

THE LINC LETTER

Spring 2009



LINC ACTIVATES COMMUNITIES TO HELP YOUNG CHILDREN READ

The people who live in every community are the greatest—and the most underutilized—resources for children in that community. LINC’s visionary approach is to energize and direct this vast and undervalued resource to the service of literacy. Through LINC’s work, teenagers tutor young children, bankers open their lobbies for student book clubs, and parents become advocates for and experts about their children’s reading opportunities.



Children explore books at a reading corner during an event in the Highbridge section of the Bronx.

LINC’s work builds a consistent unit of home, school, and community united in valuing children’s reading, and in sharing skills and activities that increase children’s literacy. This community-wide valuing of reading is a key to success in building literacy—because research shows that students are much more likely to excel when ideas about what is expected academically are shared across family, school, and community.

We are proud to of the work we do every day and thank all our partners for their ongoing support.

LINC PROMOTES SUMMER READING

LINC increased its reading outreach this past summer to address the findings of a recent study of low-income Baltimore students entitled “Summer Slide,” cited by the Partnership for Afterschool Education (PASE) as part of its Summer Learning Initiative. The authors found that these children “were learning at the same rate as middle-class students during the school year but fell much further behind during the summer” due to the fact that the more affluent students participated in summer arts, sports, and reading programs, while poor students seldom have such experiences (Alexander and Entwisle).

With two grants from the Staten Island Foundation and support from the Robert Bowne Foundation, LINC increased daily summer reading practice for Staten Island teens and their younger reading buddies through NYCHA’s Stapleton Houses’ Read and Feed program, and through the Stapleton U.A.M.E. Church’s Kids Café. Both of these cross-age reading buddy programs provided literacy activities during lunch and snack times, increasing daily summer reading practice for all participants as well as summer community service for teens.

LINC is now making plans with the Brooklyn Public Library to establish 2009 summer reading clubs at the Carroll Gardens and Crown Heights branches. These targeted summer programs for young readers, in addition to our ongoing community literacy outreach, will help to ensure that these students maintain the reading progress they make during the school year.



Children listen to a story during a reading program last summer in a South Brooklyn park.

DEAR FRIENDS,

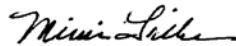
This past October, LINC made an important transition in Board leadership, and we want to take this moment to recognize and appreciate the outstanding stewardship of the outgoing Chair of our Board of Directors, Bret Halverson, Ph.D. Dr. Halverson is well known in the nonprofit world for his consultation to national, regional, and local workforce development organizations in the areas of program development, fundraising and strategic planning. His brilliant and dedicated leadership has been the cornerstone of LINC's growth and advancement over the past four years of his service as Chair, and throughout his 11-year Board tenure.

LINC has been most fortunate that Dr. Halverson has played such a vital role in helping us make the transition from a founding Board Chair and Executive Director to our current leadership, and in helping to prepare our new Board Chair, Luke Sarsfield (see box below), to assume this role.

Our deepest thanks, Bret, for your service and dedication as Board Chair, and our gratitude for your continuing service as a member of the Board and its Executive Committee.



Tanya A. Ramos



Mimi Levin Lieber

BOARD NEWS

LINC is proud to announce the election of the new Chair of its Board of Directors, Luke A. Sarsfield. Mr. Sarsfield succeeds Bret Halverson, LINC's Board Chair since 2004.

Mr. Sarsfield has served on LINC's Board of Directors for the past five years. He is a Managing Director in Goldman Sachs' healthcare group within the Investment Banking Division, and currently serves as global head of the firm's medical device investment banking practice. He joined Goldman Sachs in 1999, having previously worked for Credit Suisse First Boston as a healthcare investment banker. Mr. Sarsfield received his MBA from the Harvard Business School and his BA in Anthropology, magna cum laude, from Harvard College. LINC welcomes him as Board Chair and looks forward to his leadership tenure.

LITERACY, INC. THANKS ITS SUPPORTERS

Corporations

Altria Group, Inc.
American Express Gift Matching Program
AXA Funds Management Group Corporate Match
Bank of Greene County
Bank Hapoalim
Cohen Lans LLP
Estée Lauder
Goldman, Sachs & Co. Matching Gift Program
Hudson River Bank and Trust Company Foundation
JPMorgan Chase Foundation
Merrill Lynch
New York Life Foundation
Penguin Group (USA), Inc. Corporate Match
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
The Staten Island Foundation
State Street Global Philanthropy Program
Stewart's Shops Foundation
Sumitomo Bank Global Foundation
Target Foundation
TowerBrook Capital Partners, L.P.
Time Inc. Corporate Match
Wal-Mart Foundation
Wellcare Healthy Communities Foundation
Verizon Foundation

Foundations

Altman Foundation
The Rose M. Badgley Residuary Charitable Trust
The Fund for Columbia County of The Berkshire
Taconic Community Foundation
Booth Ferris Foundation
The Robert Bowne Foundation
The Charles Hayden Foundation
City Parks Foundation
Clark Foundation
CW-11 Tribune Foundation
Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation
Dyson Foundation
The Genesis Foundation
George Link, Jr. Foundation
Gimprich Family Foundation

Foundations cont.

William T. Grant Foundation
William Randolph Hearst Foundation
Mary J. Hutchins Foundation
Hyde and Watson Foundation
The Brooke Jackman Foundation
William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust
DJ McManus Foundation
Pinkerton Foundation
Prospect Hill Foundation Corporate Match
Pumpkin Foundation/Joe and Carol Reich
Juliet Rosenthal Foundation
Rheinstrom Hill Community Foundation
Helena Rubinstein Foundation
The Samberg Family Foundation
Peter Jay Sharp Foundation
Valentine Perry Snyder Fund
Soros Fund Charitable Foundation
Corporate Match
The Starr Foundation

Public Sector

Columbia County Youth Bureau
Council Member Sara Gonzalez
Council Member Joel Rivera
Council Member Robert Jackson
Council Member Inez E. Dickens
NYC Council Manhattan Delegation
New York State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson
Hudson Community Development and Planning Agency
NYC Department of Education
New York State Department of Education

Other

Temple Emanuel
Common Cents New York Penny Harvest - MS 72

... and Over 500 Generous Individuals

Special Thanks to R.R. Donnelley Financial for Its Generous Support of the LINC Letter since 2004!

WHAT IS LINC?

Founded in 1996, LINC gives young readers (from birth to age 8) the opportunities they need to practice reading and to learn from more experienced readers at home and in the community. Our work is vital, since studies have shown that children who do not read well by age eight are likely to lag in reading ability forever after, with consequences which can never be overcome.

Our partners in 21 Community Literacy Networks include volunteers and staff in libraries, senior citizen centers, faith-based institutions, restaurants, parks, laundromats, hair and nail salons, health centers, supermarkets, apartment building lobbies, homeless shelters, banks, and more than 100 partner schools. LINC is a catalyst, coordinating resources, activating skills and fostering commitment in each community to create reading opportunities for children in everyday places throughout the neighborhood.

LINC IMPROVES TEEN TUTOR PROGRAM

Last spring, when the William T. Grant Foundation invited proposals to improve existing programs, LINC jumped at the chance to submit ideas for enhancing our award-winning Teen Tutor Reading Partner Program—and we were fortunate to receive a \$25,000 grant through a highly competitive selection process.

One of the largest cross-age tutoring programs in New York City, LINC's Teen Tutor program engages middle school and high school students in tutoring elementary school students one-on-one in reading and writing once a week at the elementary school for at least one hour. During the 2007-2008 academic year alone, LINC facilitated 68 Teen Tutor programs in five boroughs and in Hudson, New York, with 1,257 teenagers tutoring 1,396 elementary school students weekly.

Our goals for the two-year Grant-funded improvement project are to develop a new training curriculum, enhance tutoring materials (writing activities and games), provide teens with opportunities for program input, and to create a brochure to build student enthusiasm. Students in our initial focus groups have reinforced our commitment to these goals—they have expressed the need for tutoring materials more accurately targeted to the ages of the tutees, and for a more interactive training process.



A young reader from PS 366 in Inwood receives reading assistance from her teen tutor from M 293.



A teen tutor from the High School of Media and Communication reads with a child from PS 189 in Washington Heights.

LINC PARTNER PROFILE

In the winter of 2003, Daniel Schmidt, Director of the Marble Hill Senior Center in the Bronx, was out shoveling snow in front of the Center when Deborah Dessauere strolled by and asked him if older adults there would like to read with children through LINC's Intergenerational Reading Partner Program. Debora is a LINC Coordinator, and it's her job to reach out to community partners such as Dan Schmidt and the Marble Hill Senior Center to ask if they'll serve as literacy resources for young children.

In Mr. Schmidt's words, the partnership has "succeeded beyond anybody's wildest dreams." LINC is now in its 7th school year of pairing second graders from PS 207 with older volunteers at the Senior Center for a full class period of one-on-one reading each week. All agree that the individual attention the young students gain—sometimes the only outside-the-classroom reading experience they have—makes a big difference in their reading ability. This year, 15 volunteers read at the Center to 20 young students



*Daniel Schmidt,
Director of Marble Hill
Senior Center*

each week. Four of these older volunteers have been with the program from the very beginning.

Dan Schmidt partners with Alexandra Kravitz, who teaches second grade at PS 207. LINC provides the basic literacy teaching tools and activities used by the seniors, and children bring books they are reading in class for their tutoring sessions. "I would love

to see this program replicated throughout the city," Mr. Schmidt says, "because it is so low-cost, it practically runs on its own, and it has such a strong impact."

Mr. Schmidt has dedicated his entire career to working with older adults, and has been with Marble Hill Senior Center for 21 years. "I have always had an affinity for older people," he says. In his spare time, fittingly enough, he loves to read!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Founder
Mimi Levin Lieber

Chair
Luke Sarsfield

Vice Chair
Deborah Lans

Treasurer
Jacqueline A. Kaiko

Secretary
Robert E. Spierer, CPA

Board Members
Michele Caro
Tracee E. Davis, Esq.
Carl D. Folta
Yvonne De Gaetano, Ed.D.
Jennifer Glassman
Bret Halverson, Ph.D.
Shari Levine
Debra Stern Marrone
Sonia Ortiz-Gulardo
Ron Rentel
Ann S. Sand, LMSW
Susan J. Sutherland

Board Members Emeriti
Karen Boothe-Begly
Michael E. Clark
Joseph Diamond
Lili Lynton
Susan Newton
Kylie A.D. Sachs

Tanya A. Ramos
Executive Director

Debora Mulrain
Program Director

Janet Fried
Program Director
Teen Tutor Reading Partner Program

Sandra Rodriguez
Managing Editor

Special thanks to
Sharon Wyse
Writer

LINC OFFERS PARENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Knowing that parents are their children's first teachers—and that parents are among our most active and effective organizers, over the past year LINC has developed its Very Involved Parents (VIP) Academy to train more parents as community leaders for literacy.

Our purpose is to develop and train a core group of parent leaders in their respective communities, and to create the peer support networks so necessary for ongoing parent engagement. Three VIP Academies are planned for the current year. Each Academy consists of four training sessions for parents—as teachers of their children, partners with schools, leaders in neighborhoods, and advocates for literacy. Following the training, LINC engages VIP alumni in creating literacy programs and activities in their own neighborhoods. This program has great potential and is already producing results as parents engage other parents to attend VIP training and to participate in literacy programs.

For example, Marie Stevens, a VIP alumna who is a parent at Bronx Early College Academy for Teaching and Learning, a middle school, does Early Morning Read Aloud and literacy activities at PS 7 with five low-performing ELA students every Wednesday. Le Sandra Abney, a VIP alumna in Harlem, was recently a guest reader at the Harlem branch of the New York Public Library for its "Pajama Night" literacy event. Carmen Casas and Raquel Gonzalez, graduates from last year's VIP training, are facilitating weekly Lobby Reading Programs together in apartment buildings at 75 Post Ave and 570 West 204th Street in Marble Hill-Inwood. LINC salutes its Very Involved Parents!



VIP alumna, Raquel Gonzalez, reads with children during a program at Monsignor Kett Playground last summer.



VISIT US ON THE WEB WWW.LINCNYC.ORG

Literacy, Inc. (LINC)
307 Seventh Avenue
Suite 1601
New York, NY 10001
Phone: 212.620.LINC
Fax: 212.620.0790
info@lincnyc.org