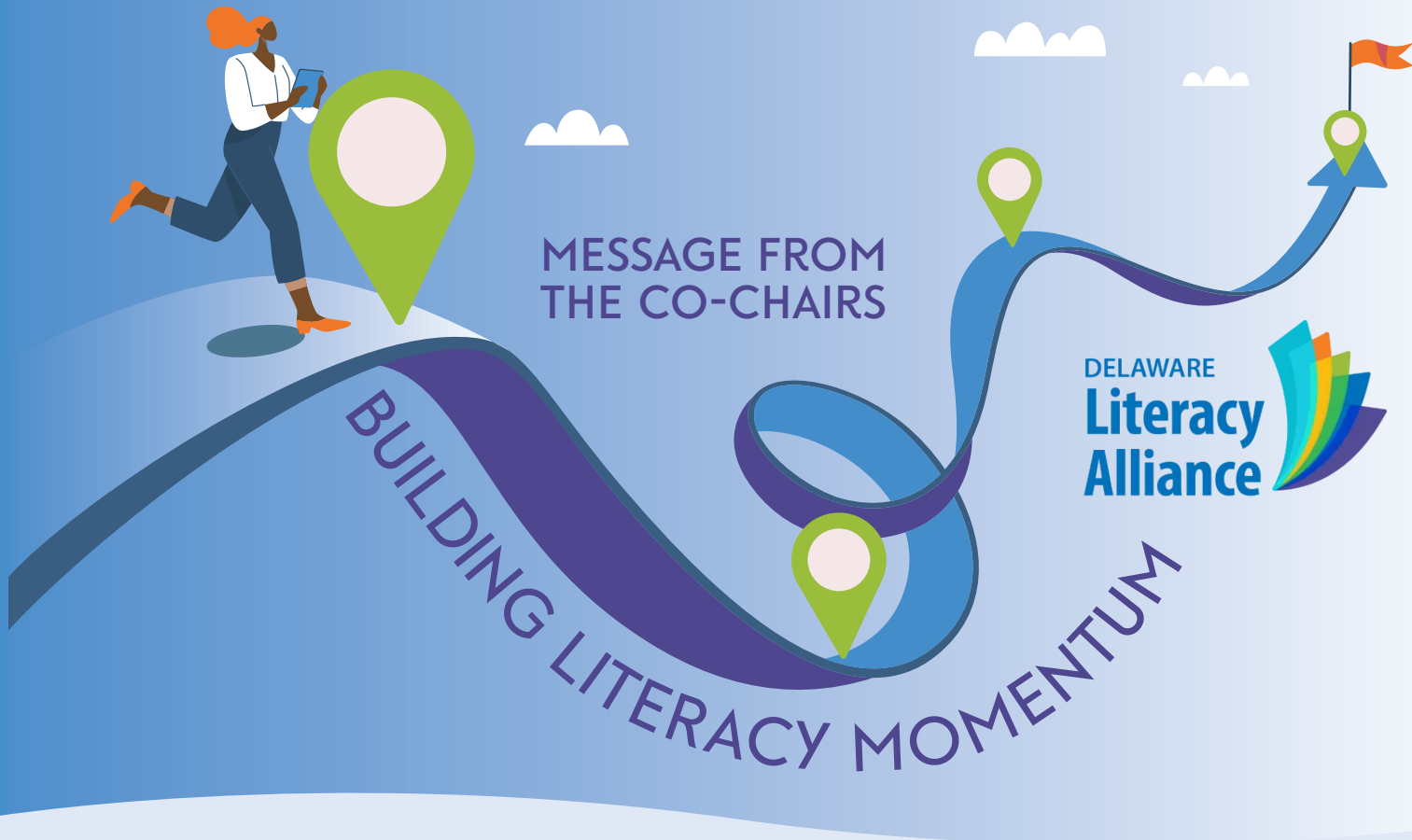




MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

DELAWARE
**Literacy
Alliance**



Dear Friends of the Delaware Literacy Alliance,

As we reflect on this past year, one thing stands out above all else: momentum. Across Delaware, we have seen communities come together, initiatives flourish, and individuals rise to the challenge of making literacy a priority. Literacy is not just about reading and writing—it's about opening doors, creating opportunities, and empowering individuals to live fuller, richer lives.

The Delaware Literacy Alliance has embraced this momentum, channeling it into meaningful action. From the success of the DE Reads campaign to the launch of our new website and membership portal, we have made significant strides in connecting people, resources, and ideas.

This year, we also celebrated our advocates, individuals, and organizations who have worked tirelessly to amplify the importance of literacy across the state. Their dedication inspires us and reinforces the vital role of advocacy in our mission.

However, we know that there is still much work to be done. Waitlists for literacy services continue to grow, highlighting the critical need for more resources and programs. Advocacy remains a

cornerstone of our strategy as we push for systemic change and increased funding to ensure that every Delawarean has access to the support they need. Our community-based organizations (CBOs) working on literacy need support, as they are trusted community organizations that serve a significant portion of this population. To address this, we will be working on community marketing efforts to demonstrate the urgent need for additional funding across multiple lanes.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities on the horizon. We envision reducing waitlists, expanding literacy services, and growing our network of passionate advocates. Through collaboration and shared purpose, we will continue building momentum to create a future where literacy is not a barrier but a bridge to success.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. Your support, dedication, and belief in the power of literacy fuel the work we do every day. Together, we are transforming lives and strengthening communities. Here's to another year of progress and possibility.

**Dr. Annie Norman, Co-Chair
Cindy Shermeyer, Co-Chair
Delaware Literacy Alliance**

ENHANCING DIGITAL ACCESS: THE DELAWARE LITERACY ALLIANCE'S WEBSITE AND ONLINE TOOLS



This year marked an exciting milestone for the Delaware Literacy Alliance with the launch of our new **website, membership portal, and events calendar**. These digital tools were designed to enhance communication, streamline collaboration, and provide valuable resources to our members and partners.

The **website** serves as a central hub, offering up-to-date information on the Alliance's initiatives, advocacy efforts, and community impact. Since its launch, the website has attracted **over 1,000 total views**, with **nearly half of all visitors arriving through direct referrals**, demonstrating strong community interest. The **Get Involved page has been one of the most engaging sections**, with **visitors spending an average of 28 seconds per visit**, reflecting a high level of interest in participation opportunities.

Through the **membership portal**, members gain exclusive access to tools and materials tailored to support their literacy advocacy and program development. This resource has become a vital

connection point for professionals, volunteers, and community members dedicated to advancing literacy in Delaware.

The **events calendar** has also proven to be an invaluable resource, keeping members informed about upcoming workshops, advocacy events, and literacy-related gatherings across the state. By making it easier for members to stay engaged and participate, the calendar strengthens our collective impact and builds a more connected literacy network.

Our **strategic digital efforts are delivering outstanding results**, with an **email open rate of nearly 27%, surpassing**

nonprofit industry benchmarks, and a click-through rate exceeding 37%—a clear indication that our communications are resonating with our audience. Additionally, our **social media presence continues to grow, driving visitors to the website and expanding our reach**.

As we continue to grow, we are committed to leveraging these digital platforms to **expand outreach, enhance user experience, and provide valuable literacy resources**. With a **refined digital strategy, increasing engagement, and strong audience interaction, the Delaware Literacy Alliance is making a lasting impact**—bringing us closer to our mission of making literacy accessible to all Delawareans.

STAY CONNECTED!

Sign up for our **newsletter and exclusive updates** to stay informed about upcoming events, new resources, and opportunities to engage with the Delaware Literacy Alliance.

Register today at [this link](#).

DE READS:

The campaign's strength lay in its ability to connect with a broad audience in a meaningful and accessible way. Through interactive posts and discussions, DE Reads generated nearly **300 engagements**, demonstrating

This innovative approach demonstrated the power of social media in amplifying important messages and fostering statewide engagement. With a well-executed strategy, DE Reads achieved an impressive return on investment, proving that small-scale digital campaigns can drive significant awareness and engagement.

By sparking conversations and highlighting the critical need for literacy support in Delaware, DE Reads successfully laid the groundwork for continued advocacy and future initiatives. The campaign's success serves as a testament to the potential of digital outreach in mobilizing communities and promoting literacy for all.



“ I LOVE MY LIBRARIAN ”

Peggy Griffith



Jamar Rahming

Two Delaware librarians have been recognized with the prestigious 2025 “I Love My Librarian” Award by the American Library Association (ALA), celebrating their exceptional contributions to their communities.

Peggy Griffith Ferris School, Wilmington



Peggy Griffith, the administrative librarian at Ferris School, has transformed the school’s library into a welcoming and educational space for court-committed youth aged 13–18. Her efforts in updating the collection, repurposing furniture, and developing a curriculum tailored to the students’ needs have helped foster a love for reading and learning. Her work provides these young individuals with critical resources to support their education and reintegration into society.

Jamar Rahming Wilmington Institute Free Library



As executive director of the Wilmington Institute Free Library, Jamar Rahming has redefined the role of a public library, turning it into a vibrant cultural hub. Under his leadership, the library has launched initiatives such as placing books in local barbershops and hosting events featuring renowned figures like Dolly Parton and LeVar Burton. His innovative approach has strengthened the library’s role in community engagement and literacy.

Delaware stood out as the **only state with multiple honorees** among the ten recipients nationwide. Each winner received a **\$5,000 cash prize** and was honored at the ALA’s **LibLearnX conference in Phoenix, Arizona**.

The “I Love My Librarian” Award, established in 2008, celebrates librarians who go above and beyond in serving their communities. With nearly 1,300 nominations this year, Griffith and Rahming’s recognition highlights the **impactful role librarians play in education, literacy, and public service**.

NEW and NOTEWORTHY



Delaware Library Association Legislative Action Day 2025: Advocating for Delaware Libraries

Delaware Library Association's Legislative Action Day is an opportunity for library supporters throughout Delaware to advocate for libraries. Attendees will be able to network, hear from special guests, and meet with elected officials and their staff to discuss the value of Delaware libraries and champion library issues.

The Legislative Action Committee will set up meetings with your local representative and senator. If you are interested in speaking with your representative about Delaware libraries, please be sure to state that when you register.

When: Thursday, March 13, 2025, 9 am–3 pm

Where: Dover Public Library, 35 Loockerman Plaza, Dover, DE 19901 and Legislative Hall, 411 Legislative Ave, Dover, DE 19901

[REGISTER HERE](#)



KIDS COUNT in Delaware's 2025 Page-a-Day Style Legislative Calendar Released

The KIDS COUNT in Delaware 2025 Legislative Calendar—a page-a-day style publication—is now available! Similar to the annual FOCUS book, this calendar highlights key data indicators and policy solutions addressing challenges faced by Delaware's children. The 2025 edition places a special emphasis on public policy, with data organized into four key areas: health, education, economic security, and family/community.

A heartfelt thank you to Delaware Libraries for co-sponsoring this year's calendar!

Stay informed with daily insights on data and policy by following @dekidscount on Facebook, Instagram, or X.

[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)



CELEBRATING OUR 2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

The Sky is the Limit

- **Empowering Youth Voices: A Successful Literacy Panel**

The *Advancing Literacy: Our Teens' Perspective* panel, held on September 30, 2024, in collaboration with the State Board of Education and the Delaware Literacy Alliance, was a resounding success. This inspiring youth-led discussion brought together passionate young leaders who shared compelling insights on the importance of literacy and innovative ideas to improve access and outcomes for all. Their voices highlighted the critical role of youth advocacy in shaping the future of education and literacy initiatives.

- **Bridging the Gap: A Successful Health Literacy Event**

On October 4, 2024, the Health Literacy Council of Delaware hosted a highly successful event, bringing together over 110 attendees for an engaging discussion on the role of health literacy in healthcare. In collaboration with leading professionals, including doctors, nurses, community health workers, and patients, the event explored how health information is used, taught, and experienced in real-world settings. The insightful conversations highlighted the importance of clear communication in improving patient outcomes and fostering a more health-literate community.

- **Expanding Access to Learning: A New Partnership with the Laffey-McHugh Foundation**

The Delaware Literacy Alliance is thrilled to announce a new partnership with the Laffey-McHugh Foundation to bring the **Learning Upgrade** platform to Delaware. This innovative, gamified learning tool integrates literacy, numeracy, and digital skills, making education more engaging and accessible for diverse learners. With compatibility across **Best Plus 3.0, TABE 13/14, and CASAS**, the platform will be piloted at **Literacy Delaware** and the **Latin American Community Center (LACC)**.

This initiative is a critical step toward **reducing waitlists and addressing geographical and transportation challenges** that often create barriers for adult learners in Delaware. By leveraging digital tools, we aim to expand opportunities for learners to build essential skills for success, ensuring more adults have access to the education they need—when and where they need it. **Implementation is set to begin around March 2025**, marking an exciting new chapter in our efforts to enhance adult education access across the state.

- Welcoming New Voices: Delaware Literacy Alliance Hosts Member Orientation**

The Delaware Literacy Alliance recently held a **New Member Orientation** as part of its ongoing efforts to expand and strengthen its coalition. This session served as an opportunity to welcome new members, introduce them to the Alliance's mission, and highlight the critical role they can play in advancing literacy efforts across the state.

During the orientation, attendees learned about the Alliance's initiatives, including its focus on **adult literacy, early childhood literacy, and health literacy**. Members also explored opportunities for collaboration, advocacy, and community engagement. The event provided a platform for passionate individuals and organizations to connect, share ideas, and commit to making a lasting impact on literacy in Delaware.

With new voices and fresh perspectives, the Delaware Literacy Alliance continues to grow, driving forward its mission to **improve literacy access and outcomes for all Delawareans**.

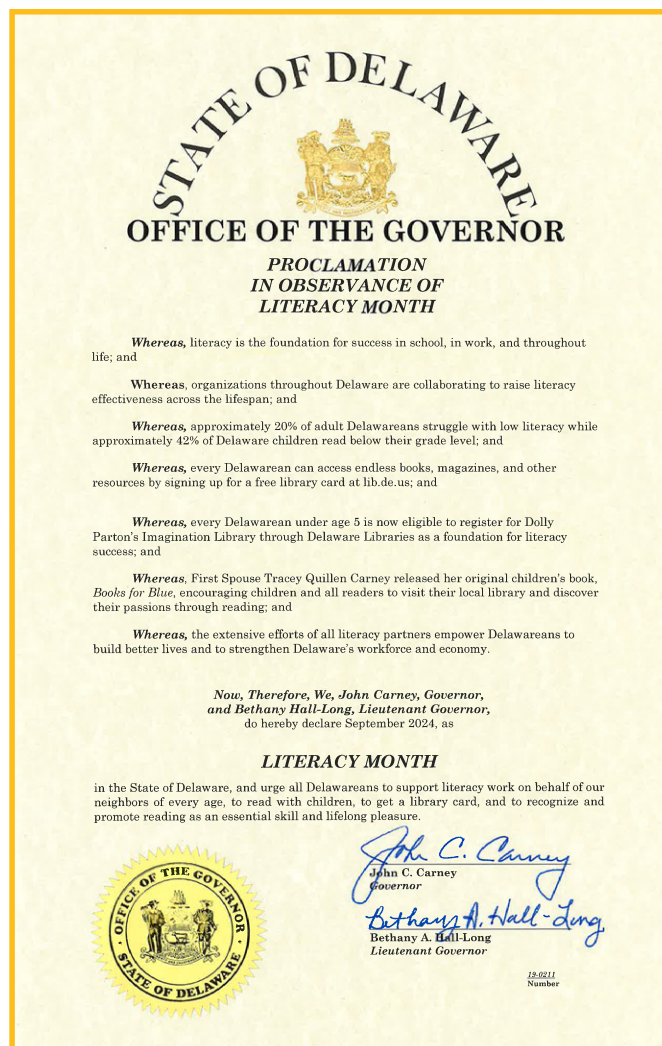
- Strengthening Early Literacy: Partnership with DE Readiness Teams for Summer Reading**

The Delaware Literacy Alliance proudly partnered with the **DE Readiness Teams** for the **Summer Reading Program**, working together to promote early literacy and encourage a love of reading among young learners. As part of this collaboration, the Alliance's **Early Literacy Committee** played a key role in designing the bookmarks distributed throughout the program, ensuring they were both engaging and educational for children and families.

This partnership underscores the Alliance's commitment to **supporting early literacy development and providing resources that make reading more accessible and enjoyable**. By working alongside the DE Readiness Teams, we continue to foster a strong foundation for literacy that empowers Delaware's youngest readers on their journey to lifelong learning.

- Raising Awareness: Successful Statewide Literacy and Health Literacy Month Proclamations**

The Delaware Literacy Alliance and the Health Literacy Council of Delaware proudly celebrated **two major statewide proclamations** in 2024, reinforcing the importance of literacy and health literacy across the state.



In **September**, Delaware recognized **Literacy Month**, highlighting the essential role of literacy in education, workforce development, and community well-being. The proclamation brought attention to the ongoing efforts to improve literacy access and outcomes for Delawareans of all ages.

In **October**, the state marked **Health Literacy Month**, emphasizing the critical need for clear and accessible health information. This proclamation underscored the importance of empowering individuals with the knowledge and skills to make informed health decisions, reinforcing the role of health literacy in improving public health outcomes.

Both proclamations were a resounding success, bringing together **state leaders, advocates, and community members** to champion literacy in all its forms. These efforts continue to shine a spotlight on the **importance of equitable access to literacy and health information**, ensuring that all Delawareans have the tools they need to thrive.



Join us!



delawareliteracyalliance.org

Delaware Libraries are proud to be the backbone for the Delaware Literacy Alliance which is open to all who have an interest in improving literacy.

DelawareLibraries.org



Library and literacy professionals throughout Delaware are joining forces and expertise to improve literacy and learning opportunities for Delawareans throughout the lifespan.

All Delaware school libraries are invited to join the statewide Delaware Library Catalog/Consortium!

Strengthening school libraries is the “last mile” to reach all students, even those that aren’t taken to the public library, and enables all students to experience the joy of reading and develop the reading and library habit. Joining the Delaware Library Consortium provides easy access to a multitude of books in addition to those in the local school library.

Reading and library use are habits, which when instilled at a young age, support success in school and throughout life!

Reading frequently a variety of books helps build vocabulary, supports learning comprehension, ignites curiosity, and strengthens reading stamina essential for success in college and careers. Delaware is a small state with limited resources, when we share books through the Delaware Library Consortium, all Delawareans have access to more!

Participating school librarians receive support!

School Librarians receive support from the Delaware Division of Libraries and are connected more directly to other library professionals and expertise. They also receive access to additional resources and professional development opportunities in support of local services. Public and school libraries can collaborate more closely in serving their communities.



The statewide Delaware Library Catalog/Consortium (DLC) connects over 80 libraries (public, academic, special, school libraries), sharing professional services and more than 4 million books for the benefit of Delawareans.



Get a Delaware Library Card! It's Easy! It's Free!

DelawareLibraries.org/librarycard



Help Delaware Become The State That Reads!

While funds last! – Thanks to Senators Coons and Carper, a federal earmark grant provides funding for participating school libraries to rejuvenate book collections! There are **no local costs for joining the Delaware Library Consortium**; membership does not supplant the local investment in school library services, and does not change governance or local control. For more information, contact Dr. Annie Norman, State Librarian, annie.norman@delaware.gov



FORECAST: LOOKING AHEAD

express your support for increased funding and resources for literacy programs. Together, we can make a difference.

What the Alliance Will Do

The Delaware Literacy Alliance will continue to lead advocacy efforts by acting as a liaison and providing opportunities for engagement. We are committed to empowering individuals and organizations to advocate effectively and to working collaboratively with policymakers to advance literacy initiatives.

Spotlight on Literacy Advocacy

Literacy advocacy is critical to addressing the challenges we face and creating a future where every individual has the tools they need to succeed. Advocacy raises public awareness, inspires action, and drives systemic change to reduce barriers to literacy. By elevating the conversation around literacy and making it a visible priority, advocacy ensures that resources and attention are focused where they can have the most significant impact.

This Could Be You!

Advocacy is a powerful tool for change, and we are always looking for new voices to join the movement. Are you ready to step up and make a difference? Become a literacy advocate and help us build a brighter future for all Delawareans. Together, we can ensure that literacy is not just a goal but a reality for everyone.

What Needs to Be Done

As we look to the future, we are laser-focused on addressing some of the most pressing challenges in literacy. Reducing the waitlist for literacy services remains a top priority. Too many individuals and families are waiting for critical support, and we are determined to expand access to meet this growing need.

Advocacy: What It Means and How You Can Help

Advocacy is at the heart of our efforts to create lasting change. It's about raising awareness, amplifying voices, and influencing policy to prioritize literacy as a fundamental right. Advocacy ensures that resources are directed where they are needed most and that barriers to literacy are removed.

You can help by becoming an advocate for literacy in your community. Share your story, participate in advocacy events, or contact your legislators to

Thank You to Our Generous Funders!

The Delaware Literacy Alliance extends our deepest gratitude to our incredible funders for their unwavering support of our mission.

Your investment in literacy, health literacy, and lifelong learning is profoundly impacting Delaware. With your support, we are expanding access to critical literacy programs, launching innovative initiatives, and breaking down barriers to education and health information for individuals and families throughout the state.

Thank you for being champions of literacy and for helping us build a stronger, more informed, and empowered Delaware!



DELAWARE HEALTH
AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health

DelawareLibraries



HIGHMARK
Delaware

The Laffey-McHugh Foundation



PMG
CONSULTING
Facilitated by
PMG Consulting