

Fleeing Tragedy, Finding Success

You helped change Cesia's life.
Someday she could save yours.

Imagine that your father and sister have just been murdered—and you and the rest of your family have been told that you're next on the list. This is the horrible reality that faced Literacy for Life learner Cesia in her native Honduras. To save her family, Cesia's mother started them on the long, harrowing journey to the United States, where they would be safe from violence and have the opportunity to begin new lives.

Cesia tried to find a job in her new country to help support her relatives, but her limited English was a barrier. Her asylum lawyer recommended that Cesia come to Literacy for Life for language skills. Cesia says she felt immediately welcomed by the warm and helpful staff—which gave her the resolve to stick with the program and get all the education she could. She decided to focus again on becoming a nurse, after her studies in Honduras were interrupted by the violence.

The young woman was quickly matched with her tutor, Helen, who identified with Cesia's challenges because she herself had spent time in another country while limited in the local language. Helen says that Cesia is extremely motivated, works hard, never complains, and has a big heart. Cesia also was matched with a nursing skills tutor, Susan, who remarks on Cesia's "shining personality" as a great attribute for the medical profession and her future patients. That personality and heart are what drive Cesia to help as many people as she can—and to give back to the adoptive county that is protecting her from a life of danger.

Cesia's English has improved so much that she passed her Certified Nursing Assistant exam, and now she's working on her Medication Aide certification. She currently has an A+ in nursing school, even though she's the only non-native speaker in her class. Cesia's ultimate goal is to become a Registered Nurse.

Taking advantage of as many Literacy for Life classes and programs as possible, Cesia has not only worked with two tutors, but she has taken all

the classes she is eligible for. This includes HEAL, our health literacy class. With a younger sister who is frequently ill, Cesia says HEAL has really guided her on how to talk to the doctors. The skills from HEAL will also help her be a better nurse. The EmployEd program has also helped Cesia—from getting into Certified Nursing Assistant training to making sure support is available when she's ready to look for a job in her chosen profession. EmployEd even helped Cesia step up from her housekeeper job to working as a server at Maurizio's Italian Restaurant, where she is able to study for her nursing classes when her shifts are slow. The new job also gives her flexibility to take classes on her own schedule.

Cesia is grateful for all the opportunities provided by Literacy for Life and the community. In addition to receiving so much free education, she's been able to develop a support system of friends who understand what she has gone through and staff who care about her and are ready to help her with anything she needs.

With your generous support, tutors like Helen and Susan, and the resources available at Literacy for Life, Cesia and the hundreds of learners like her served by the agency each year will be able to **keep striving to reach their dreams!**



"The best moment is now."

Cesia



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— www.literacyforlife.org —

Impact in 2017–2018

829



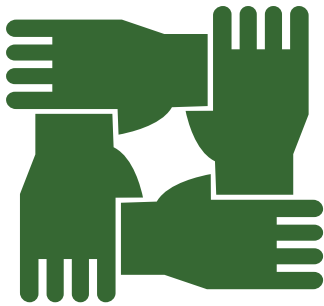
learners served

through one-to-one tutoring, small classes, off-site programs, the on-site computer lab, and distance learning programs.

351

volunteers

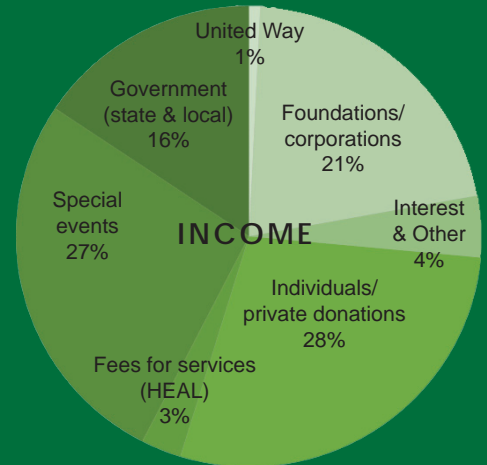
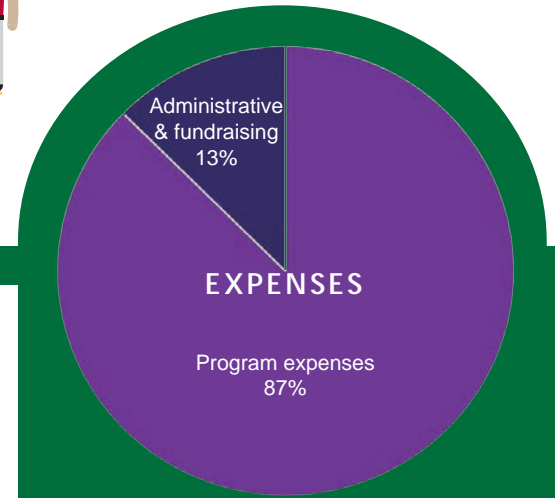
changed lives by tutoring, teaching classes, serving as board and council members, and assisting the staff.



1,130

personal goals met

like getting accepted into community college, earning a certification for work, reading a book to a child, or understanding a doctor's instructions for the first time.



1

new state-level position

for Literacy for Life Executive Director Joan Peterson, who was appointed to the Virginia Board of Workforce Development by Gov. Northam—helping Literacy for Life advocate for Virginians with the greatest barriers to employment, like those currently being served by our EmployEd program.

\$447,105

saved through volunteering

from a combined 18,109 hours of volunteer assistance in Literacy for Life programs and operations.

12

new U.S. citizens
who studied American civics and history with their tutors.



She escaped violence in her homeland ...leaving behind her career dreams

Find out how
Literacy for Life helped
Cesia start over
THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT



A 5K & FUN RUN Fundraiser
for Literacy for Life

Thanksgiving Morning
Thursday, Nov. 22, 2018

A great way to kick off your holiday! The Blue Talon Bistro Turkey Trot is a 5K and 1-mile fun run, with proceeds benefiting Literacy for Life. It has become the most notable race in the region — on the most popular running day of the year! Join your friends and neighbors at this festive Williamsburg tradition. We especially need volunteers!



To volunteer or to run,
register at:
bit.ly/turkeytrotLFL



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