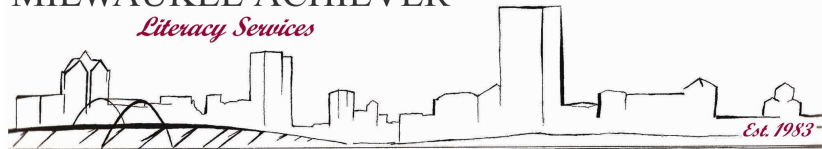


MILWAUKEE ACHIEVER

Literacy Services



ADULT LITERACY AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Congratulations!

Milwaukee Achiever Literacy Services has selected your organization to help us celebrate our
25th Anniversary!

We hope you will be able to join us.

Milwaukee Achiever is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit Wisconsin corporation organized to provide adult literacy education to economically and educationally disadvantaged adults living in the greater Milwaukee area. Our **mission** is to inspire and empower adult learners to gain the skills necessary to enrich their lives through education and training in an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and respect.

As we reflect upon yesterday, our founding in 1983 by the presidents of Alverno College, Cardinal Stritch University, and Mount Mary College established and defined our mission and program, and ultimately gave us our roots. From our humble beginnings through today, Milwaukee Achiever has served over **15,000** highly motivated adult learners -- helping them to find employment, obtain a GED, become United States citizens, learn English as a second language, learn computer/business skills, become better parents, etc. We have grown from the original group of 24 adult learners who gathered at 931 West Madison Street for the first session, to approximately **1,500** adult learners who gather annually at our neighborhood learning centers.

Today in Our Community

Twenty-seven percent (27%) of Milwaukee's adult population is at Level 1 Literacy, the lowest level. These individuals have difficulty with basic tasks such as reading and comprehending, interpreting charts and graphs, writing a short letter, locating an intersection on a map, giving timely reports, explaining a mistake on a credit card bill, calculating total costs on an order form, etc. Approximately 35% of Milwaukee adults lack a basic high school education. The current high school dropout rate in Milwaukee is 39.4%. What does this mean? It means that **these adults are unemployable because of illiteracy**. It means that local employers are facing a rapidly growing skilled-worker shortage. It means that Milwaukee has a serious economic problem.

Just as adult illiteracy has an extremely negative impact on business and economic growth, it also increases unemployment, violence, crime and incarceration rates, intergenerational poverty, and welfare dependency. All of these problems have seriously affected the Milwaukee community for many years.

Why Literacy?

Literacy is essential to the well-being of healthy communities. Education opens the door to greater opportunity in today's job market, and greater opportunities can mean greater financial independence. Financial independence enables **self-reliance**, which, in turn, helps to break the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy because parents set new standards and examples for their children.

Milwaukee Achiever empowers people. Knowledge is power. As learners grow in knowledge, they also are enabled to assume more responsibility for themselves and their families. Self-esteem is increased, and soon learners can reach out to help others and become active in creating solutions for the challenges faced in their neighborhoods and community.