



THE *Heart* OF THE TRIANGLE

Sharing the vision and supporting the mission of the Triangle area non-profit community.

Teaching Individuals Literacy Skills to Improve their Future—and Yours

by Judy Liu, MPH

Advanced education and literacy competency are strongly correlated to individuals' upward financial and social mobility. For almost fifty years the Triangle Literacy Council (TLC) has been serving individuals and families in the Triangle region with literacy and basic skills programming to improve lives through community and individual success.

TLC provides literacy programming across a broad spectrum of individuals and families of all age groups, including families and their pre-school children, youth involved with the juvenile justice system, incarcerated women, inmates in county jails, and the unemployed. Programs are offered for Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language, one-on-one tutoring with trained volunteers, a Juvenile Literacy Center for youth involved with the juvenile court system or at risk of being involved, financial literacy, life skills, civics and government, and specifically tailored workplace literacy. TLC also serves as a NCWorks job search site.

TLC also offers and manages a number of programs. In late 2016, TLC was notified by the U.S. Department of Labor that it had been awarded \$821,000 for their Bull City YouthBuild initiative. Bull City YouthBuild will assist at-risk youth in obtaining their high school diploma or equivalency while providing hands-on job skills training in the construction industry. YouthBuild's

aim is to serve the community by helping build a productive future for young men and women who have dropped out of school. Participants work part-time in the classroom to earn their high school equivalency or diploma while also working part-time constructing low-income housing through TLC's partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Durham. Additional partners in this initiative include Durham Public Schools, NC Department of Public Safety, Home Depot, and other community focused organizations and individuals.

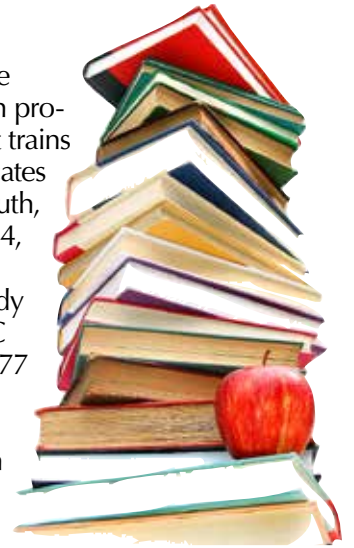
Bull City YouthBuild is a full-time, nine-month program operated by the Triangle Literacy Council, during which participants are able to earn up to \$200 a month for program attendance. Upon completion of the program, participants will earn a nationally-recognized construction certificate and be given the opportunity to find gainful employment, significantly improving their futures. All Bull City YouthBuild participants who graduate from the program will also receive a laptop computer. Interested participants must be between the ages of 16 and 24 and live in East Durham, in zip codes 27701 or 27703. To join TLC's Bull City YouthBuild program, interested residents should contact Deborah Reid Murphy, YouthBuild Program Manager, at 919-797-2471 or complete an application online at www.triangleliteracy.org/bullcityyouthbuild.

YouthBuild is a community-based

alternative education program that trains and educates at-risk youth, ages 16-24, in work-force-ready skills. TLC is one of 77 programs currently funded in the U.S., and

one of 24 newly created sites, as well as the only organization chosen in NC this year to receive the Department of Labor grant. "We are so excited to take the next step in our Triangle expansion through partnering with the U.S. Department of Labor for the YouthBuild initiative. Our program will work closely with the Durham community to provide young adults with new educational and work-force development opportunities to increase their quality of life and help them better provide for themselves and their families," said Laura Walters, President and CEO of the Triangle Literacy Council.

TLC's library is open to all active students and their tutors during normal business hours (Mon–Fri 9 am –5 pm). It houses a number of ABE and ESL core curriculum series as well as textbooks for grammar, spelling, writing and life skills. Books are available for check-out or purchase. In 2016, TLC supporters volunteered about 7,000 hours of their time. TLC is seeking volunteers 18 or over with good reading skills, patience and a commitment to helping another adult achieve his or her goals. Please plan now to attend one of their monthly volunteer orientations to see how you can help. For information, call 919-787-5559, email info@triangleliteracy.org or visit www.triangleliteracy.org.



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