



# READ/Orange County (ReadOC)

## Grant Request



## Project: Teach the Teacher Accelerated (T-T-T Accelerated)

## **Organizational Description**

The shame of not knowing how to read! Spouses in pain conceal their inabilities from partners. Children hiding their secret, graduate unable to land jobs that pay a living wage. A 50-year-old man finally finds himself in an adult literacy organization after years of abuse by his mother, followed by a life of drugs and alcohol. Marten Griego documents his journey to full literacy through the dedication of his inspiring tutor in his memoir, Leaving the House of Tears<sup>1</sup>.

Similarly, the efforts of Read OC (Orange County), begun in 1991, have eased these feelings of shame and raised the confidence of over 5000 adult learners with their 85+ years' combined experience in adult literacy and volunteer management. Four of the 7 key team members are certified as trainers through ProLiteracy America, the only national accreditation service in the literacy field. Read OC started with a grant from the State Library through the California Literacy Campaign, serving 20,000 Californians annually. With 20 years of experience, Read OC's well-established, devoted organization is an asset to the community.

Read OC has trained over 2500 volunteer tutors in both the Wilson Reading System (for dyslexic learners) and the Lindamood Bell Phoneme Sequencing Program (for learners who struggle with sound discrimination), following 23 hours of basic training, and subsequent quarterly meetings to enhance their skills. These giving individuals proceed from the training program confident in their ability to help learners, knowing they'll have continued program support.

The mission of READ/Orange County is to create a more literate community by providing diversified services of the highest quality to all who seek them. Programs include Families for Literacy, Read Jr. and Working for Inmate Literacy Now, but the core program focuses on basic literacy for adults through the formation of one-on-one tutor-learner teams. The number of learners supported is tied to the number of volunteers recruited, currently about 250-300 matched pairs per month. Last year, 684 learners were served.

Read OC's target population is Orange County adults at least 16 years old who need help with basic reading and writing skills and are out of the traditional high school environment. The benefits to these learners have tertiary, positive effects on the lives of their families and the quality of work they can do for employers.

About 25% of the Read OC's funding still comes from the California Literacy Campaign grant, signed into law 27 years ago. Additional resources are other grants, donations from friends groups and private donations, but most support comes from the county.

## **Project Needs Statement**

With some 93 million adults at or below basic reading levels<sup>2</sup> in the United States, literacy programs are clearly essential. Even in the relatively affluent Orange County, about 26% of the population 16 years and over lack basic prose literacy skills<sup>3</sup>. Imagine not being able to pay your bills, send an email or read a bedtime story to your child. And note the impact to the community at large: illiteracy rates are tied to crime levels, overall workforce competence and health care

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<sup>1</sup> Future Destinations Publishing, January 2006

<sup>2</sup> 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy, 2003

<sup>3</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, 2003

costs.<sup>4</sup> Learning to read transformed the life of former convicted drug trafficker, William Morales. He graduated from pushing drugs to kids to pushing “them to field grounders, ace algebra and mentor each other — then sits at a desk to pore over a budget for the YMCA youth center that he directs.”<sup>5</sup>

Additionally, some funding is at risk, as the California Literacy Campaign grant mentioned above, is on Governor Brown’s chopping block, with the Assembly Budget Committee coming out in favor of keeping the grant intact, and the Senate Budget Committee supporting the governor.<sup>6</sup>

### **Project Description**

Read OC administrators believe the most innovative thinking in literacy must be employed now. The 1-2-3 Read model was developed in 2009 by Peter Segal to advance reading and writing levels among adults to the 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade level within the first 6 months of tutoring. A study run by the National Institute for Literacy showed that 75% of participants were able to achieve this level using this model. However, no formal materials have been developed to implement the ideology. Read OC has the opportunity, with its existing relationship with Peter Segal, to create a new training project incorporating the concepts into their existing program for tutors. The new project will be called *T-T-T Accelerated* and can serve as a trailblazer for other literacy programs.

Currently, non-readers are expected to achieve 2<sup>nd</sup>-grade level within the first 6 months of tutelage (Section 1) through Read OC. We are requesting \$5000 for the T-T-T Accelerated project aiming to get adult learners with no reading ability to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level within that period. Two-hour tutorial sessions will be conducted twice a week for 6 months on a test group of 30 learners from Orange County.

*Inputs:* 1 staff, 1-2 writers, 1 tutor trainer, 50 tutors, \$5000 funding, Tustin Library facility.

*Processes:*

- 1) Hire one or two writers for training manual and workbook rewrites.
- 2) Add the 1-2-3 Read model to existing tutor training manuals.
- 3) Add the 1-2-3- Read model to existing learner workbooks.
- 4) Print 30 new learner workbooks and 50 tutor training manuals each.
- 5) Add the 1-2-3 Read model to existing training seminars.
  - a. Develop video showcasing theorist Peter Segal to explain the new concepts.
  - b. Create role-play scenarios demonstrating 1-2-3 Read practices.
- 6) Add the 1-2-3 Read model to the existing tutor examination, incorporating role-play.
- 7) Hold the first T-T-T Accelerated seminar for a test group of 50 tutors.
- 8) Administer exam to potential tutors at 75% minimum score with 3 chances to pass.
- 9) Pair at least 30 graduated tutors with 30 learners and commence Section 1 for the pairs.
- 10) Instruct tutors to meet with their learners for 6 months, meeting twice per week, 2 hours per session, submitting monthly reports documenting hours and milestones.
- 11) Administer the standard Orange County reading comprehension and writing test to the first 30 learners to complete T-T-T Accelerated.

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<sup>4</sup> National Commission on Adult Literacy, 2008; Kirsch, Braun, Yamamoto, & Sum, 2007; Friedland, 1998

<sup>5</sup> Boyle, Patrick. "Ex-Convicts Connect With Kids." *Youth Today*, March 2001, p. 1

<sup>6</sup> Mike Dillon & Christina DiCaro, California Library Association Lobbyists, February 18, 2011

- 12) If at least 65% attain 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade reading level, apply for additional funding
- 13) Print 1000 new tutor training manuals and learner workbooks.
- 14) Implement the T-T-T Accelerated project as a permanent program.
- 15) Send press releases to major media outlets and literacy organizations announcing success.
- 16) Market learner workbooks, tutor training manuals and video to other literacy organizations for additional income.

*Outputs:* 30-learner test group receiving instruction, revenue from sale of training materials.

*Outcomes:* 65% of learners will reach 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade reading/writing levels at the end of 6 months.

### **Goals/Objectives**

**Goal:** Improve and update the quality of training for Orange County volunteer literacy tutors to maximize reading and writing levels among adult student recipients of the project.

**Objective:** Develop new training materials applying the 1-2-3 Read model, to increase expected reading/writing level by 1 grade within 6 months.

**Objective:** Create prototype interactive teach-the-teacher seminar incorporating the 1-2-3 Read model for 50 tutors to arm them with uniform teaching tools.

**Goal:** Implement testing for both tutors and learners of the Orange County T-T-T Accelerated project to ensure teaching competence and learner advancement.

**Objective:** Test 50 potential tutors to ensure teaching competence. Participants must score 75% with 3 chances to pass.

**Objective:** Administer standard Orange County reading/writing testing to measure whether at least 65% of learners reach the 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade level within 6 months.

### **Project Evaluation**

At the end of Section 1, we expect these quantitative results: 65% of the first 30 learners will test at 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade level. Read OC staff will conduct the exam using the Orange County reading comprehension and writing test with summative results collected on an Excel spreadsheet.

Read OC will continue to lead tutor trainings using the new materials and conduct evaluations at the end of each Section 1 period, and with continued success, T-T-T Accelerated will become a permanent part of Read OC's tutoring program.

### **Timeline/Work Plan**

- Within 3 months, new training materials, seminar and video will be produced.
- By month 4, 50 volunteer tutors will be recruited and trained.
- In the 5<sup>th</sup> month, 30 tutors and learners will be paired and commence Section 1 tutelage.
- In month 11, Section 1 ends and learners will be tested.
- Announce success to news outlets in month 12 if 65% of learners test at 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade level.

### **Future Funding**

Read OC expects to get continued support from Orange County, friends groups, other grants and private donations. If the project shows continued success, additional funding will come from the sale of tutor training manuals and learner workbooks to other literacy groups. In addition, we hope the California Literacy Campaign grant will not be cut.