



Providing adults who live in or near Ottawa County with an opportunity to improve and transform their lives by strengthening their reading and language fluency.

July 2025 Newsletter

Change a Life! Give Today!



Tutor Spotlight



Daniel Horne



During his years at the University of Michigan, Daniel Horne worked as an Academic Peer Advisor, helping students choose classes in Literature, Science and Arts. Upon his graduation in 2023 his neighbor, Peg Helmink, suggested tutoring. This started a journey not only with READ but as a paid Middle and High School tutor in math and other subjects.

Richelle Hofman remarks on Daniel's creativity in tutoring. He has been known to use ESPN and Harry Potter as well as the daily newspaper to meet his learners' needs. Daniel is currently tutoring 2 learners and has one on hold for a bit.

When asked about READ Ottawa Daniel states, "It is such important work! Learning about the backgrounds of my ESL learners and getting to teach and learn about topics relevant to all of us gives me purpose." Daniel has worked as a tutor for just over a year; we hope there are many more!

READ Ottawa Grads Shine



On June 3 the Midtown Center was the stage for Zeeland Adult Education's Graduation Ceremony. Two READ Ottawa learners lead and inspired the class of 2025 with speeches. (right to left: Miriam Jimenez, Arlen Silva Laguna) The stories they shared highlighted the deep impact of achieving their educational goals. One particularly moving testimony came from a single mother who reflected on how putting her education first-something she had long postponed- ultimately made her a better parent and role model.

READ Ottawa is honored to share in each of their journeys. Board, staff and tutors attended the event with joy and pride. READ Ottawa's program was influential in many of the lives celebrated that day. Here are the numbers:

- 7 learners graduated out of the ESL Program
- 4 learners honored by getting their Master's Degrees transferred to the U.S.
- 1 learner received a Dental Assistant certification
- 1 learner earned her Teacher Academy certification
- 1 learner graduated with a High School Diploma



June was a month full of celebration, pride, and powerful moments that reminded us just how transformative literacy can be. I had the honor of attending this year's Zeeland Adult Education Commencement, and it was truly a joy to witness the achievements of so many determined and resilient learners. It was a room filled with inspiration, shared by families, educators, and community partners alike.

We were also thrilled to celebrate Allegan Adult and Online Education with recent commencement. Many adult learners earned their GEDs—some fulfilling lifelong promises to themselves or loved ones. These are individuals who once left school early but returned with purpose. For them, the GED wasn't just a certificate; it was a symbol of perseverance, a second chance, and a step toward brighter futures. Each story, each diploma, represented a moment of pride that will stay with us all.

In June, we also launched our Literacy Champions campaign—an initiative that invites community members to make a long-term impact by becoming monthly donors. Literacy Champions pledge \$100 per month, which directly funds a full year of support for one tutor/learner pair. This includes:
Tutor training and continuing education
Learning materials such as workbooks, dictionaries, and flashcards
Testing and learner assessments
Individualized pairing and ongoing support for both tutor and learner

Becoming a Literacy Champion means investing in real people, real progress, and real community impact.

We're so proud of the work being done—and of the learners, tutors, and supporters who make it all possible. June was a reminder of how far we've come, and how many more lives we can touch with continued support.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us.



We are looking for **Literacy Champions** to support local adult learners and transform lives. **READ Ottawa** is the only nonprofit in Ottawa County offering free one on one literacy tutoring for adults.

Your \$100/month =

- Tutor Training & Education
- Learner Testing & Assessment
- Workbooks & Learning Materials
- Tutor/Learner Matching & Support

Interested in becoming a tutor? RSVP through one of the following:

Filling out the form at <https://readottawa.org/volunteer>

Email Lynn Groothuis at lynn@readottawa.org

Call Lynn at 616-414-0295

\$100 / month funds one tutor/learner pair for a year.

Local Learners.
Local Tutors.
100% Local Impact.

Scan QR Code to become a monthly donor



616-843-1470

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"The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled." Plutarch



Website: www.readottawa.org
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