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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.

August 2025 Newsletter

Change a Life! Give Today!

Tutor Spotlight



Amy Van Oordt



Amy Van Oordt began her relationship with READ Ottawa over 15 years ago, serving first as a tutor and then as the first secretary on the board of directors. She has taken breaks on and off throughout the years and has always been available to substitute when needed. Most recently, Amy has come out of tutor semi-retirement to take on a learner with whom she is a perfect fit.

Amy worked as an American Sign Language Interpreter for over 12 years. Currently she is employed by Loutit Library and is working in the Adult Services Department. Amy and her husband Steve have 2 grown children and 1 grand child and are happy to call Grand Haven their home.

Reading has always been Amy's love and helping another discover this joy was the reason she worked to overcome her nerves when beginning tutoring. Now she just loves those "lightbulb" moments and states, "Volunteering for READ is FUN! I am so grateful for every single minute I have given to READ."

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READ Ottawa Nursing Stories

2 learners in the READ Ottawa program have recently entered the health care work force as nurses. Both learners passed the TOEFL test with the help of tutors. The TOEFL test is an English language proficiency test that, once passed, allows some learners to use their licensure from a foreign country and practice in the U.S.

Learner "M" and her tutor **Peg Helmink** worked hard to pass the TOEFL and now "M" is practicing at Metro Health. She continues to work with Peg because her new goal is to go from her RN to her BSN.

Learner "H" is here in the U.S. with her family for 5 years. She deeply wanted to practice as an oncology nurse during this time so she could learn from American doctors and take this knowledge back to Korea when she returns. 2 tutors worked on different aspects of the TOEFL with "H". Both tutors **Pat Eidean** and **Mary Stitt** were thrilled with her passing score and excited about her employment with Trinity Health in Grand Rapids. READ Ottawa tutor **Michelle McArthur**, a former nurse, has now begun to work with "H" on prescription and drug pronunciation.

READ Ottawa is proud of the efforts of both learners and tutors and the teamwork it takes to help adults in the community find meaningful work.



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.

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"Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace." Confucius



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