



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.

January 2026 Newsletter

Change a Life! Give Today!



*Celebrating
the work of **Kate Ford**
READ Ottawa's
exiting
Social Media
Volunteer*

Kate Ford has worked behind the scenes for the past three years as READ Ottawa's Social Media Coordinator. Kate maintains READ's website and posts events and news to social media. Her work as a Digital Marketing Manager for a local agency as well as a marketing freelancer for The Sharp End podcast fills her days and somehow she has managed to use her talents to promote READ Ottawa in her spare time.

Kate grew up in East Lansing and received her B.A. from MSU. A lifetime learner, she also is a certified pastry chef and continues to explore various arts and crafts like felting, embroidery and pour painting. Kate also loves to discover the outdoors with her rescue dog, Emmett, and care for her rescue kitties, Hobbes and Olivia.

When asked why she volunteered for READ Kate says, "I had actually never heard of READ Ottawa until I came across an Indeed post for the volunteer social media position. Once I learned more about what READ does, I knew I wanted to get involved. I can't imagine a world without reading, and I wanted to support a mission that helps neighbors in my community achieve their literacy goals. Literacy is so important; it impacts confidence, job opportunities, and much more. I'm honored to have served over the past three years and hope that my work on the social media side has made a meaningful impact."

Thank you, Kate Ford! Your work has made READ Ottawa shine.

SAVE THE DATE!



9TH ANNUAL SCRABBLE TOURNAMENT

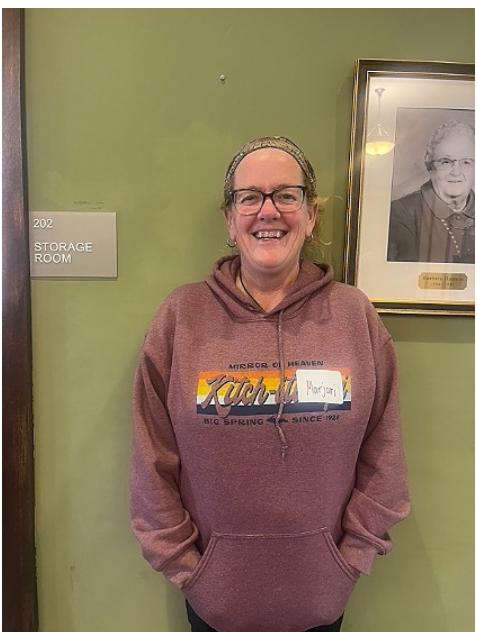
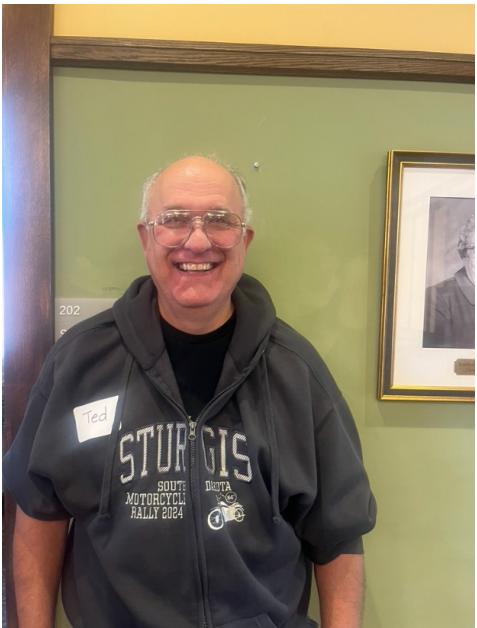
Thursday, April 23 at the Grand Haven Eagles

MORE DETAILS TO COME!

*All proceeds will support READ's efforts
to strengthen reading and language skills of adults in Ottawa County!*



Allegan READ Program spins off on its own



Read Ottawa began a Pilot Program with Allegan Adult Education in 2024. The program was designed to help Allegan create and maintain a tutoring program of its own. Since the short partnership was formed, READ trained 13 tutors and over 150 hours of volunteer work was done. Even more impressive are the learner results:

2 learners passed the GED
3 learners graduated from adult education
and one learner significantly improved his job situation

In just a year and a half this pilot program's impact in the community has created the energy for Allegan to spin the program off on its own. Richelle Hofman's work with the tutor matches has set a solid foundation for Allegan's program to grow. We look forward to news of further impact in the Allegan community as literacy levels are raised with one on one tutoring.

READ Ottawa

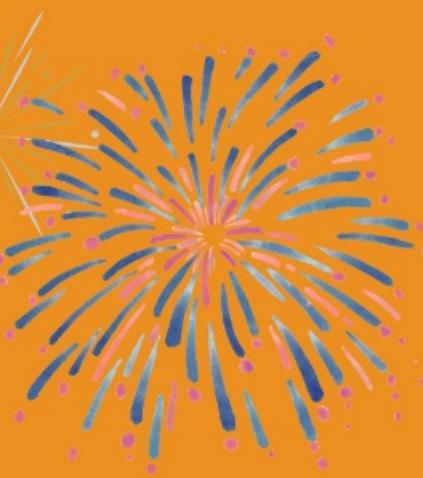
2025 Stats

64 new learners

37 goals reached

94 tutors

3,300+ hours





A New Year Rooted in Hope

The start of a new year invites reflection, fresh goals, and most importantly – hope. At READ Ottawa, hope shows up everyday in quiet but powerful ways. Hope – An adult opening a book with confidence for the first time. Hope – A parent reading alongside their child. Hope – a learner finding the confidence to use their voice at work.

As we step into this new year, we are reminded that progress doesn't always happen in big leaps. It happens one page at a time, one conversation at a time, one positively supported relationship at a time. That is where hope lives – in steady encouragement and belief that growth is possible at any age.

Why READ Ottawa Tutors Matter More Than Ever

Adult literacy is about much more than reading and writing skills. Research consistently shows that one-on-one tutoring is one of the most effective ways for adults to build confidence, retain skills, and stay motivated. Our tutors provide consistency, patience, and trust. The three ingredients that are essential for adult learners who may carry past educational challenges or self-doubt.

At READ Ottawa, our tutors don't just teach literacy skills, they help learners rebuild confidence and open doors to greater independence. This personalized support allows learners to move at their own pace, celebrate small victories, and stay engaged over time. Simply put, tutors are the heart of READ Ottawa.

As we look ahead, we are hopeful because of people like you, those who believe in second chances, lifelong learning, and the power of community. Together, we are building a year filled with opportunity, connection, and brighter futures for adults and their families across Ottawa County.

Join Pivot Group and become one of our Corporate Sponsors!



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

"Kindness can become its own motive. We are made kind by being kind." Eric Hoffer



Website: www.readottawa.org

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