Dear Friends:

In 2013, we interviewed key stakeholders of the Community Foundation of Greater Flint (CFGF) to better understand the Foundation’s value to the community. The reviews were favorable. However, missing in these responses was the identification of a signature area of impact. This led the CGFG board of trustees to “put a stake in the ground” on one community issue.

As part of the subsequent strategic planning process, we formed a task force to identify our stake in the ground issue. In December 2013, that task force recommended to the board to put a stake in the ground on literacy. Why literacy? We had come to understand the strong connection to literacy rates and economic self-sufficiency and overall quality of life. The task force saw literacy as a foundational issue that could have far-reaching impact and dramatically improve people’s lives throughout Genesee County.

In June 2014, Literacy Powerline, a national organization that helps communities improve literacy rates, met with our board and encouraged them to embrace this goal by focusing our time, talent and treasure on building a literacy network. Research shows that communities that make significant progress in improving literacy rates do so because they have a literacy coalition that engages a multitude of stakeholders in the work.

Fast forward three years. We have continued forward progress through the Water Crisis. And we have created this report to offer an interim, qualitative assessment designed to summarize what has transpired with our focus on literacy. We know that changing literacy rates takes decades to accomplish, but it is important that we capture what has happened during CFGF’s initial investment period.

We have many miles to go before we will see the kind of big change we intend to bring about. This report highlights some early successes as evidence that even in the early stages of this work, our investments in literacy are changing lives. We want you to hear the stories of Dianndra and Angela as examples of the people whose lives these investments have already touched, people whose life trajectories have been significantly altered as a result of our investments in literacy.

Eventually we will be able to take these changes to scale. But for now, we encourage readers to celebrate our short-term victories as we tackle one of the most complex, entrenched challenges of our community.

And know, we’ve only just begun.

Kathi Horton, Past President
Isaiah Oliver, President & CEO
LOCAL LANDSCAPE

The Flint community has been managing a variety of challenges for many years, including a county-wide decline in population, aging infrastructure, lack of access to healthy food, and ongoing changes to state-level funding streams. All of these issues and others have affected community literacy in Flint.

Flint once had 200,000 residents; today that number is less than half as large. Over time, layoffs have led to fewer residents and a massive reduction in the tax-base. This tax loss links directly to education and library funding in Genesee County. In 2009, for example, the Flint Public Library operated with an annual budget of $4.7 million, with one main location and three branches. Today, that budget has been cut by 40 percent, forcing the closure of the three branches, a reduction in library staff, and reduced hours at one location to serve nearly 100,000 people. Despite the library’s efforts, which are monumental for its size and budget, Genesee County residents have reduced access to books and educational programming. In addition, according to recent U.S. Census data:

40.1 percent of Flint’s population was living in poverty in 2013 — similar to Detroit’s rate of 39.3 percent and far higher than Michigan’s 16.2 percent poverty rate — making Flint the second most poverty-stricken city in the nation for its size.

In 2015, 130,095 people in Genesee County were using food stamp assistance compared with 87,847 in 2005.

The median income for Flint residents between 2009 and 2013 was $24,834 a year. The state’s median income was $48,411.

Since 2005, an estimated 5,000 abandoned homes have been demolished in the city.

Flint Community Schools lost its seat as the largest school district in the county to Grand Blanc. In 2014, Flint had a little more than 300 high school graduates while Grand Blanc had more than 600.

In 2012, Dr. Richard Shaink, President of Mott Community College, had become increasingly concerned that many high school graduates were beginning postsecondary education not fully literate. As part of the Achieving the Dream initiative, a national program designed to help community college students pursue their dreams, Dr. Shaink and his team disaggregated local data that determined many students were placing into developmental classes. He convened community leaders to discuss literacy work in Genesee County, including the libraries, the school system, a local literacy coalition and the foundation community. The City of Flint was the first major funder of literacy efforts through Community Development Block Grant dollars. A Literacy Summit was convened, which raised the profile of Literacy efforts in Flint, and began conversations in earnest with the United Way of Genesee County, the C.S. Mott Foundation and the Community Foundation of Greater Flint.
Mott Community College has experienced, first hand, the consequences of low literacy. Remedial basic skills courses are required for many entering students. Remedial courses prove to be expensive, both for the college and for the students who can exhaust their financial aid resources before they begin regular coursework. The result is low graduation rates for those students entering without strong literacy skills.

“When you invest in the infrastructure it allows you to bring people together to be able to influence not only where existing resources are being directed, but also who can think differently about new resources. It takes longer to build a network as a sustainable entity, but if it does happen and it happens properly, those that are at the provider level should be able to get the resources that they need and be more effective at what they are doing.”

By 2013, when CFGF put its “stake in the ground” on literacy, it was to find innovative ways to respond to this new landscape, urgent needs and smaller budgets. We knew that to have strong families and vibrant communities in the future, we needed to invest in literacy today. We also needed to better prepare our students so that they were ready for college coursework and professional training, and didn’t expend years of financial aid on remedial classes that did not count toward a degree or certificate. We were ready to move — with a collective impact model — and we had gotten the ball rolling in the right direction. Soon, we were able to support the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network, which was created to engage a variety of community stakeholder organizations, strengthen ongoing collaboration, and improve literacy resources and services in the region. Currently, it coordinates the work of more than 100 direct service providers that serve residents throughout Genesee County.
The Flint Water Crisis demanded that we respond to the profound outpouring of local and national support for Flint’s children exposed to lead. It also shined a bright spotlight on Genesee County’s need for high-quality early childhood learning and literacy programs, echoing what we learned from the community in 2013. Fortunately, our community-building efforts before the Water Crisis gave us a strong foundation, as we were better organized, experienced and already working together. As a result of all of these factors, our literacy work has more momentum now than ever before. CFGF continues to play the role of facilitator and connector for our literacy providers and partners, and we remain committed to “catalytic philanthropy.” We are still fighting fiercely for the future of Flint.

“Literacy efforts go right in line with the vision we have for our library in this community. When the Literacy Network began, we were also doing strategic planning due to the Library’s budget cuts. The Literacy Network helped us be strategic in where to put our efforts.” The Network, in bringing partners together to collaborate, allows groups to see where there are gaps and services and also duplication of efforts. These collaborative relationships allowed the Library to feel confident in focusing on its specialties, early literacy and digital literacy.

The Library has faced tremendous budget cuts over the last nine years, which led to the closing of all three branch libraries and reduced hours at the main branch. “Once we closed our branches and noticed library participation was shrinking, we knew we had to do something. We decided that if the public can’t come to us, then we’re going to go to them.” The Library now implements “Every Child Ready to Read” events at Flint Housing Sites, YouthQuest afterschool enrichment, Y Safe Places, community and neighborhood events, and the Police Athletic Leagues.

Leslie Acevedo
Director of Library Operations,
Flint Public Library
THE FLINT WATER CRISIS

For the Community Foundation team and our partners, the Water Crisis demanded a sophisticated, nimble, high-impact response. Our days turned from implementing proactive strategies to crisis management — fielding phone calls, developing new tools and pooling resources. We had just rolled up our sleeves to address the literacy crisis when the Water Crisis hit — a lot for any one community to manage.

The effects of lead poisoning can be disastrous — especially to children. Realizing this fact, Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, whose research brought light to the crisis, established the Flint Child Health and Development Fund at the Community Foundation. The purpose of the Fund, also known as the Flint Kids Fund, is to serve the long-term health and development needs of Flint children exposed to lead.

Dr. Mona’s national television appearances helped to activate the generosity of people from every state and 15 countries around the globe. Students, families, churches, foundations, businesses, celebrities, and sports figures all wrapped their generous spirit around Flint children and have contributed over $19 million to the Flint Child Health and Development Fund.

In turn, nearly $4 million has been granted back to the community, including $516,700 in support for early childhood literacy programs like the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and $360,000 for Cummings Great Expectation Early Childhood Center.

Today we are just now reemerging on the other side, able to deepen our focus on literacy. And the silver lining of the Water Crisis is that our community is more aligned, driven and resilient than ever before. The average person sees the benefit of offering quality literacy programming, and we know that investments in literacy will play a critical role in ensuring that Flint children have the resources and support they need to live healthy and happy lives.
TIMELINE  
CFGF Literacy Investments in Genesee County

**SUMMER 2013**  
- CFGF board formalizes strategy to put a “stake in the ground” on one community issue.

**FALL 2013**  
- CFGF board votes to make literacy its stake in the ground issue to improve literacy rates in Genesee County, particularly in Flint’s areas of greatest need. The approach will be multi-generational and align with other CFGF grantmaking programs, including its five Community Funds.

**SPRING 2014**  
- CFGF enlists national literacy expert Literacy Powerline to help support the work of the Flint and Genesee County Literacy & Basic Skills Network led by Mott Community College. Together the group forms a Steering Committee of local leaders to work directly with Literacy Powerline, which includes CFGF’s President and Vice President of Community Impact.

- CFGF makes its first literacy grants totaling $58,000 to three local organizations helping to improve literacy rates with residents of all ages.

**SUMMER 2014**  
- In collaboration with Literacy Powerline and the Steering Committee, CFGF decides to adopt a “catalytic philanthropy” approach and to build a broad-based literacy network as its primary investment strategy.

- CFGF makes grant of $77,000 to Mott Community College (grant 1 of 4) to support additional work with Literacy Powerline and to hire a full-time director of the growing literacy network.

**FALL 2014**  
- Ja’Nel Jamerson is hired to serve as director of the Flint and Genesee County Literacy & Basic Skills Network.

- Literacy Powerline launches a six-month community planning process that engages hundreds of individuals and organizations across Genesee County.

**SPRING 2015**  
- Planning concludes. The Network announces focus on family literacy and youth tutoring/mentoring; renames the coalition as Flint & Genesee Literacy Network; embraces “action teams” as initial strategic framework.

- CFGF forms internal Literacy Task Force with representation from all CFGF advisory committees to align across the foundation and maximize impact.

**SUMMER 2015**  
- CFGF makes a grant of $105,000 (grant 2 of 4) to fund operations of the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network, and supports expansion of the Michigan Reading Corp in Flint Community Schools.

**FALL 2015**  
- Network launches public awareness campaign focused on literacy. CFGF establishes Literacy for Life Fund, a non-endowed fund to support the non-profit partners of the Network. The CFGF 2015 year-end appeal letter focuses on this Fund.

- Flint & Genesee Literacy Network joins the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, a collaborative effort by more than 300 communities across the U.S. to ensure that more children in low-income families are reading at grade level by the end of third grade and armed for long-term success.
Network partner Christ Enrichment Center pilots a **Family Literacy Program** following guidelines identified by the National Center for Families Learning. *Testimonials from two graduates of this program are included in this report.*

Network partner Flint Institute of Arts receives a mini-grant to develop take-home kits for the Success through Art initiative. They begin to host Parent and Child Together Time activities through the Family Literacy pilot program.

Network partner Flint Public Library launches the *Read While You Wait* initiative in one barbershop in Flint. Literacy Network Early Childhood Action Team members recommend expanding to 10 sites throughout Genesee County.

**Spring 2016**

- Flint Institute of Arts distributes 500+ take-home kits through local Early Learning Centers.

**Summer 2016**

- CFGF makes third grant of $137,000 (grant 3 of 4) to the Network, allowing the group to hire additional staff members, develop new programs, and measure Network impact in new ways.

- The Literacy Network and the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce co-host the first Summer Learning Professionals Conference to provide high-quality professional development opportunities for youth-serving providers. The event draws nearly 200 leaders from more than 30 organizations.

- In collaboration with partners, the Literacy Network and the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Flint & Genesee County host *National Summer Learning Day: Passport to Learning* focused on stemming summer learning loss.

**Fall 2016**

- Literacy Network partners launch the *Flint Kids Read* initiative to provide access to age-appropriate reading material to Flint children. The Flint Public Library is selected as a “local champion” for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

**Spring 2017**

- Dolly Parton Imagination Library enrollment reaches 2,000+ Flint children and families. The Literacy Network presents at the bi-annual *Homecomin’ Conference* for the Dollywood Foundation.

- Flint Public Library’s *Read While You Wait* initiative reaches eight sites.

- The Literacy Network now includes a full-time director of programs, a coordinator of community impact and an operations manager. The Network steering committee continues to grow.

- The Network enlists PolicyLink, a national collective impact expert, to help support the growth of the Network and grow capacity to maximize impact.

- Flint & Genesee Literacy Network receives the “Pacesetter Honor” from the national *Campaign for Grade-Level Reading*.

- The Network establishes its cradle-to-career Continuum of Solutions, reflecting the original commitment of all partners to 1) family literacy and 2) two-generation strategies, including tutoring, mentoring, etc.

**Summer 2017**

- CFGF makes fourth grant of $136,500 (grant 4 of 4) to sustain the Literacy Network’s staff capacity. In addition, partners and providers within the Network boost support throughout the cradle-to-career continuum, and target populations to ensure the most vulnerable learners are connected to the literacy services they need.
# INVESTMENTS IN LITERACY

Community Foundation of Greater Flint and Foundation for Flint as of June 30, 2017

### 2014

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<tr>
<th>Grantee</th>
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### 2015

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<td>Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Michigan-Flint</td>
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<td>United Way of Genesee County</td>
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<td>C.S. Mott Community College</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Way of Genesee County</td>
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<td>Young Men’s Christian Association of Flint</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christ Enrichment Center</td>
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<td>Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint</td>
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<td><strong>CFGF Grant Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$205,673</strong></td>
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In 2016, the Carnegie Corporation of New York made a $1 million investment in early childhood education and literacy efforts in Flint. They made their grant to the Foundation for Flint as part of the philanthropic response to the Water Crisis inspired by the C.S. Mott Foundation’s Recover and Rise initiative. We are grateful for their support and for the leadership of the C.S. Mott Foundation.

### 2016

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grantee</th>
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<tr>
<td>University of Michigan-Flint</td>
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<td>Christ Enrichment Center, Inc.</td>
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### 2017

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<td>Genesee Intermediate School District</td>
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<td><strong>Foundation for Flint Grant Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$919,000</strong></td>
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**TOTAL INVESTMENT $2,524,690**

Also in 2016, following the declarations of emergency from each Flint Mayor Weaver, Michigan Governor Snyder and President Obama, CFGF established the Foundation for Flint and the Flint Child Health and Development Fund (the Fund) to help respond to the water crisis, and to serve as primary recipient for the outpouring of national support and connector of resources for the greater community. The Foundation for Flint is a supporting organization of CFGF and administers the Fund, which was founded under the leadership of local civic leaders and Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha — the pediatrician and humanitarian who brought the Water Crisis to national attention. The Fund raises money to mitigate the impact of the water crisis on children ages 0-8 and is the ultimate destination for gifts made at www.flintkids.org.
Dianndra Davis is a single mother of two children. When she first came to Christ Enrichment Center (CEC), Dianndra was homeless, without a job, had an unresolved legal issue, and was not spending quality time with her children. Through the support of CEC, Dianndra and her children are now living on their own, she is on her way to finishing her GED, her legal issues are resolved, she has a fulfilling and well-paid job, and she is invested in her children's lives. At age 25, she is experiencing rewarding parenting, job satisfaction, financial security and life stability.

In addition to her GED courses, Dianndra learned practical skills at CEC, like personal finance and healthy cooking classes. She also learned the value of spending time with her children, explaining that “we took our children to the museum, the library, to Disney on Ice, to the Saginaw Zoo—we went everywhere” with CEC. Before the Family Literacy program, “I wasn’t taking my kids to the library. I wasn’t reading to them, I wasn’t helping with homework. Now I spend more quality time with my kids. I make sure I’m doing things with them throughout the week, like I’ll take them for a bike ride. I never spent a lot of time with them before and now I do.”

As with other students, CEC helped Dianndra gain employment. They also arranged for a Saturday morning tutor, which has kept her working and on track to graduate.

Reflecting on the value of this program, Dianndra explained, “There are a lot of single mothers out there with no help. CEC is giving them opportunities to get their GED, to get jobs, to get closer to their families, to be better moms. Family Literacy is helping. It’s getting little girls like me big jobs.”
SUPPORTING THE FLINT & GENESEE LITERACY NETWORK

As mentioned earlier, the Community Foundation made its first grant to Mott Community College in the summer of 2014 to help build a broad-based literacy network. Continued funding of the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network remains our primary investment strategy for improving literacy rates in Genesee County.

In addition to financial support, the Community Foundation has made an “all-in” commitment that has taken the form of strong leadership participation on the Network’s steering committee, extensive staff involvement in the community planning process during the launch of the Network, and continued participation at the implementation level through the Network’s action teams.

In just three short years, the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network has become nationally recognized, receiving the Grade-Level Reading Campaign 2016 Pacesetter Honor for demonstrating exemplary work in the Campaign’s framework for success, scale and sustainability. Pacesetters are part of a nationwide network of more than 300 GLR Campaign communities dedicated to narrowing the achievement gap of children from low-income families.

We are pleased to highlight the work of the Network, its partner organizations which signify the strength of the Network, the generosity of other funders that have invested in the Network’s formation and success, and finally testimonials from participants in the Network’s programs. These individuals are transforming themselves and our community.

Professor Todd Womack is dedicated to literacy. “Community Reads is not only about improving literacy, but also about approaching deep issues that impact the Flint community. “We want to bring people together and build relationships. And within those relationships we want to begin to wrestle with issues that face our community—you can’t do that on an island.”

The Literacy Network has also been instrumental in helping to connect “Community Reads” to other Literacy organizations. “It’s a really synergistic approach to see how literacy organizations can come together and support one another. It’s an organic approach, but it’s also intentional about working with other partners who are also tackling literacy.”

TODD WOMACK
ACADEMIC ADVISOR AND LECTURER, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT
LITERACY NETWORK — FOCUS

Embarking on its fourth year of operations, the Literacy Network is focused on well-coordinated two-generation interventions, ensuring there are ‘literacy-rich’ environments during pivotal early years of childhood, and for parents who struggle with their own literacy. Additionally, the Network is focused on grade-level reading throughout K-12 — all with an eye on college without remediation. We are making early progress and experiencing much momentum, but to truly move the needle and improve literacy rates for the region, we must look years into the future.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT IN THE LITERACY NETWORK

**FY 2014 June 2014 — June 2015**

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**TOTAL INVESTMENT $1,371,920**
Community Results and Solutions

School Readiness

Children Enter School Ready to Learn

- Children engage in Book Rich Environments
- Children engage in quality Early Learning Programs
- Parents/Caregivers receive quality Parent Education

School Success

Children Succeed in School

- Parents/Caregivers receive quality Parent Education
- Children receive quality Out-of-School Time Learning
- Children receive quality Tutoring and/or Mentoring
The Network is focused on the four stages of growth below: kindergarten readiness, school success, post-secondary readiness, and gainful employment. The chart explains the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network’s approach, and includes its collaborative strategies and performance measures.

**Post Secondary Success**

- Parents/Caregivers receive quality Training and Workforce Education
- Parents/Caregivers receive quality Remediation and Mentoring Services

**Gainful Employment**

- People are Gainfully Employed

**People are Prepared for and are Succeeding in Post-Secondary Education**

- Parents/Caregivers receive quality Remediation and Mentoring Services
Angela Baker is a recent graduate of Christ Enrichment Center’s Family Literacy program. Within nine months, she completed her GED, a task she had tried to tackle several times previously. She brought her reading level from a 5th to a 12th-grade level, and entered a Medical Assistant Program. Today Ms. Baker is supporting her children with a Medical Assistant career in Urgent Care and no longer receiving public assistance. She has her sights set on Nursing School, a dream since childhood that now feels attainable, she explained, through tears.

“I always told myself when I was growing up I would go into the medical field. But I wasn’t able to because I was only 16 when I had my first son and my mom died when I was 15. It was hard and it pushed me out of school because I didn’t have help. As I grew up I kept trying the GED programs but nothing worked.”

Angela cherished her educational experiences, “With all the experiences I had with going to school, I loved it so much. It was so amazing. It was so amazing. It is something I always wanted to do.”

The CEC Family Literacy Program was distinctive from other programs Angela had tried because of its flexibility. Angela could bring her children with her if necessary, or take work home if a conflict arose.

Angela’s children have benefited beyond the financial improvement in the household. The children observed their mother complete something difficult and new—and Angela’s 10-year-old daughter has a new goal for herself: Nursing School. Angela explained, “She now wants to go to Nursing School. She loves it.” And her confidence has risen, “I’m proud of myself. I did it. And I just thank Ms. Connelly for everything. I wouldn’t be where I am at without her.”

A CRITICAL COMPONENT AT THE CEC WAS THE MENTORSHIP, SUPPORT, AND EVEN TOUGH-LOVE SHE RECEIVED FROM HER GED TEACHER MS. CONNELLY. “MS. CONNELLY, SHE PUSHED ME. SHE PUSHED ME WHERE I NEEDED IT. I GIVE ALL CREDIT TO MS. CONNELLY. I STILL TALK TO MS. CONNELLY TO THIS DAY BECAUSE SHE HELPED ME. ‘KEEP GOING, YOU GOT IT! I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT,’ AND I TELL MY CHILDREN EVERY DAY THAT I DID IT ALL FOR THEM.”

Angela Baker is a recent graduate of Christ Enrichment Center’s Family Literacy program. Within nine months, she completed her GED, a task she had tried to tackle several times previously. She brought her reading level from a 5th to a 12th-grade level, and entered a Medical Assistant Program. Today Ms. Baker is supporting her children with a Medical Assistant career in Urgent Care and no longer receiving public assistance. She has her sights set on Nursing School, a dream since childhood that now feels attainable, she explained, through tears.

“I always told myself when I was growing up I would go into the medical field. But I wasn’t able to because I was only 16 when I had my first son and my mom died when I was 15. It was hard and it pushed me out of school because I didn’t have help. As I grew up I kept trying the GED programs but nothing worked.”

Angela cherished her educational experiences, “With all the experiences I had with going to school, I loved it so much. It was so amazing. *It was so amazing.* It is something I always wanted to do.”

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**PARTNERS — FLINT & GENESEE LITERACY NETWORK**

Listed below are community organizations that, in 2016 and 2017 alone, participated in Literacy Network convenings and/or contributed to the development and implementation of Network strategies.

**LOCAL**
- ABC-12
- Asbury United Methodist Church
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Flint & Genesee County
- Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint
- Brownell-Holmes Neighborhood Advisory Council
- Catholic Charities
- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- Child Care Network
- Child Connect for Family Success
- Christ Enrichment Center
- City of Flint-Community & Economic Development
- City of Flint-Office of Mayor Dr. Karen Weaver
- Community Foundation of Greater Flint
- Community-Based Organization Partners
- Congressman Dan Kildee, MI-05
- Crim Fitness Foundation
- Crossover Downtown Outreach
- Diplomat Pharmacy
- ELGA Credit Union
- Evergreen Community Development
- Evidence-Based Learning Instruction
- Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce
- Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce: Education & Learning Division
- Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce: YouthQuest
- Flint & Genesee Opportunity Youth Coalition
- Flint Area Youth Groups
- Flint Children’s Museum
- Flint Community Schools: Administration
- Flint Community Schools: Brownell-Holmes Elem.
- Flint Institute of Arts
- Flint Public Library
- Flint/Genesee Job Corps
- Genesee County Catholic Schools
- Genesee County Health Department
- Genesee County Literacy Coalition
- Genesee County Parks
- Genesee District Library
- Genesee Intermediate School District: Administration
- Genesee Intermediate School District: Early Learning
- Genesee Intermediate School District: Nutrition
- Genesee Valley Rotary
- Genesee-Shiawassee Michigan Works
- Greater Flint Health Coalition
- Hagerman Foundation
- Hamilton Community Health Network
- Huntington Bank
- Hurley Children’s Hospital
- International Academy of Flint
- Kettering University
- Landaal Packaging
- Linda A. Pohly P.C.
- MADE Institute
- McLaren Foundation
- Metro Community Development
- Michigan Department of Human Services
- Michigan Reading Corps
- Michigan State University
- MLive Group (Flint Journal)
- Mott Community College
- MY-Flint My Brother’s Keeper
- National Heritage Academies-Burton Glenn
- New Jerusalem Baptist Church
- Olmsted Associates, Inc.
- Priority Children
- RAISE IT UP! Youth Arts & Awareness
- Rotary Club of Flint
- Rowe Professional Services Company
- Ruth Mott Foundation
- Sloan*Longway
- The Disability Network
- United Way of Genesee County
- University of Michigan-Flint Office of Educational Opportunity Initiatives
- University of Michigan-Flint Office of University Outreach
- University of Michigan-Flint School of Education & Human Services
- University of Michigan-Flint Administration
- WOW Outreach

**NATIONAL**
- Aspen Institute - Ascend Network
- Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
- Clear Impact (Formerly Results Leadership Group)
- Dollywood Foundation
- Educational Alliance of New York
- National Center for Families Learning (NCFL)
- PolicyLink - Promise
- Neighborhood Institute
- National Head Start Association

**LITERACY NETWORK STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Kathi Horton**, Steering Committee Chair, Flint & Genesee Literacy Network

**Jennifer Acree**, Associate Program Officer, C.S. Mott Foundation

**Robert Matthews**, Associate Vice President of Workforce Development, Mott Community College

**Isaiah Oliver**, President and CEO, Community Foundation of Greater Flint

**Kay Schwartz**, Director, Flint Public Library

**Todd Slisher**, Executive Director, Sloan-Longway Interim COO, Flint Cultural Center Corporation

**Marjory Raymer**, Publisher & Managing Editor, *Flintside* Magazine

**Jamie-Lee Venable**, Director of Community Impact, United Way of Genesee County
LOOKING AHEAD

Our goal is to ensure all children have what they need to succeed in life. We want them prepared for kindergarten, to excel in school throughout grades K-12, to have options and support for any post-secondary path they choose, and to have secure jobs that pay a living wage as adults.

This is our dream, and our vision for Flint and Genesee County. As a community, the only way to bring this vision to life — for all residents — is to align as a collective force and make literacy a central priority.

We are hopeful. The momentum guiding the Literacy Network is a source of optimism for all those who wish to see the residents of Genesee County prosper. The stories reflected herein are only a small sample, and show that the collective impact approach is helping change lives. As Robert Matthews noted, “We had a commitment early on to bring community-wide awareness to literacy. I think that has happened, and I think we are keeping it in the forefront of people’s minds.” As the Network moves into the full implementation phase, it does so with community support, practitioner engagement and promising results from pilot programs.

We are also guided by the core values that have always been present in our community but have emerged in earnest in recent years, across sectors and organizations. There is an optimism, momentum and energy behind this collective effort, and a new focus on quality programming and measurable results. There are fewer silos and barriers, and in their place we are building teams and collaborative infrastructure. We are also operating with a stronger sense of urgency, and a renewed drive to implement successful programs at scale, ultimately to serve the youth in Genesee County who deserve every possible opportunity to live their best possible lives.

OUR GOAL IS TO ENSURE ALL CHILDREN HAVE WHAT THEY NEED TO SUCCEED IN LIFE.
Support the Literacy for Life Fund at www.cfgf.org.