

# Life Goals *achieved!* at Blue Ridge Literacy

The 2017-2018 year was a time of transition at Blue Ridge Literacy. We hired our first instructors, Ramey Ferrell and Mary Lowder, offered three levels of English classes, and trained volunteers determined to bring good into their community. We also hired a new Executive Director, the previous Program

Director, Stephanie Holladay. Sara Geres became the new Program Director, while Office Manager Robin Allison helped everyone in the office work as efficiently as possible. Amidst so many changes, our literacy learners continued to improve their English skills and reach their life goals.

## LEARNERS

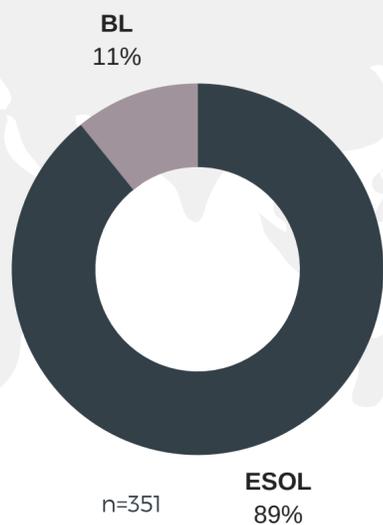
**87**  
improved reading level

**7**  
became US citizens

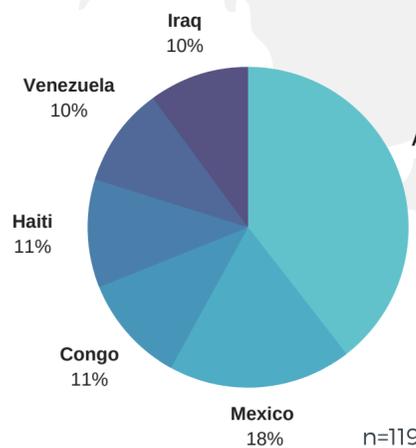
**154**  
worked with a 1:1 tutor

**152**  
enrolled in ESOL classes

**18**  
achieved employment



Roanoke's diverse immigrant and refugee community is reflected in the students we see at BRL. 89% of our population are ESOL learners



Our ESOL learners came from 60 countries last year. The top countries represented were Afghanistan, Mexico, Congo, Haiti, Iraq, and Venezuela

## VOLUNTEERS

**8,446** total volunteer hours

Our volunteers gave almost an entire year's worth of instruction to over 350 literacy learners.

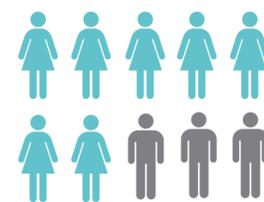
That's a **\$208,531.74** investment into our community.

**168**  
total # of literacy volunteers

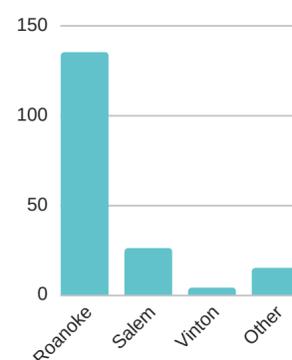
**97**  
new volunteers engaged

**100%**  
of volunteers who left in 2017 completed their commitment

Who volunteers?



Women make up 71% of volunteers at BRL n=168



Most BRL literacy volunteers live in Roanoke City n=180

Life goals through literacy

# Life Goals *achieved!*



Your generous support helped over 350 adult learners last year. Thank you!



The community participates in an Arabic Lesson at the Roanoke Main Library, taught by one of BRL's Advanced Egyptian learners



Francine from the Democratic Republic of Congo reads her story at the Annual Celebration



Volunteers and learners, like Sadia from Sudan, gather for a Holiday Potluck in December 2017



Honoring Russ Merritt for 8 years of service as Executive Director at BRL



Executive Director Stephanie Holladay makes opening remarks at the March 2018 Scrabble Tournament



Program Director Sara Geres and Lead Teacher Mary Lowder lead an activity during Volunteer Training



BRL volunteer Rolphine, originally from Haiti, becomes an American citizen



A very happy Ramadhan (right) and his wife, Evelyne, during Ramadhan's naturalization ceremony in April 2018



After countless hours studying, Hanaa is a proud US citizen



Johari gives Program Director Sara a gift on her last day before starting her job at the hospital



Donsha is all smiles with his tutor Clare after announcing he has a job at a local restaurant



Sumitra from Nepal achieves perfect attendance during BRL's Spring ESOL Class