

PROJECT Uplift

Literacy is the Key to Success



Roots and WingsSM

Introduction

Project UpLift is a free, intensive, small group, after-school tutoring program, targeted at struggling 1st through 4th grade readers attending 8 Title One schools in Boca Raton, Delray Beach and Boynton Beach. Title One schools are those schools where 75% or more of students receive free or reduced priced lunch.

Launched in 2017 at Pine Grove Elementary School in Delray Beach, the Project UpLift program has grown from serving 30 students at one school to serving 540 students at 8 schools in the 2021-2022 school year. The students served may not have a bed to sleep in, they may not have enough to eat at home and they may have parents for whom English is not the primary language.

Project UpLift is unique. The program is taught by certified teachers from the students' home school in small groups of 10 or less. The teachers are supervised by a literacy coach at each school, and Project UpLift is overseen by our Program Director to ensure quality and consistency. The teaching team is familiar with students' learning styles and challenges, and groups them to personalize learning according to student needs.

The most recent statistics show that only 54% of third grade students in Palm Beach County can pass the Florida Standards Assessment in reading. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that 90% of students attending the schools we serve are able to pass this crucial test. Literacy is the key that opens the door to academic success.



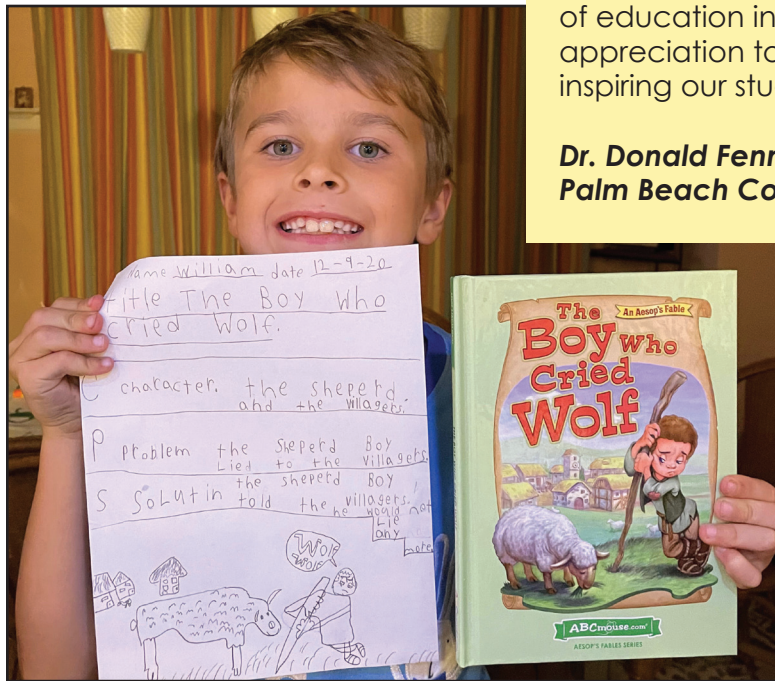
"Roots and Wings is such an asset to our community. Project UpLift has amazing results in helping our local students increase their reading skills. We love that Roots and Wings' Above and Beyond Awards support our true community heroes – The Teachers!"

Lindy Harvey, Spirit of Giving Network

"Roots and Wings' mission matters for its impact on education and the benefits it provides for our children, but it also matters for its impact on economic opportunity. Students who are not reading proficiently in third grade are four times more likely to not graduate high school, and 88% of students who failed to earn a diploma were struggling readers in 3rd grade."

**Ellen Okrent, CEO, Florence Fuller
Child Development Center**





"Roots and Wings, through its Above and Beyond Teacher and Staff Recognition Program and Project UpLift, improves the quality of education in Palm Beach County by recognizing and showing appreciation to our dedicated teachers and by supporting and inspiring our students. I am grateful for this unwavering support."

Dr. Donald Fennoy II, Superintendent, School District of Palm Beach County



"I have been fortunate to become involved with Roots and Wings. Typically, teachers are overlooked for their dedication and commitment. It has never been more apparent than during the pandemic how critical our teachers are. Roots and Wings' Above and Beyond Awards are making a difference in the classroom by acknowledging teachers and all they do for our future generation."

Gary Hildebrand, 2020-2021 Club President, Rotary Club of Boca Raton



"Orchard View needed a village to help it transform from a 'D' rated school to a 'B' rated school over the last four years. Roots and Wings was, and still is, a critical partner in this journey that we couldn't live without. They not only provided the Project UpLift reading tutorial program, but also lifted the culture of the school through the Above and Beyond awards for teachers which include some very valuable incentives. Great instruction, great culture, an amazing partner in Roots and Wings!"

Lisa Lee, Principal, Orchard View Elementary

"Roots and Wings' work is important to public education because they bring awareness and research-based academic programming to schools that need community support and involvement. Putting actions into words is what Roots and Wings represents."

Kiwana Howell, Ed.S., Director, Extended Learning, School District of Palm Beach County

"Roots and Wings' support for education has been invaluable. Not only has this resulted in increased achievement for our students who need the most support, but by also recognizing our most critical resource, our educators. We thank you, Roots and Wings, for your partnership in making a difference in the lives of students and teachers."

Keith Oswald, Deputy Superintendent, School District of Palm Beach County



"I admire how quickly Roots and Wings has grown Project Uplift, its after school tutoring program for children who are having trouble learning to read. The organization is a great community partner. We help kids get a good night's sleep and Roots and Wings helps kids read at grade level. Together, we are helping area children form a strong foundation for the future."

Suzanne Broad, Executive Director, Sweet Dream Makers



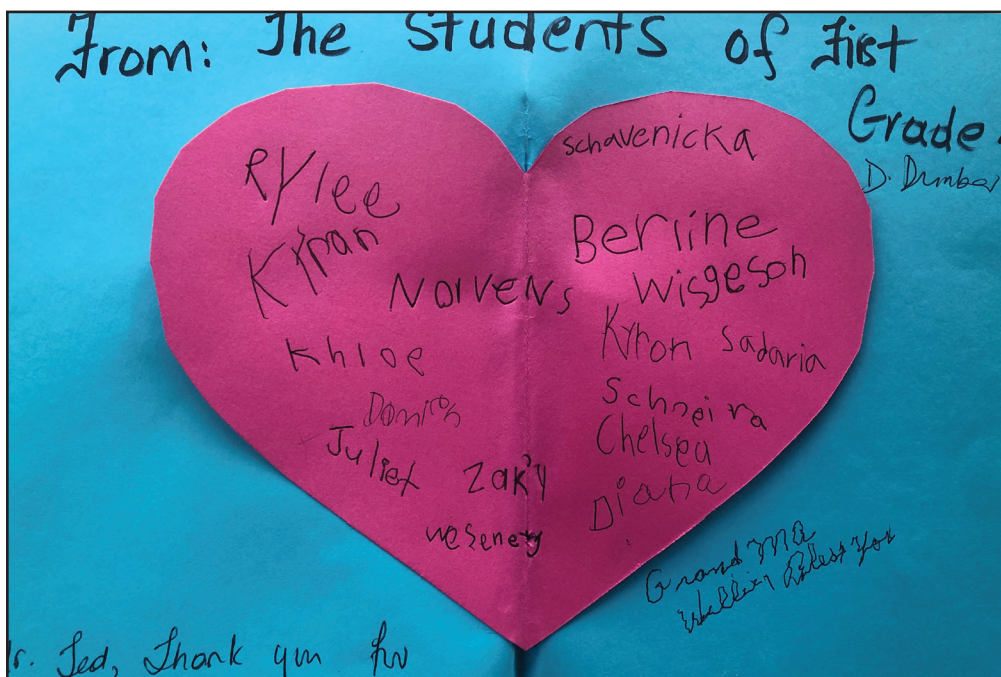
— The Challenge —

If You Can't Read, You Can't Learn: If you can't read by the end of third grade, you only have a 1 in 6 chance of catching up. According to figures provided by Florida Chamber of Commerce Business Alliance for Early Learning Report there were 444 third graders in the 8 schools we serve who were not reading at grade level at the last testing period in spring 2019. Principals believe that number may now have doubled. Here are some of the most important statistics from the National Institute for Literacy, National Center for Adult Literacy, The Literacy Company, and U.S. Census Bureau underscoring the critical need to address illiteracy in the United States:

- Currently, 45 million Americans are functionally illiterate and cannot read above a fifth-grade level
- 50% of adults cannot read a book written at an eighth-grade level
- Only 1/3rd of fourth-graders reach the proficient reading level
- 85% of juvenile offenders have problems reading
- 3 out of 5 people in American prisons can't read
- 3 out of 4 people on welfare can't read

SOURCE: <https://www.literacyprojectfoundation.org/30-key-child-literacy-stats-parents-need-to-be-aware-of/>

"Literacy is the bridge from misery to hope." Kofi Annan



"Our community is very fortunate to have Roots and Wings' Project UpLift providing small intensive reading groups that help struggling readers improve their foundational skills leading to self-confidence and long-term academic success. The principals love this program and I hope it can be expanded to serve more children given its proven success!"

**Janet Meeks, Education Coordinator,
City of Delray Beach**

— The Solution —

Through our close partnership with the schools we serve, and the support and encouragement of the Palm Beach County School District, we will again be providing robust in-person teaching and learning this fall, assisting 540 students 3 days a week with our free, small-group program that serves individual needs of the children who most need our helping-hand to thrive. With the growing assistance of our broad community of supporters, Project UpLift will stretch to meet the challenges schools are facing in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Thanks to individuals, foundations and corporations who have already joined our crusade for grade level reading, we have laid a strong foundation for the work that lies ahead. We are grateful to those whose generosity and shared passion inspire us to stay the course.

As we move Project UpLift forward to repair the significant learning losses children are facing due to COVID-19, the support of our community is more important than ever. We trust our benefactors will continue their votes of confidence in our work with their gifts, and that new partners will emerge to join our crusade to promote grade level reading proficiency in our south Florida communities.

We imagine expanding our program to 6 p.m. five days a week and adding arts integration, STEAM-centered activities, social-emotional learning, and just plain fun! We see a future in which Project UpLift serves all Title One elementary schools in our three communities, building strong, confident readers and providing the best foundation possible for future learning.

***Literacy is the key to academic success.
Our ultimate goal: 90% of third graders reading at grade level!***

“Our students come from homes where English is a second (and new) language. Their inclusion in Project UpLift, in small group settings, has provided the opportunity for our children to get the extra help necessary to raise their reading levels and their overall performance in school has been ‘Uplifted.’ Project UpLift is an important step in leveling the playing field.”

***Kathy Fazio, Executive Director,
Paul’s Place***





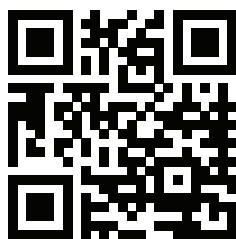
To get there we need your help to:

1. Encourage prioritization of early literacy and strong collaboration.
2. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers of reading.
3. Expand opportunities to help struggling readers catch up.
4. Engage our communities to embrace the 90% literacy goal.

We are living in an unprecedented time. The challenges we face as a result of COVID-19 are daunting and will influence the future of the world for years to come. We do, however, have the power to help ensure that the children who come after us are prepared to thrive. The best chance we can give them is literacy...the ability to read opens countless doors to opportunity.



"You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending." CS Lewis



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Roots and Wings is endorsed by the Superintendent of Schools of Palm Beach County and by the City of Delray Beach. Roots and Wings, Inc., a Florida not-for-profit corporation, is registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services under registration #CH54161. It is a Section 501(c)(3) charitable organization under the Internal Revenue Code.

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