



# The Reading Center

Fall 2021

DYSLEXIA INSTITUTE OF MN

Founded in 1951

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## The Reading Center

2010 Scott Road NW  
 Rochester, MN 55901  
 Office: (507) 288-5271  
 Fax: (507) 288-6424  
 www.TheReadingCenter.org

## Science of Reading - A New Term Validating the Orton-Gillingham Approach

The phrase, “everything old is new again” comes to mind when we talk about the Science of Reading (SOR). **SOR refers to the growing body of scientific research that describes how the human brain learns to read, the skills kids need to develop to become proficient readers, and the appropriate methods to use to teach those skills effectively.**

For the past 70 years, **The Reading Center has been at the forefront of the science surrounding solid, evidence-based reading instruction.** The founder of The Reading Center, Paula Rome, was a student of her uncle Dr. Paul Dozier (a neuroscientist) whose colleague Dr. Samuel Orton (also a neuroscientist) and Anna Gillingham (an educator) helped develop an approach to teach reading that worked for struggling readers. This is what we now refer to the Orton-Gillingham Approach (O-G), the core method we have used to teach more than 10,000 students to read and the approach we have trained over 2,500 educators to use with students of all types.

**The Orton-Gillingham approach follows the science of reading – respecting that the skills needed to become a proficient reader need to be explicitly taught, individualized to the student.**

Unfortunately, most educators in classrooms today did not complete a teacher training program aligned with the science of reading, nor do they enter classrooms that use curriculums aligned with SOR. **That is why our work to introduce O-G concepts, consistent with SOR, through our Dyslexia 101 course and other professional development in production is so crucial to our mission to impact all dyslexic kids in Minnesota whether they are in our programming or not.**

**When teachers better understand the components of scientifically based, good reading instruction, and better understand how and why a student might struggle (such as having dyslexia), students are positively impacted.**



Continued on Page 3



## Celebrating 70 Years

Greetings TRC Community. I was honored to assume the position of Chair of The Reading Center Board of Directors in July; but I am not new to The Reading Center. I am both an alumnus and the



Carl Anderson  
Board Chair

parent of an alumnus of TRC. I remember one of my proudest moments was when I was moved from the lowest reading group in school, to the highest. Learning strategies to deal with my dyslexia changed my life. While I credit my parents as strong advocates and avid readers themselves, a great deal of credit must go to The Reading Center and the wonderful tutor I was matched with, Jean Walters.

This year marks our 70th year. **In that time, Reading Center tutors have taught over 10,000 students and trained more than 2,500 educators**

**who have worked with thousands of students across the nation.** While we would like to be celebrating this milestone with a large fall event, the surge of COVID cases has made that impossible. We will be holding a small, invitation only event to keep our attendance appropriately low. Be sure to check your email this fall for a link to view some special 70th Anniversary video messages from some exciting, nationally known dyslexics!

While we cannot all gather there are ways you can help celebrate TRC this year. In honor of our mission to serve the needs of every student impacted by dyslexia, **we set a fundraising goal of \$70,000 intended to: Boost needs-based student scholarships for struggling readers (we've doubled our scholarship spending this year), fund Orton-Gillingham Institute scholarships for trainees of color, and develop more training options for Minnesota teachers.**

We have matching funds courtesy of Mayo Clinic and the Rochester Scottish Rite Children's Foundation to increase the impact of your donation.

Make your donation today with the enclosed envelope, or online via [www.TheReadingCenter.org](http://www.TheReadingCenter.org) and help us change the lives of struggling students like I once was.

Help us raise \$70,000  
by December 31st  
to support  
student and trainee  
scholarships!

**Matching funds  
available!**

## Moving Forward in the Time of COVID

The saying, 'One step forward, two steps back' might be applicable now. For those of us who are vaccinated, it was wonderful to operate in our daily lives without a mask for a few months this summer. But the rapid emergence of the Delta variant of COVID-19 threw a wrench into our plans. Delta has been shown to be more infectious than the original virus. As an education organization with many students too young to be vaccinated, we are making some changes to protect our students, families, and tutors.

Following the lead of Olmsted County, as well as the Minnesota Department of Health, Mayo Clinic, and the CDC, **we are now back requiring that everyone wear face masks in our building and for all in-person services.** This includes testing, tutoring, classes, and conferences within our building or out in the community.



Cindy Russell  
Executive Director

**It is our intention to continue with in-person services using our robust safeguards for tutor and student.** We will require masks regardless of vaccination status, limit people in our building, and continue with strong disinfectant practices.

Thank you for your patience and for keeping the safety of students, tutors, testers, and families at the forefront. While we look forward to the day when we can invite students, parents, trainees, tutors, and staff to our building without these safeguards, **we are confident that whether you receive services in-person using our precautions or choose to receive services online, we are truly helping our students make reading gains.**

We believe that Paula Rome, our founder, would be thrilled about the growing interest in the science of reading! This is what she dreamed of, along with Jean Osman and Marcia Henry, all early Reading Center staff and founders. We see growing interest manifested in the work of the Higher Education Literacy Partnership; a group comprised of professors of education at higher education institutions across Minnesota. We see it in the record number of teachers who took our Dyslexia 101 course last year (more than 3,500, thanks to a Mayo Clinic grant) and that every one of our Orton-Gillingham Training Institute courses are full – often maxing out the same day they open for registration. We see it at the Minnesota State Capitol as legislators hear not only from dyslexia advocates, but from **teachers across the state who know they could teach more students to read if they had professional development in line with the science of reading.**



For the past four years, The Reading Center has been an active partner in a legislative coalition, spearheaded by Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota, together with our partners the International Dyslexia Association Upper Midwest Branch and Groves Academy. This Dyslexia and Literacy Coalition has a focus on helping all students with dyslexia, but also toward addressing the widespread problem of illiteracy. **When 60% of Minnesota students do not read at grade level, this problem is not just a dyslexia problem.** During the 2021 Minnesota Legislative Session, the bill that we supported passed, allocating \$3 million toward providing LETRS training for Minnesota teachers. (LETRS training aligns with the science of reading, is scalable and cost effective for schools). This state funding will enable more than 3,000 Minnesota teachers to be trained in this science of reading program. **These 3,000 teachers will in turn provide more effective instruction of reading to approximately 75,000 Minnesota students!**

**To learn more deeply about the science of reading, we recommend that you reference The Reading League's work to strengthen understanding about SOR and to promote the use of this approach amongst all educators.**

<https://www.whatisthescienceofreading.org/science-of-reading-guide> The Reading

Center is proud that our approach to teaching reading, Orton-Gillingham, has been affirmed as consistent with the science of reading. While our focus is on students with dyslexia, it turns out that the same concepts that help all emerging readers are what work for dyslexic students. Quite simply, this is how the human brain learns to read.

## Pollinator Habitat in Our Backyard

While our hill to the west of our building doesn't look like much now, thanks to the Jirik family, the City of Rochester approved our grant request to help establish a pollinator habitat and water stewardship garden on this area behind our building. **Ryan Jirik, JM high school student, Eagle Scout candidate and FFA Member**, who provides landscape management services for The Reading Center, will work under the supervision of his father, Patrick Jirik, and Doug Courneya, owner of Courneya Horticulture, to **install the pollinator planting at The Reading Center.** Work has been ongoing this summer and will continue into the fall. Stay tuned for photos of the new garden when it's completed!



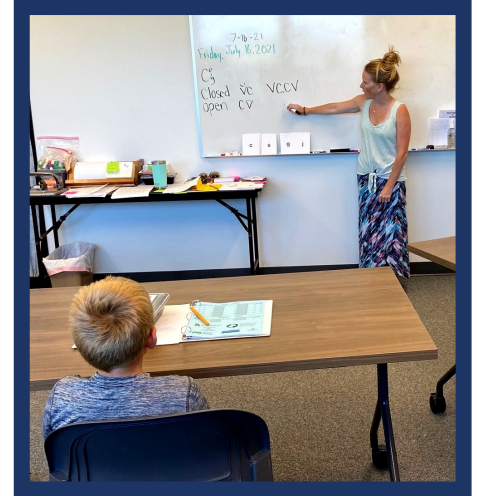
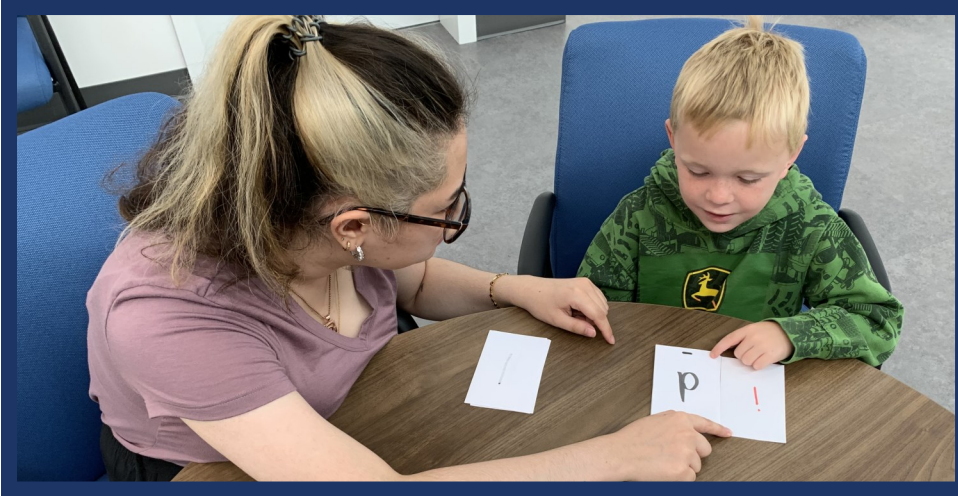
*Future home of our pollinator habitat and water stewardship garden (left) and Ryan Jirik (right).*



## Best of Basics - Hybrid Edition

Last year, our summer Best of Basics program was entirely online. **This year we offered a hybrid approach and served 32 students both in-person and online. It was delightful to have groups of students in the building again – socially distanced and wearing masks of course!** It was the third and final year of Lillian Stewart's tenure as BOB Program Coordinator. Lillian worked tirelessly this year and last to modify our tried-and-true program to work well during a pandemic so that we continued to meet the needs of all our students, from the youngest elementary students to our high schools students.

Parental feedback of the program was excellent – and several families are interested in continuing in our 1:1 Tutoring program this fall. **If your child was a student in BOB this summer, let us know by October 31 if you would like to move into tutoring, without the need for additional testing.**



### Early Childhood Program: Ages 4-6

Parent-child classes for our youngest learners will be back in-person this September. Our Reading Clubs meet one hour per week during the school year, and focus on early reading skills in a fun, safe, structured way. These small groups are fun for parents and kids. Registration is open now for our fall class.

If you have a child, ages 4-6, who you feel may be struggling to grasp pre-reading skills, register them for Reading Club or for a FREE screening with our Director of Reading Readiness!

### New Classes for Middle and High School Students Start in October!

Two classes are available this fall for middle and high school students.

Our **Meta Studying** course is a **ten-week online course** that will focus on building independent study skills.

Our **five-week Bootcamp: Back in the Classroom** class is an **in-person course** that will focus on executive function skills like notetaking and time-management.

**Registration for both closes October 4! Learn more and register on our website.**

## Staff Changes



**Zhade Stupar** (left) became our new Office Administrator earlier this year. She is now the first face to greet you when you enter the building.

**Anna Johnson** (right) moved into the Development and Teacher Training Assistant role.



## 2021 Bright Futures Campaign a Success - Thank You!

The need to raise more funds to cover a growing need for student scholarships has become an organizational priority. The past 18 months have been hard financially for many of the families we serve. In addition, The Reading Center is committed to expanding scholarships so more students from underprivileged backgrounds have access to quality life-changing tutoring.

Thanks to our generous donors, **we surpassed our 100K goal and raised \$113,117 through this campaign.** A special thank you to our **2021 Bright Futures Leadership Team: Ginger Holmes** (Campaign Chair), **Carl Anderson** (Board Campaign Chair), **Lora Keller** (Staff, Tutor Campaign Chair) and **Jennifer Gowin** (Friends Campaign Chair). Our first ever virtual donor outreach night was a success thanks to **Jennifer Gowin, Tim Fischer**, a team of tellers from Premier Bank, and **Margaret Heise** from Southeast Minnesota Realtors.

## New Members Join Board of Directors

As of July 1, we are pleased to announce a few changes to our Board of Directors. Thank you to **Chuck Brust of the Rochester Scottish Rite Children's Foundation** for his service as Board Chair. He has moved into the Past Chair role. **Carl Anderson, attorney with Anderson Law Firm**, assumed the position of Board Chair. Both have served on the board since 2017. Thank you to **Paul Bucher, attorney with Dunlap & Seeger** for his service following completion of his second three-year term.



Brian Moser  
Board Member

Two new board members joined our incredible group for three-year terms: Brian Moser and Eliot Tracz. **Brian Moser is the Director of Construction and Development at Titan Development and Investments.** He became familiar with The Reading Center when he volunteered his time as the Owner's Representative during the construction process for our new building. We truly would not have had the smooth construction process without the strong leadership and expertise Brian provided. Originally from Iowa, Brian now lives in Rochester with his wife and three daughters.

**Eliot Tracz is an attorney with Dunlap & Seeger.** The majority of Eliot's work involves business and real estate litigation, with a sizable intellectual property practice. Eliot struggled to focus in school and like many of our students, was eventually diagnosed with ADHD. Eliot is new to The Reading Center's mission but understands the core of why we do what we do. He says, **"Reading is the great equalizer; it opens the door to knowledge, in**



Eliot Tracz  
Board Member

**turn leveling the playing field for people who may not have grown up affluent or with access to good public education. Equally important, a confident reader has a hobby for life."** Originally from North Texas, Eliot and his wife now live in Rochester with their son and dog.

# Newsletter Donor List

January 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021

We would like to acknowledge and thank all of you who have so generously pledged or donated to The Reading Center. We strive to list our donors accurately, but occasionally we make a mistake. If your donation has been omitted, your entry is misspelled or put in the wrong giving level, please contact Sarah Carlson-Wallrath at [scarlsonwallrath@TheReadingCenter.org](mailto:scarlsonwallrath@TheReadingCenter.org).

If you would like to make a contribution, please use our secure online server at [www.TheReadingCenter.org](http://www.TheReadingCenter.org), contact us at (507) 288-5271, or use the enclosed envelope.

## Paula Rome Legacy Society Those honoring The Reading Center with a planned gift

Mike and Joy Fogarty  
Kevin Kvale  
Tony Love  
Leone & Thomas Mauszycki  
Jean S. Osman  
Joe Powers  
Lois Saxton  
Marguerite K. Smith  
Erik and Eileen Thorpe  
Bruce and Mary Wolfson

## \$25,000 and Up

Mayo Clinic  
Otto Bremer Trust  
Anna Mary and Terry Peterson  
Scottish Rite Children's Foundation

## Heroes \$5,000 - \$24,999

Mike and Joy Fogarty \*  
Ginger and David Holmes  
In honor of The Reading Center  
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Rochester Plumbing and Heating  
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Steve and Shelley Sperling \*

## Benefactors \$2,500 - \$4,999

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In memory of Jean Osman  
and Pat Christenson  
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## Patrons \$1,000 - \$2,499

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Mark and Dana Woeste ◊

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## Assistants \$250 - \$499

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In memory of Jean Osman

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Dean and Julie Stenehjelm  
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Barbara Walbruch  
Bruce and Mary Wolfson

### Associates Up to \$49

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In memory of Fred Schultz  
Sarah Beckman  
In honor of Elaine Bauman  
Jena Bergendahl ‡  
Jennifer Ferguson ∞  
Kim Firstbook ^  
Burton and Lucille Garr  
In honor of Dahlia Rae  
Paula Horner  
Elizabeth Mackey  
In memory of Jean Osman  
Wendy and Randy Moger  
Illene and Martin Peterson  
In memory of Liz Gallanis  
Robert and Denise Peterson-Perry  
In memory of Liz Gallanis  
Janice Ulrich  
In memory of Fred Ulrich

### General In-Kind Donations

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Kathy Fears

### Best of Basics Sponsorships

#### Academic Level \$1,000+

Ann and Brad Becker



#### Pupil Level \$500

Premier Bank Rochester  
Rochester Commercial Banks  
Association

### In-Kind Sponsor

Johnson Printing

### 70th Anniversary Sponsorships

Our comprehensive list of 70th Anniversary sponsors will be listed in our Spring 2022 newsletter.

### Presenting Sponsor \$25,000

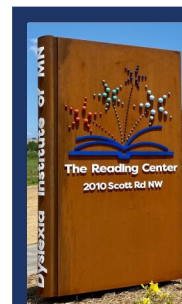


### Editor Level \$5,000



### Designations

- \* *Unleashed to Succeed* Capital Campaign donors in 2020
- ‡ Our monthly sustaining donors
- ^ Donations given through Thrivent Financial Choice Dollars
- ∞ Donations given through United Way Olmsted County
- ◇ Donations given through IBM Employee Charitable Contribution Campaign
- Donations given to Dr. Terri Edwards Scholarship Fund



Remember The Reading Center and its mission in your will, and ensure that children with dyslexia get the help that they need into the future.

Are you a Thrivent Financial investor? Consider designating your Thrivent Choice Dollars to The Reading Center!

**thrivent**<sup>®</sup>



# The Reading Center

DYSLEXIA INSTITUTE OF MN

2010 Scott Road NW  
Rochester, MN 55901  
Website: [www.TheReadingCenter.org](http://www.TheReadingCenter.org)  
Email: [read@TheReadingCenter.org](mailto:read@TheReadingCenter.org)  
Office: (507) 288-5271  
Fax: (507) 288-6424

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# SAVE THE DATE!

### Reading Club (4-6-year-olds)

K Class: Sep. 21 - Oct. 26  
1st Grade: Sep. 22 - Oct. 27

### Walk in Our Shoes: Dyslexia Simulation (in-Person)

Oct. 5

### Reading Center Student Program Open House (online)

Oct. 12

### Back in the Classroom: Bootcamp for in-person-learning (Grades 7-11) (in-person)

Oct. 11 - Nov. 8

### Meta Studying (Grades 7-12) (online)

Oct. 13 - Dec. 15

### Give to the Max Day

Nov. 18

### Basic Orton-Gillingham Training Institute (online)

Nov. 29, 2021 - Mar. 6, 2022  
Feb. 28 - May 29, 2022

### Advanced Orton-Gillingham Training Institute (online)

Nov. 29, 2021 - Feb. 20, 2022

### Advanced Orton-Gillingham Training Institute (in-person)

Jun. 16 - 30, 2022

### Basic Orton-Gillingham Training Institute (in-person)

Jul. 7 - 28, 2022

### 4-6-Year-Old Screening and Reading Club

Ongoing, call for times

### It's back! Take our Dyslexia 101 course for FREE!

Thanks in part to funding by Mayo Clinic we can again offer this course for FREE to Minnesota educators. Take this self-paced five clock hour course on the Canvas platform and earn a certificate of attendance! Register on our website.