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# Gaston Literacy Council, Inc.

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2023  
Annual Report

# About Us



Gaston Literacy Council, Inc. was founded in 1964. We are a member of ProLiteracy, the largest adult literacy and basic education membership organization in the nation. ProLiteracy believes that a safer, stronger, and more sustainable society starts with an educated adult population.

We offer FREE assessment and individualized instruction to adults through small group classes and one-on-one tutoring. Our adult programs include Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language. Eligible students may also pursue US Citizenship. In addition, we are proud of our Reading Soul Mates program, where adult/student tutors work individually with second graders in select Gaston County Schools to improve reading skills.

 *Gaston  
Literacy  
Council, Inc.*

# Vision & Mission

## Vision:

Through advocacy initiatives and instructional services that build desired literacy skills, the Gaston Literacy Council, Inc. helps build a thriving Greater Gaston Community in which all residents can confidently pursue their collective and individual life goals and interests.

## Mission

To promote literacy by delivering instructional services and advocating for literacy in the Greater Gaston area.

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# Our Staff



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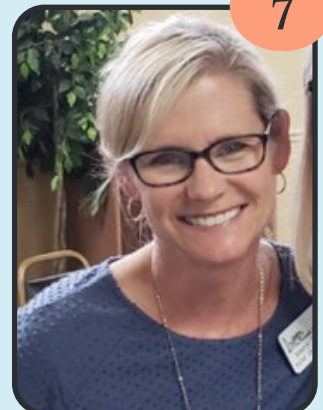
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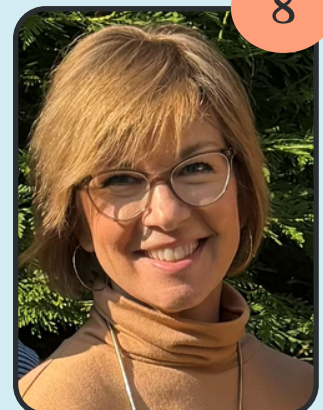
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1. Linda McConnell, Executive Director
2. Jean Ann Stuart, Assistant Director
3. Donna Watson
4. Elizabeth McLean
5. Delta Sanders
6. Annie Anthony
7. Merry Penegar Deely
8. Jami Gibson, Volunteer Staff





# Our Board

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-2024

Donyel Barber

Ana Barreto-Mathews

Mary Robin Bell

Kathleen Boyce

Jami Gibson

William Gross

Angela Gravely Harris

Christa Heilig

Donna Lockett, Chair

Mary Massey, Immediate Past Chair

Chris Mills

Carrie Minnich

Laurel Morris, Treasurer

Jane Pearson

Lucille Rinehart, Secretary

Jason Shoemaker

Susan Stacey

Beth Stanforth

Pauline Styers, Vice Chair

Regina Taylor

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# Highlights In 2023

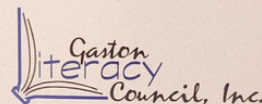
We are already three months into 2024 and soon, 2023 will be a distant memory! So, let's take a few moments to highlight some of our most memorable accomplishments!

## Highlight In April 2023

Our annual Meet the Author event featured Deborah Goodrich Royce and showcased the work of the Gaston Literacy Council to almost 300 guests. Deborah featured her book, Reef Road, and the audience was enthralled as she shared her story of how the book came to be and captivated us all as she told of her earlier life as a dancer and soap opera star!

## 2 Highlight In July 2023

We welcomed new leadership to our Board of Directors: Jami Gibson and Cynthia Stitt, active community members who share a passion for our mission. Long-time board member Roger Rizk will be missed as he completed his second term.



# More Highlights



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## Highlight In August 2023

Gaston County has welcomed many immigrants from Haiti during 2023. These folks are interested in obtaining and improving English language skills. In partnership with some private donors and the Gaston County Department of Health and Human Services, we began a class, with plans to expand services in 2024.

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## Highlight In September 2023

We hosted our first “fall” event with Jason Mott, author of *Hell of a Book*, receiving the 2021 National Book Award for Fiction. Jason was quite entertaining and so “down to earth,” making personal contact with almost every guest. We plan to make this an annual event!





# More Highlights



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## Highlight In November 2023

Kelly Link, our long-time Assistant Director, ESL instructor, Data Management guru, and office “handy person” left GLC. We miss her very much, but are pleased to introduce our new Assistant Director, Jean Ann Stuart. Jean Ann comes from Inlivian (Mecklenburg County), bringing a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to GLC. Stop by and meet her!

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## Highlight In December 2023

Our adult student population continues to grow as we finally feel almost “normal” after our COVID diversions! We are proud to report serving almost 175 students, with 220 or more projected for the end of the fiscal year.



# More Highlights



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## Highlight In January 2024

Our Reading Soul Mates program is keeping us busy!! With 265+ second grade students and 139 volunteer tutors, there is little time to relax! We are in 16 elementary schools and hoping to grow more in 2024-2025. Our little readers made tremendous progress, with over 95% making growth in reading skills. We are changing lives!!



*Gaston*  
Literacy  
Council, Inc.

# Congratulations To Our 2023 Phil Ritter Award Recipient!



**Marty Starnes**

This award is given to a current or past GLC Board member for exemplary dedication and service. Well deserved, Marty!!







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# Program Updates



## ADULT LITERACY & ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

We are proud to have served:

- 129 adult students during the 2022-2023 fiscal year (an increase of 18 students)
- 3,833.25 hours of instruction
- Sneak peek into 2024 to date: 225 adult students with 3,880.25 hours through January, 2024. Wow!!


All levels classes/tutoring integrate the following into instruction:

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- US Citizenship information
- Digital literacy
- Health literacy

## READING SOUL MATES (RSM)

Reading Soul Mates serves 2nd graders in select Gaston County elementary schools who have been identified as reading below grade level, at risk of grade retention, or who may benefit from a mentor with an emphasis on reading.

RSM relies heavily on volunteers and can be one of the best parts of your week! If you can commit to 30-60 minutes each week, September-April, love getting hugs and changing a life, contact us at 704-868-4815 or [l.mcconnell@gastonliteracy.org](mailto:l.mcconnell@gastonliteracy.org). Training sessions are offered throughout the year.



# Financial Summary

NC Solicitation License No. SL002480

Audited statement prepared by Butler & Stowe and  
available on GLC website



Beginning Balance  
on July 1, 2022

**\$158,636**



Receipts

**\$323,997**



Disbursements

**(\$342,101)**



Ending Balance  
on June 30, 2023

**\$140,532**

# Endowment Summary



Beginning Balance  
Fair Market Value  
on July 1, 2022

**\$841,023**



Deposits

**\$0**



Withdrawals

**(\$100,000)**



Ending Balance  
Fair Market Value  
on June 30, 2023

**\$783,304**  
Net earnings (\$42,281)



# Community Foundation Run



On your mark, get set, and GO!! Runners for Gaston Literacy Council “blasted” from the start line on April 1, 2023 with dreams of personal records and prize money dancing in their heads!

GLC’s supporters and donors worked hard with total proceeds of \$25,590 received. Big THANKS to Franklin Keathley, Emily McConnell, and our own Linda McConnell, all who placed in their age groups and won us some extra cash! We wish to express heartfelt thanks to those of you, included in the contributors list, who helped us receive the maximum allowable matching gift of \$3,400 from the Community Foundation.

The 2024 RUN, set for April 13, 2024, will be here in a flash and we are hoping for your support! So, lace up those sneakers, hit the streets and build those miles, improving both your own health and the health of your chosen non-profit organization! #laceupforliteracy.

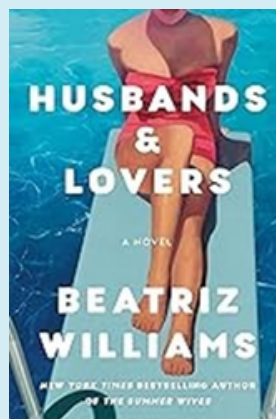
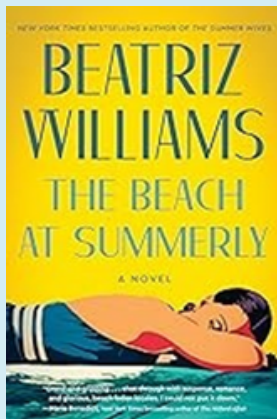
Click here to donate: <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/cfrun2024>

Click here to register to run or walk:

<https://raceroster.com/events/2024/81980/community-foundation-run>

# Meet The Author

## April 24, 2024



### Beatriz Williams

Make your reservations now for our 16th annual Meet the Author Luncheon and Silent Auction. at the Gaston Country Club. Our “Silent Auction” opens at 10 am, and guests will be seated for lunch at 11:30 am.

Our guest author is Beatriz Williams. Her novel to be featured is *The Beach at Summerly*. Several of her books will be available for purchase at the event. Beatriz’s latest novel, *Husbands & Lovers*, will be released on June 25, 2024.

# Thank You

Gaston Literacy Council, Inc.

gratefully acknowledges the following supporters who made  
this report and our mission possible.

*Some donors have asked to remain Anonymous.*

(Donations received between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023)

## Major Funders

United Way of Gaston County

## Read! Read! Read! Club (\$1 - \$49)

Albright-Jurs, Lisa  
Amazon Smile  
Anonymous  
Bach, Mary  
Cook, Mary

Harris, Lee Ann  
Klein, Robert  
Lee, Katherine  
Matherly, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas  
Page, Ibby

Trosper, Mollie  
Weisenhorn, John  
Williard, David & Martha

## Skill Builders (\$50 - \$99)

Anonymous  
Archibald, Maeve  
Bell, Mary Robin  
Bergman, Susan  
Blackburn, Peggy  
Blair, Susan  
Boyd, Mr. & Mrs. Walter  
Bradley, Beverly Jean  
Brannock, Diane  
Charities Aid Foundation  
America  
Cole, Vickie  
Daniel, Janice  
Davis, Ann  
Davis, Mr. & Mrs. Mark  
Dixon, Paula

Dunlap, Judy  
Elliott, Maggie  
Farrell, Gretchen  
Friday, Jaime  
Fuhr, Karen  
Fulton, Mona  
Gill, Gayle  
Gray, June  
Hancock, Edie  
Harris, Clara  
Hayes, Mary  
Hoffman Place  
Homeowners  
Howe, Cherry  
Iezzi, Teri  
Johnson, Cheryl  
Land, Dee

Leicht, Jan  
Lineberger, Laura  
Link, Kelly  
Lodge, Lauren  
Long, Bobby  
Long, Debbie  
Love, Marion  
Mackie, Margaret  
Miller, Ann  
Mitchell, Joanne  
Moose, John and Cindy  
Moxham, Frank & Faith  
Myers, Barbara  
O'Donohue, Paula  
Pasqualone, Judith  
Peindl, Darlyn



## Skill Builders (\$50 - \$99)

Rankin, Carol  
Ratchford, George Ann  
Reidy, Bonnie  
Renfro, Anna  
Rhyne, Mary Randall  
Roberson, Kay  
Robinson, May  
Rowe, Ginger  
Rowland, Bobbie  
Rudisill, Janet  
Rudisill, Patricia

Sarno, Michelle  
Schroeder, Brian  
Siceloff, David & Libby  
Simcox, Elizabeth  
Smith, Jane  
Steffey, Shelly  
Stewart, Theresa  
Stiles, Janie  
Stoker, Loretta  
Stowe, Carol  
Stowe, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph

Sutton, Bobby & Benette  
Thrower, Bill & Price  
Walker, Brenda  
Wellden, Sallie  
Williams, Novelyn  
Wilson, Jean  
Wilson, Pam  
Yatko, Valerie

## Literacy Advocates (\$100 - \$249)

Baretto-Mathews, Ana  
Bryant, Beverly  
Bumgarner, Elizabeth  
Choplin, Beth  
Cinq-Mars, Robert & Ellen  
Cox, Shirley  
Coyle, Mr. & Mrs. Joseph  
Craig, Julie  
Crane, John  
Dickson Animal Clinic  
Dixon, Jean  
Dukes, Patricia  
Duncan, Melanie  
Eccles, Bill and Sharon  
Epstein, Dr. & Mrs. Mark  
Flowers, Melanie  
Furr, Anne  
Gehle, Randall & Annette  
Glenn, Harry & Pat  
Gray, Angela  
Gray, Janice  
Gray, Walt & Jan  
Griffin, Laura  
Harris, Denise  
Heinrich, Sharon  
Hobson, Davidson & Caroline

Jacobs, Gaylia  
Jarrett, Mikell  
Johnston, Geraldine  
Junior Assembly of  
Gastonia  
Kirlin, Dave & Nan  
Koon, Belinda  
LaCourse, Jeffrey & Alecia  
Layne, David & Janet  
Layton, Mary  
Lefler, Sandy  
Lodge, Dot  
Massey, Branson & Mary  
Matthews, Alice  
McAteer, Porter & Libby  
McIntosh, Theresa  
Medlock, Robin  
Mills, Chris & Elizabeth  
Neely, Margaret  
Neerincx, Suzanne  
Neimeyer, Carolyn  
Norcross, Mary Lou  
Overcash, Pamela  
Pattinson, Rich & Sheila  
Payne, Walter & Julia Lee  
Ratchford, Patty

Rhoney, Morgan  
Rizk, Roger & Beth  
Robinson, Jacob & Sherry  
Robinson, Natalie  
Sessoms, Carol  
Shedd, Kelly  
Smith, Patricia  
Spurrier, Katie  
Starnes, Marty  
Sumner, Beverly  
Sumner, Jane  
Sumner, Liz  
Teeter, Morris & Carol  
The GE Foundation  
Thiele, Judy  
Timmons, Lorna  
Torrence, Charlton  
Tracey, Cam  
Treece, Curtis  
United Way of the  
Piedmont  
Ward, Dale & Ann  
Watts, John & Kenna  
Wells, Jane  
Whitesides, Susanne  
Woody, Gayla

## Sustaining Supporters (\$250 - \$499)

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority,  
Inc  
Altrusa Club  
Anderson, Jim & Lyn  
Anthony, Edward & Annie  
Bohanan, Carolyn  
Boyce, Richard & Kathleen  
Carstarphen, Catherine  
Caton, Ilene  
Comer, Anne  
Crockett, Frances  
Deely, Mike & Merry

Elliott, Chuck & Carol  
Fayed, Jennifer  
First Presbyterian (Pearl  
Wilson Fund)  
Frederick, Tommy & Martha  
(Voices for Kids)  
Gaston East Rotary Club  
Gross, William & Lynda  
Hannon, Steve & Suzi  
Harrill, Nancy  
Hovis, Rick & Kelly  
Kennington, Grady & Sally

Kuney, Nancy  
Kush, Gail  
Lockett, Roy & Donna  
McConnell, Linda  
Murphy, Nancy  
Phillips, Sandra  
Simmons, Billy & Karen  
Smith, Austen  
Stacey, Don & Susan  
Stowe, Chris  
Voorhees, Barbara

## ROTELL Partners (\$500 - \$999)

Abernethy, Elizabeth  
Anthony Medical Clinic  
Bean, Lynn  
Drum, Ann  
Farris, Jami  
Gibson, Jami  
GSM  
Hancock Family  
Harris, Kelvin & Angela  
Howe, Dr. & Mrs. Donald  
Jacobs, Reba

Jarman, Rich & Amanda  
Kelly, Bill & Annabelle  
Kersh, Dan & Gayle  
Killian, Kay  
McConnell, Patrick & Emily  
McMahan, Mick & Carla  
McMenamin, Edward &  
Anne-Marie  
Patton, Davis & Beth  
Piedmont Plastic Surgery &  
Dermatology

Planer, Geoff & Judy  
Rinehart, David & Lucille  
Seabrook, Elizabeth  
Stafford, Ring  
Summerville, Joe & Lil  
Sumner, Beverly  
Thompson, Dr. & Mrs. Mark  
Yarbrough, Barbara

## Laubach Society (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Nixon, Frank & Ann  
Pearson, Charles & Helene  
Petty, Larry & Linda

Presbyterian  
Endowment Trust  
Styers, Wes & Pauline

The Charles and Irene Nanney  
Foundation

## Olna Daves Leadership Givers (\$5,000+)

Anonymous  
Gaston Breakfast Rotary Club

Pearson, Plato (Tete)  
Petty, Dr. Jerry

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# Gifts In Memoriam



In memory of Audrey Petty  
Dr. Jerry Petty

In memory of C. R. and Ann Robinson  
Jacob and Sharon Robinson

In memory of Dan and Dede Gunter  
Robin Banks

In memory of Helyn Robinson  
Patricia Dukes

In memory of Hilton and Pete Parks  
Jacob and Sharon Robinson

In memory of Jim Baldwin  
David and Martha Williard  
Gayle Gill  
Vickie Cole  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas  
Matherlee  
Hoffman Place Homeowners

In memory of Myra Jenkins  
Jane Wells

In memory of Nancy Albright  
Bill and Sharon Eccles

In memory of Richard Farrell  
Chuck and Carol Elliott  
Gretchen Farrell

In memory of William Seabrook  
Elizabeth Seabrook

Special thanks to the Family of Carol Dow Andrews for her  
generous bequeath to Gaston Literacy Council, Inc.



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# Gifts In Honor

In honor of Annie Anthony  
Mary Emma Hambright

In honor of Baxter and Nancy Harrill  
Dee Land  
Karen and Billy Simmons

In honor of Becky Adams  
Karen and Billy Simmons

In honor of Beth Stanforth  
Sandra Phillips

In honor of Bill and Price Thrower  
Karen and Billy Simmons

In honor of Bobby and Beverly Sumner  
Karen and Billy Simmons

In honor of David Belk Cannon  
Tommy and Martha Frederick (Voices  
for Kids)

In honor of David Layton  
Mary Layton

In honor of GB 52s  
Lyn Anderson

In honor of John and Nan  
Bridgeman  
Karen and Billy Simmons

In honor of Larry and Janie  
Stiles  
Karen and Billy Simmons

In honor of Martha Frederick  
Voices for Kids

In honor of Mary Massey  
Steve and Suzi Hannon

In honor of Pinky Smith and  
Susan Challenger  
Karen and Billy Simmons

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# 2022-2023 Grant Awards

- Dollar General Literacy Foundation
- Gaston Community Foundation
- The Carrie E. and Lena V. Glenn Foundation
- Gaston East Rotary Literacy Endowment Fund
- Presbyterian Endowment Trust
- United Way of Gaston County

## In-Kind

- CC Communications (Web Site)
- First United Methodist Church -Rent Reduction

*All contributions support adult students working toward high school equivalency attainment, English as a Second Language, and Citizenship, and the Reading Soul Mates Program (second graders learning to read on grade level.)*

*Your contribution helps to change lives!*

*Reading and literacy are some of the most important life skills anyone will ever acquire!*