

Making Lives More Meaningful

Agency: Sioux Falls Area Literacy Council

Service: Provides one-on-one tutoring for aspiring adult learners with limited literacy skills and support for both adult learners and their tutors as they begin their journey on the pathway to literacy.

Need: 15-20% of the population struggle with a reading disorder. 56 adult learners were provided assistance in 2008.

What does that mean to me? Sioux Falls Area Literacy Council gives individuals the opportunity to learn the reading and writing skills they may have missed out on; better preparing them for work related and other experiences that involve proficiency in reading and writing.

Most people enjoy going out to eat and feel comfortable filling out a job application. But for 85 million Americans these seemingly simple activities can become the source of stress.

“It’s not an easy thing,” said 59 year-old Rich. “I got by for a long time.”

Rich, like 35% of people in the US, has struggled with reading since the 4th grade.

“They taught me one way in fourth grade, another in fifth and a different way in sixth,” said Rich, “I always had trouble, but they kept passing me through and I graduated without really knowing how to read.”

Many Americans suffer with low reading levels. Many of these individuals have graduated from high school, even college and are working full time jobs. But still have problems reading menus and filling out forms at the doctor’s office.

“I’ve always wanted to read and understand the Bible and golf and racing magazines,” said Rich. “I’ve already started reading whole newspaper articles since I began the literacy program.”

Thanks to Sioux Empire United Way and their support of the Sioux Falls Area Literacy Council, people like Rich can get the assistance they need to improve their reading skills and make their lives more meaningful. “This program is supposed to take a year, but I’ll keep at it for five years if I have to. I just want to read better!”