



Literacy Assistance Center

Press Release

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Literacy Organization Receives United Hospital Fund Grant

The Literacy Assistance Center (LAC), the premier organization providing support services for New York's adult and family literacy programs, has received a \$50,000 Health Care Improvement Grant from the United Hospital Fund. The grant will be used to guide the development of new partnerships between literacy programs and health care providers.

The LAC has been developing these partnerships as part of its Health Literacy Initiative, a collaborative effort with the NYC Mayor's Office to improve the health and health care of low-income and immigrant New Yorkers. Health literacy is the ability to access, understand, and use health information and health services. In the Health Literacy Initiative partnerships, health care organizations provide medical information and resources to nearby literacy programs, while the literacy programs assist their learners in developing strategies to increase their access to health care professionals and vital health information. For example, the partnership established last year between Harlem Hospital and the Mid-Manhattan Adult Learning Center of the NYC Department of Education provided opportunities for dialogue in which hospital staff and the center's students learned to communicate more effectively with each other about health needs and health care. A tour enabled immigrant students to become more familiar with the hospital so that they would be more likely to use its services.

The LAC is in its third decade of providing free professional development and other services to New York City programs offering adult literacy, family literacy, English for Speakers of Other Languages, and GED preparation. The LAC also operates New York State's Literacy Referral Hotline, which assists learners and volunteers in identifying the most appropriate nearby free adult education program. For more information on the LAC and the Health Literacy Initiative, visit www.lacnyc.org.

The United Hospital Fund is a health services research and philanthropic organization dedicated to promoting high-quality, patient-centered health care services that are accessible to all New Yorkers. In 2004, UHF provided more than \$3 million in grants to support model projects, research on systemic problems, and innovative solutions to health care problems.-

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