



neuhaus  
EDUCATION CENTER



# *Literacy For All*

2023 Year In Review

# Message from CEO

*“It is time to reinvent education with  
Literacy for All as the foundation...”*

I recently had a profound conversation with a valued member of one of our adult literacy classes. He shared his story of attending a local Houston-area school until the age of 14, when he made the difficult decision to leave due to family circumstances. Despite being placed in special education classes, he never acquired the ability to read during his time in school. His story underscores the importance of ensuring that every student receives the support and resources they need to succeed. It's a reminder of the responsibility we have to create inclusive and effective educational environments for all.

As I interact with our adult literacy program and engage in virtual sessions, I'm reminded of the impact Neuhaus Education Center has on people's lives. I'm constantly inspired by the dedication of our educators and learners, and often ask myself, "What if every individual had access to quality reading instruction right from the start?"

The consequences of illiteracy are far-reaching, but so too are the possibilities that literacy unlocks. We have a choice: to sit back and watch or to actively participate in the solution. Adult literacy is a reflection of broader systemic issues, but it's also a beacon of hope. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all who contribute to this cause – your generosity and dedication do not go unnoticed.

Let's continue to be catalysts for change, united in our mission to make literacy accessible to all. Together, we are part of a movement, a reading revolution that transcends boundaries and transforms lives.



*Tracy White Weeden*

Dr. Tracy White Weeden  
President & CEO  
Neuhaus Education Center

# Message from the Board of Trustees

Over 10 years ago, a good friend of mine first brought Neuhaus Education Center to my attention. Reading has always been a passion of mine, and I quickly fell in love with the mission and the people involved with the organization and eventually joined the board.

Growing up, my mom was a teacher who was an avid reader and promoted my reading from an early age. We spent many afternoons reading together and sharing our love of books. Reading is a core skill and the building block on which so much knowledge is gained. As a national leader in implementing the science of reading, Neuhaus is doing important work by providing the basic foundational skill that everyone must have to be successful. I want all children to have access to quality literacy education by finding enjoyment in reading and the knowledge it brings.

Parents should care about this issue. Business leaders should care even more because we want employees and entrepreneurs who can read, spell, write, and present their ideas with confidence and excellence.

2023 was a difficult year for the education world due to the continued effects of pandemic learning loss and the lack of funding for school districts across the nation. Neuhaus was not immune to these effects, but thanks to generous donors and school partners, we were able to weather the storm.

One of the year's highlights was the rollout of our Adult Literacy Opportunity Youth class. Did you know that according to a recent report from the Houston Mayor's Office of Adult Literacy, 1 in 3 adults in the City of Houston struggle with literacy? This new class engages students aged 16 to 24 years old, many with dyslexia and other reading difficulties, and provides them with a cohort of peers while they increase their reading abilities. Several of the youth participants have said they enjoy their time in this class more than the regular school day and have made lifelong friends.

As the Chair of the Neuhaus Education Center Board of Trustees, I am looking forward to creating new initiatives like the Adult Literacy Opportunity Youth class while continuing to refine our exceptional existing services.

Our greatest national treasure is the resources of our citizens. We need your continuing support to invest in this and future generations until illiteracy is eradicated. Your investment of time, talent, and treasure are deeply appreciated. There is so much work to be done, and your support is life changing.



Amy Thompson  
Board of Trustees President  
Neuhaus Education Center



For more than 40 years, Neuhaus Education Center (NEC) has been a trailblazer in solutions for overcoming obstacles to literacy, including dyslexia, and today is a nationally recognized leader in the implementation of the science of reading.

Our professional development for educators, referral and resource services for families, and classes for adult learners unlock a brighter future of *Literacy for All*.

## Our Programs & Services



### Teacher Professional Development

Neuhaus professional development and training applies research-based methods that help all students achieve skilled reading and attain individual literacy goals. We empower and equip teachers to adeptly identify and address students' literacy needs, leveraging the resources provided by their school through coaching and tailored training.



### Family Support

Home is where literacy takes root, and when a child struggles with reading, the search for answers and specialists trained in detecting learning differences can be difficult and intimidating. Our resources and referral services provide families with a welcome first step in unlocking a path to reading success.



### Adult Literacy

Together we can transform the family tree through literacy. NEC is the only adult literacy program in Houston where classes are taught by Certified Academic Language Therapists (CALT), to help students reach their skilled reading goals.

# Our Impact



**3,118**

Educators learned to teach reading using structured literacy instruction



**749**

Coaching and implementation visits with classroom teachers and school leaders



**7**

## University Partnerships

- TAMU Texarkana
- Walsh University
- Texas State University
- Texas A&M University
- William Carey University
- University of Houston
- Rice University



**341**

School districts & private schools served



**41**

Professionals graduated from our dyslexia specialist certification programs

## Family Support Programs



**6,095**

Family members of struggling readers accessed free information and support



**620**

Family members attended informative seminars on reading



**1,867**

Calls and emails from family members were answered

## Adult Literacy Programs



**107** Total students per year



**540** Hours of instruction per semester

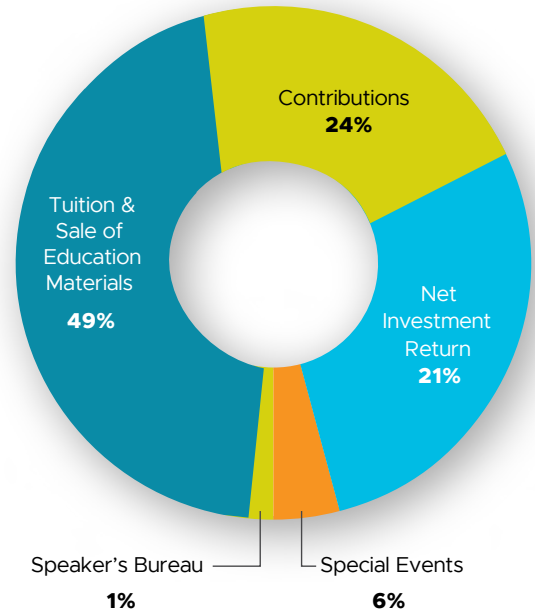


**3/4** Students entered the program reading below a 4th grade level

# 2023 Financial Report

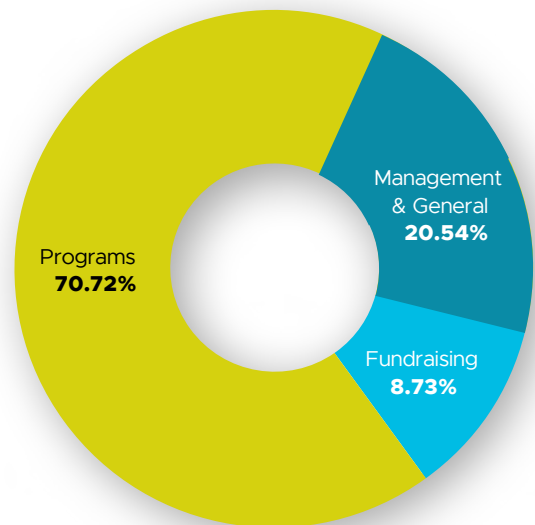
## Revenue 2023

Tuition & Sale of Educational Materials	\$3,372,045
Contributions	\$1,673,935
Special Events	\$402,664
Speaker's Bureau	\$62,198
Net Investment Return & Endowment Draw	\$1,422,095
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,932,937</b>



## Expenses

Programs	\$5,524,335
Management & General	\$1,604,780
Fundraising	\$681,989
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,811,104</b>



# 2023 Highlights

Educators with instructional team members, Tamara Hall and Jennifer LaHaie



## Certification Pathways

The **Online Certification Program for Dyslexia Specialists (OCPDS)** provides educators with the preparation and knowledge to offer intervention for students specifically identified with dyslexia or students who demonstrate reading and spelling challenges. The program saw its first graduate, **Tekila Fullam of New Miami, Ohio**, in 2023. Also, in 2023, NEC grew OCPDS by partnering with the **Alaska Department of Education and Pasadena ISD** to add their respective educators into program cohorts.

## Family Support Outreach

In addition to organizing 27 information sessions and dyslexia simulations, the Family Support Office (FSO) actively engaged in outreach initiatives through strategic community partnerships. These collaborations included **Aldine ISD (English/Spanish)**, **Literacy Now (English/Spanish)**, **Prairie View A&M University Wellness Initiatives at Haverstock Hills**, **Meyers Center medical staff**, **Communities in Schools staff**, **Frost Bank**, and the **Junior League of Houston, Inc.**



Lara Speights, Vice President of Family Support and Adult Literacy

## NEC Launches New Student Information System

After a two-year development period, NEC unveiled its latest innovation: the **Neuhaus Education Center Student Information System (NECSIS)**. This proprietary, custom cloud-based web application serves as a centralized repository for all student-related data, and is accessible across all NEC departments. NECSIS streamlines and automates student-centric operations, generating automatic workflows to enhance organizational processes. Prior to NECSIS, many internal procedures, particularly student registration, relied on manual data entry, spreadsheet creation, and email communication. Now, with NECSIS, the interconnected departmental portals facilitate more efficient workflows and enhance the overall customer experience. The creation of this system was generously supported by The Elkins Foundation.



# 2023 Highlights

(Cont.)

Educators, Francy Mitchell, Laurel Stevens, Elizabeth Romero at the Specialist Roundtable



## Launch of the Structured Literacy Modules

In 2023, NEC unveiled a transformative resource tailored for educators: the **Structured Literacy Modules (SLM)**. These modules offer a deep exploration into evidence-based, structured literacy instruction, providing a thorough understanding of its core components. Grounded in research from the science of reading, the modules highlight the necessity of structured literacy for cultivating skilled readers. They offer practical insights on implementing these components in direct instruction, covering all aspects of literacy instruction and implementation.

This resource equips educators with essential knowledge for nurturing literacy skills in their students and serves as a “guiding light” for those seeking clarity on the significance of structured literacy in the journey toward reading proficiency. With the convenience of on-demand accessibility, educators can engage with the modules at their own pace, facilitating personalized and efficient professional development.

*“Structured Literacy instruction has helped my beginning readers to understand how letters are linked to sounds and has improved their ability to spell and decode significantly.”*

– Houston ISD Educator

## Advancing Knowledge & Expertise

In 2023, all of Neuhaus’ full-time **Instructional Team** members attained a new certification level. Through the Knowledge and Practice Examination for Effective Reading Instruction (KPEERI), educators enhanced their teaching careers and validated their expertise in structured literacy instruction. Remaining abreast of the latest research is crucial, as many states mandate certification. Now, every member of the Neuhaus **Instructional Team** is equipped to teach in the organization’s certification pathways.



Instructional team member, Jen LaHaie, working with an educator



# 2023 Highlights

(Cont.)

Adult Literacy Class with instructor Suz Hall



## Adult Literacy

The **Margaret H. Ley Adult Literacy Program** saw enrollment increase by 20% in 2023 with 60% of students attending virtually and 40% attending in person.

In May 2023, NEC celebrated the graduation of 12 **students** from the Adult Literacy Program. Highlights included students sharing their experiences with attendees and guest speakers, Amir Bar, CEO of UCNLearn and former NEC adult literacy student, and Ameer Baraka, Emmy<sup>®</sup> Award-nominated actor and dyslexia advocate. An alumni class that focuses on complex reading and writing skills and requires students to use Microsoft Word for assignments to increase their digital literacy began in fall 2023.

In December 2023, an additional 10 **students** graduated from the Adult Literacy Program. At the celebration, Jenai Tidwell, MA, LPC-S, from Fowler & Tidwell Counseling served as the guest speaker.



Jenai Tidwell, MA, LPC-S from Fowler & Tidwell at the December graduation

Adult Literacy students, John and Chao

David Chalk, Dr. Ruth López  
Turley, Dr. Tracy White  
Weeden, Jenn White,  
Danielle Shokes-Knotts

## Unlocking Literacy

**Unlocking Literacy: Houston, We Have a Solution!**, sponsored by Gulf Coast Workforce Board – Workforce Solutions, was held on October 24, 2023, at the Jones Hall at the University of St. Thomas. Over 150 attendees experienced the transformational event that included the screening of two impactful films: *The Truth About Reading* and *The Right to Read*, which aim to raise awareness about the importance of literacy.

Each screening was followed by an engaging panel discussion with literacy leaders and advocates moderated by **Jenn White**, host of 1A. Panelists included **Dr. Tracy White Weeden**, President & CEO of Neuhaus Education Center; **Danielle Shokes-Knotts**, Manager, Adult Education and Literacy, Gulf Coast Workforce Board, Houston-Galveston Area Council; **Ameer Baraka**, actor, author, and dyslexia advocate; **Dr. Ruth N. López Turley**, Professor, Department of Sociology at the Kinder Institute for Urban Research, Rice University; **Dave DeJohn**, Educator & Literacy Advocate; **David Chalk**, Entrepreneur & Literacy Advocate; **Debbie Landau**, Chief Operating Officer, Lovescaping; and **Federico Salas-Isnardi**, Director of the City of Houston Mayor’s Office for Adult Literacy.

## Family Bingo

More than 200 children, parents, grandparents, and friends gathered for NEC’s first **Family Bingo** event on Sunday, November 5, 2023, at the SPJST Lodge 88 in the Heights. **Deborah Duncan** from Great Day Houston served as the event’s emcee and bingo caller, contributing to the lively atmosphere. The evening raised nearly \$40,000, while guests savored delicious offerings including hot dogs and nachos from **James Coney Island**, cotton candy and popcorn from **Pirouette: A Cloud Candy**, and rice crispy treats from **Ms. Krispie**.

This event was made possible by the hard work of the event committee: Bahiyiyh Autry, Kathleen Noel Camp, Cynthia Goehringer, Jamie Grissom, Suz Hall, Karen McCarthy, Susan McConn, Elisa Moran, and Janna Webber.



Event Emcee,  
Deborah Duncan



Families  
playing bingo

Luncheon Chairs, Ethel and Chap Hutcheson and Laura and Chris Hutcheson with their son Cooper



Bettie Cartwright, Dr. Gloria Hui and friends



Dorian Cockrell and Nory Angel



Barb and Will Noel and Sharon Noel Griffin

## Literacy Lights the Way Luncheon

The **2023 Annual Benefit Luncheon** took place Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at The Post Oak Hotel. Over \$475,000 was raised, thanks to the generosity of our donors and the 500 individuals and educators who attended the event.

Luncheon chairs **Ethel and Chap Hutcheson** and **Laura and Chris Hutcheson** highlighted the importance of literacy as a human right and its ability to combat poverty and transform communities. The event featured keynote speaker **Ameer Baraka**, an accomplished actor, author, and literacy advocate who shared his inspiring story of overcoming social and economic barriers due to his inability to read, and his subsequent championing of prison reform and dyslexia awareness. **Marjorie and Palmer Hutcheson** were honored for their commitment and leadership to Neuhaus Education Center.\*

This event was made possible by the hard work of luncheon host committee members Leslie Blanton; Laura and Seth Borland; Lucia and Louis Brandt; Kathleen Noel Camp; DeBra and George Edwards; Ruth and Dan Flournoy; Anne Frischkorn; Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Goehringer; Joanie and Don Haley; Cecilia and Emerson Hankamer; Jennifer Jeffery; Ann Johnson; Patty and Neil Kallmeyer; Katherine and Matthew Kardesch; Klinka and John Lollar; Anne and Jack Moriniere; Graham and Ed Neuhaus; Susan and Charlie Neuhaus; Jennifer and Will Neuhaus; Betsey and Bob Phillips; Lenox and John Reed; Eloise and David T. Searls Jr; Kristen Oesch Stubbs; Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Taylor; Leslie and Eric Wade; Elizabeth and Peter Wareing; Janna and David Webber; and Gabrielle and Rallin Welch.

A special thank you to **HEB** for providing the event centerpieces and **RBC Wealth Management** for serving as the event program sponsors.

*\*In memory of the late Marjorie Hutcheson and her husband, Palmer Hutcheson, we recognized and honored them for their unwavering dedication and leadership in advancing the mission of Neuhaus Education Center.*



Keynote Speaker, Ameer Baraka



Honorees, Palmer and the late Marjorie Hutcheson



Mary North, Lenox Reed, and Kay Allen



**Katy Severe**  
Certification  
Pathways  
Educator

“I first heard about Neuhaus and the OCPDS program through some Google searching. I was interested in furthering my degree with more training and knowledge about dyslexia and was looking into some of the options. I attended an information meeting via Zoom soon after, and then signed up shortly after that!

I have really enjoyed learning more about dyslexia and how to best meet the needs of students with language-based learning disabilities. I feel both knowledgeable and empowered to share with parents and colleagues more about dyslexia. Knowledge is power, and I love being able to shatter some of the myths that many educators still have about dyslexia and shed some new light (and evidence-based information) on it.

I would recommend the program to other educators; the instructors are top-notch. The entire time I felt that what I was learning was the most up-to-date, evidence-based information about dyslexia. The instructors and supervisors all have extensive background knowledge in this field, and were so helpful in providing feedback during our mock lessons and after submitting recorded lessons with my students. I won't downplay the amount of work and time that this program requires of you, but it is so worth it in my opinion.

I was nervous about taking the KPEERI exam at first. After taking it (and passing), I realized that the OCPDS program and the wealth of knowledge I gained from it really set me up for success. Honestly, there was nothing to be nervous about.”



**Tameka Blackshire**  
Adult  
Literacy  
Student

“To be completely honest, there was a time when I found myself in a low place, struggling not only with my own understanding but also with my son's challenges. My son had been diagnosed with dyslexia, and the struggles he faced in school echoed deeply within me. I carried the weight of feeling like I had let him down. The turning point came when I stumbled upon the Neuhaus Adult Literacy Program. It was a moment of bravery when I thought, “What could possibly go wrong?” I reached out to the staff from the Family Support & Adult Literacy Office and that conversation marked my first step.

Among the many impactful aspects of the Neuhaus program, I can hold my head high now, confident in my reading abilities. Most importantly, I can support my son's reading journey and help him recognize his progress.

Neuhaus Education Center took a chance on me, and it changed my life. Now, I stand proud, armed with newfound knowledge, ready to share it with my son, my grandkids, and anyone else who needs it.”



**Heather Beukema**  
Charter School  
Partner

“IDEA Public Schools believes that each and every child can go to college. Since 2000, IDEA Public Schools has grown from a small school with 150 students to a national network of tuition-free, K-12 public charter schools in the United States. Currently, the network serves over 80,000 college-bound students in 143 schools across Texas and its affiliates. For the last 16 years, IDEA has sent nearly 100% of its graduates to college and remains on track to uphold that legacy.

In 2022, IDEA Public Schools was the recipient of TEA's 2-year Dyslexia Grant. With this grant, IDEA has been able to provide targeted professional development in partnership with Neuhaus Education Center to its staff. Currently, 644 staff members have completed a series of courses preparing them to teach and support students with dyslexia. In addition, 22 staff members are currently undergoing credentialing training to become Certified Academic Language Practitioners (CALP). These participants complete a specific sequence of practicum-based courses focused on developing the ability to successfully deliver intensive literacy instruction to individuals with a language learning difference, in particular dyslexia.

The partnership with Neuhaus has changed the way we provide support for our students. Students with dyslexia K-12 each receive tailored, targeted, explicit, research-based instruction that ensures it meets their needs. Teachers are provided with the training, knowledge, practice, and curriculum they need to feel successful. Ultimately, we can achieve the highest results and accomplish our mission because of our partnership with Neuhaus Education Center.”



Lenox M. Reed Seminar event attendees



Dr. Erin Baumgartner speaks to seminar attendees

## Lenox M. Reed Seminar

Educators, friends, and board members gathered on Wednesday, April 19, 2023, at the Junior League of Houston for our annual **Lenox M. Reed Seminar** to congratulate 40 graduates of the Dyslexia Specialist Preparation Program (DSPP).

The annual seminar offers educators the opportunity to hear from industry experts on the implementation of the science of reading and evidence-based methods dedicated to improving classroom success in reading, writing, and spelling.

**Dr. Erin Baumgartner**, Director of the Houston Education Research Consortium at Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research, discussed the importance of centering the needs of emerging bilingual/English language students in planning, and consider how doing so will benefit students and our entire community.

## Houston Area Educators Celebrate Year-End Achievement

On May 4, 2023, the Neuhaus Instructional and Advancement teams hosted a new end of school year celebration honoring the accomplishments of educators in the Houston region who are using Neuhaus coursework and resources. Over 60 attendees enjoyed mingling with educators, funders, and Neuhaus staff members. The highlight of the event was a testimonial given by an educator that participated in classes and coaching through grant funds provided by **The Powell Foundation** and the **Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™**.



Dr. Tracy White Weeden with two Houston-area educators

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