2018-19 IMPACT REPORT

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF SITSTAYREAD
FROM THE FOUNDERS
CELEBRATING 15 YEARS
OF SITSTAYREAD

In 2003, we started SitStayRead with a simple idea - unite kids and dogs to provide a unique approach to motivate students to become life-long readers. Smartphones were not in every hand, and technology wasn’t essential to a student’s life, at home or at school.

Now in 2019, screens, analytics, and apps are constantly seeking the “most efficient” way to solve problems and are taking over our world; however, adults and children alike still yearn for meaningful connection and shared empathy.

SitStayRead still provides that and more with an authentic, hands-on experience in every program, inspiring creativity that only happens because of caring volunteers and Certified Reading Assistance Dogs. This connection increases the students’ interest level, curiosity, and engagement in reading and writing. SitStayRead shows students that they matter, and they receive the instruction, love, and attention they deserve to help them become active readers and creative writers.

This simple idea, along with your passion, support, and collaboration, has turned SitStayRead into a thriving community of volunteers, teachers, students, and donors reaching 21,951 students in 651 classrooms since 2003.

Thanks to you, SitStayRead continues to grow and seek new ways to motivate and inspire students. In 2019, SitStayRead was honored to support student authors and publish their third early reader book in collaboration with the Shedd Aquarium and the Perucca Family Foundation. SitStayRead also expanded to more kindergarten classes, jumpstarting the magic of SitStayRead that will follow them through third grade.

Today, there are over 100,000 K-3 students in Chicago Public Schools that qualify for SitStayRead programs but we are able to only reach 3%. Since 2003, the demand has always been higher than we can deliver. With your continued support, more teachers and students in Chicago can be part of the SitStayRead community.

It’s simple to come up with an idea and get it started, but harder to keep innovating and growing the organization. Hats off to you for your incredible commitment to SitStayRead students and volunteers. You’ve given SitStayRead the resources to provide a quality, impactful program that keeps students engaged and helps them develop a life-long love of reading. Your support makes the authentic connection of SitStayRead possible for thousands of students each year, and your continued commitment to that reality will benefit thousands more to come.

Thank you,

MaryEllen Schneider  Sarah Murphy  MK Czerwiec

SITSTAYREAD FOUNDERS

Pictured on Left: The first SitStayRead student authors from the first second grade Tail Blazers program at Hendricks Community Academy in 2004. Hendricks Community Academy is still a partner, receiving Kindergarten, Little Buddies, Tail Blazers, and Poetry Pals programming.
OUR MISSION

IS TO ADVANCE CHILDREN’S LITERACY SKILLS USING AN ENGAGING CURRICULUM, DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS, AND CERTIFIED DOGS.
IN 2018-19:

94 classroom programs

243 volunteers

73 Certified Reading Assistance Dogs

2,656 students served
OUR IMPACT

2018-19 PARTNER SCHOOLS

1. Gale Community Academy, Rogers Park
2. Manierre Elementary School, Old Town
3. Funston Elementary School, Logan Square
4. Lowell Elementary School, Humboldt Park
5. Cameron Elementary School, Humboldt Park
6. Brunson Elementary School, Austin
7. Melody Elementary School, W. Garfield Park
8. Faraday Elementary School, E. Garfield Park
9. Hughes Elementary School, N. Lawndale
10. Paz Elementary School, Little Village
11. National Teacher’s Academy, Chinatown
12. Fuller Elementary School, Bronzeville
13. Hendricks Community Academy, Fuller Park
14. Hamline Elementary School, Back of the Yards
15. Fulton Elementary School, Back of the Yards
16. Marquette Elementary School, Chicago Lawn
17. Tanner Elementary School, Greater Grand Crossing
18. Carver Elementary School, Altgeld Gardens
This year, we added two new partner schools to the SitStayRead family - Henry O. Tanner Elementary School in the Greater Grand Crossing neighborhood and Octavio Paz Elementary School in the Little Village neighborhood. This brought our total schools served this year to 18. We provide our programs at no-cost, targeting our partnerships at schools that serve students with less access to resources. In 2018-19, 94.4% of SitStayRead partner school students came from low-income households and 73% of third-graders scored below the national average in reading*.

This year, we served kindergarten through third-grade students in 94 classrooms. Our newest Kindergarten program, piloted in 2018, reached 358 students in 14 classrooms. Our Little Buddies (1st Grade) program, focusing on social-emotional learning, was in 32 classrooms and served 740 students. The Tail Blazers (2nd Grade) program served 680 students in 24 classrooms, while our Poetry Pals (3rd Grade) program was in 21 classrooms serving 505 students.

*According to CPS data
IN THE COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

While our mission is primarily delivered through our programming in the classroom during the school day, we also offer community programming. Through participation in school-hosted Family Literacy Events, two summer programs, and other one-time program opportunities, we served an additional 373 children outside the school day and gave away 1,627 books this year to students in the community.

FIELD TRIPS

Thanks to the generosity of our corporate supporters, we offered several field trips this year. Allstate Insurance Company joined us at Manierre Elementary, and our friends at KPMG welcomed five classrooms for three separate field trips, hosting SitStayRead from the top of the Aon Center.

Thanks to the Perucca Family Foundation, we were also able to take two second-grade classrooms from Funston Elementary to the Shedd Aquarium as part of the publishing of our third early reader book, “Where Are You, Dozer?” In the spring, the fun continued with a field trip to Navy Pier for three classrooms of students from Hendricks Community Academy.

Because of these partnerships, we are able to offer more unique experiences at no cost to schools and provide students with more opportunities to experience literacy in new ways!
Our end-of-the-year Keep Reading Celebrations were our largest yet, with 22 Celebrations in 10 days thanks to the help of our volunteers, Certified Reading Assistance Dogs, and our corporate partners.

Each of the 2,283 SitStayRead students across our 18 partner schools received a Summer Reading Fun Pack filled with pencils, erasers, a pencil sharpener, a notebook, a coloring book, a pack of crayons, a SitStayRead pencil case, a bookmark, an encouragement card, and a copy of our newest early-reader book “Where Are You, Dozer?”

Thanks to KPMG’s Family for Literacy program, each student also received five brand-new books to take home and fill their at-home libraries with, totaling 13,698 books given away in 10 days. Sending SitStayRead students home for the summer with these vital literacy tools is an important part of our mission and we are thankful to KPMG for their generosity!

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped at Keep Reading Celebrations and who made encouragement cards throughout the year: ABOI/ID, Allstate Insurance Company, ARMA, BlueCross BlueShield of IL, BMO Harris Bank, Dogtopia Foundation, IRi, KPMG, Nielsen, PwC, and VML.
IN THE BOOKS

SHEDD-INSPIRED

Thanks to the Perucca Family Foundation, we took second-grade students from Funston Elementary to the Shedd Aquarium for a day of exploration and inspiration in the Amazon Rising exhibit. Students were sent on a guided activity, searching the exhibit for animals who are masters at camouflage.

Inspired by this activity, students wrote their own stories. SitStayRead Book Buddies, and Certified Reading Assistance Dog Cosi, were on-site to help students with their writing.

“WHERE ARE YOU, DOZER?”

Using inspiration from the stories, SitStayRead board member and children’s author, J. B. Blankenship, illustrator Cassandre Bolan, and SitStayRead staff, created our third early-reader book, “Where Are You, Dozer?” The book tells of Dozer, a dog who is invited to play a game of hide and seek at the aquarium and ultimately finds the perfect hiding place.

We commemorated the publishing of this book with a celebration for the student authors. The students signed copies of the book and each took a copy home to show their families the story inspired by their writing! This book was then given to all 2,283 students during the Keep Reading Celebrations in June and will enter our curriculum this fall. Want your own copy? You can purchase “Where Are You, Dozer?” on Amazon!
On Friday, April 26, 2019, we held our fifth annual Bark ‘n Ball fundraiser, hosting a sold-out crowd at Galleria Marchetti. We had our largest and most successful event ever, with 345 attendees (including 30 dogs!) raising $181,096! On top of these milestones, all of the event expenses were covered thanks to our sponsors, especially our Premier Sponsors, Allstate Insurance Company and Kirkland & Ellis, LLP.

This memorable night was packed with an evening of entertainment including second-grade teacher Ashley Geyer, who moved everyone with her heartfelt speech about SitStayRead’s impact in her classroom. It was a Bark ‘n Ball to remember! Thank you to all those who attended or donated, and to Vanessa Brantley Newton for designing the Bark ‘n Ball Poster this year!
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### Corporate
- Donations: $23,944
- In-Kind: $69,431

### Grants
- Unrestricted: $274,500
- Family Foundations: $48,200
- Restricted: $22,500

### Events
- Donations: $215,125
- In-Kind: $12,314

### Individuals
- Donations: $107,534
- In-Kind: $13,452

### Other
- Total: $1,284

### TOTAL INCOME
$788,284

### TOTAL EXPENSES
$648,896

### NET OPERATING INCOME
$139,388

### NET ASSETS
$404,098

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## SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to photographers Jon Sall of Sall Pro Photography, Erika Dufour, and Andrea Mandel for the photos included in this report. Thank you also to Victoria Luisi for designing this report.
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Factory
Chicago Cut
Steakhouse
Chicago Pet Sitters
Chicago Sky
(Sky Cares
Foundation)
Crimson Cat Studios
Beth and Ken
Czechanski
Dave Davis
Patrick Dawley
Erika Dufour
Sharon and Frank
Dugan
Eagle Ridge Resort
and Spa
Eli’s Cheesecake Co.
Family Pet Animal
Hospital, P.C.
First Book
Paul Weaver and
Shannon Fitzpatrick
Four Corners’ Tavern
Group
Knoxie Overton and
Farrell Friedman +
Funk’s Barbershop
Garfield’s Beverage
Warehouse (Wicker
Park/Bucktown)
Tom and KC Garrett
Gibsons Restaurant
Group
Ben and Nicole
Gilbert
GOLFTEC
Goodman Theatre +
Google
Green City Market
Frederick Lynn
Haberdashere
Brendan and Julie
Hagman
Harrington, Ocko &
Monk LLP
Haymarket Pub &
Brewery
Thom Heil
Horizon Line Films
The Hotel at
Midtown
Jim and Rosemary
Hughes
InterContinental
Hotels & Resorts
Jenner & Block LLP
Jiobit
jookie, a portrait
boutique +
Ramesh and Sudha
Kalari
The Lagunitas
Brewing Co. +
Chris Latting
Lettuce Entertain You
Enterprises, Inc. +
Kate Lloyd +
Malnati
Organization, Inc. +
David Harris and
Andrea Mandel
Massage Envy
(Plainfield Location)
Justin and Sarah
McCarty
Sarah and Tim
Murphy
Navy Pier
Mara and John
O’Brien
Megan O’Brien
Mark Juhl and
Kevin Oran
Out-U-Go! Pet Care
Services Inc.
Paradise 4 Paws
Larry Pinsky
Kristin and Steve
Purcell
Revolution Brewing
Rockstar Pets
Brett and Michelle
Sanchez
Tony and Caitlin
Saracco
The Second City
Shred 415
Southwest Airlines
SpeedPro Chicago
Loop
Robert and Katherine
Strozak
Sutton Studios +
Tito’s Vodka
Uncommon Ground
Urban Oasis +
Jessica Warchol
Jessica Westerman
Wildfire Restaurant
Windy City Ninjas
Wines for Humanity
Women & Children
First Bookstore