



ANNUAL REPORT

2016-2017

MISSION STATEMENT

The Robinson Community Learning Center welcomes community and Notre Dame partners who strengthen the Northeast Neighborhood of South Bend through relationship building and educational opportunities. By promoting innovation and excellence, the Center builds individual capacity and enhances existing systems throughout South Bend.



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Letter from the Manager

The programs at the Robinson Community Learning Center (RCLC) continue to thrive, engaging more than 500 volunteers and touching the lives of more than 2,500 community members of all ages. The following pages detail our program activities and accomplishments for the 2016-17 academic year. In addition, we have a lot of wonderful news to share:

- The RCLC was awarded another grant to continue our AmeriCorps program for three more years!
- RCLC's Take Ten program was the recipient of Serve Indiana's Service Learning Award!
- The RCLC Shakespeare Company has been invited to perform in England!

And perhaps the most exciting development of all:

- The South Bend City Council approved funding for the Eddy Street Phase II project, which will include a new, larger Robinson Community Learning Center!

So now it's official: There will be a new RCLC building in our future! This new center will be significantly larger with more space and resources for our programs and will even have a safe greenspace so children will no longer have to play in the parking lot! Our new location—literally just across the street from where we are now—means we will continue to serve our current community and volunteers will continue to have easy access from campus.

Early conversations about the design and layout of our new center have already begun but much has yet to

be decided. Be assured that these conversations will include our entire community. Feedback has already indicated that the new center should provide a welcoming gathering space and incorporate the familiar RCLC murals in some way! We invite all RCLC participants, neighbors, community partners, volunteers, and families to let us know what aspects of the current building you would like to keep and what innovations you would like to see.

We look forward to keeping you engaged and informed in the journey to a new RCLC. The mission of the RCLC will remain unchanged, and we look forward to finding the ways our new center can better serve our community.

Jennifer Knapp Beudert
RCLC Manager

GOAL 1: HOSPITALITY

Create a setting that serves as a place of gathering and interaction among neighborhood residents, ND students, faculty and staff, and community partners.



A Gathering Place

For over 16 years the Robinson Community Learning Center has provided a welcoming environment for the Northeast Neighborhood and Notre Dame communities. In a typical week, approximately 750 individuals visit the RCLC. They come for tutoring, seniors' activities, community meetings, English classes, preschool, or just to read the paper. They range in age from 6 weeks to 96 years, come from 26 different countries, and represent a range of ethnic, racial, religious, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds. The RCLC is proud of its role in fostering such a richly diverse community, one that comes together through a shared commitment to learning and each other.

Programs for Seniors

*Lu Ella Webster,
Adult Program Coordinator*

The RCLC continues to offer many opportunities for senior adults to engage in ongoing learning and to connect with their community. More than 50 seniors participate in weekly book and computer clubs, a lively group of retired women meet monthly for fellowship, and there is even a senior yoga class! This year the monthly Lunch and Learn lecture series had an average attendance of 55 seniors who came to hear presentations such as: "Winterizing Your Home," "Tax Saving Strategies for Seniors," "Guarantees for You During Retirement," "Forever Learning," and "Planting Your Spring Garden for Summer Bloom."



For an overview of all the exciting happenings at the RCLC, check out our new video at rclc.nd.edu

GOAL 2: EDUCATION

Establish educational opportunities to develop technical abilities, build academic and life skills, and provide support/mentoring at all ages.



“Tutoring was the highlight of my week. The kids I worked with made me laugh and made me proud with how much they improved over a few short months. Their energy and positivity were infectious and always a breath of fresh air from the college bubble.”

ND Student Volunteer Tutor

Tutoring

Velshonna Luckey, Youth Development Program Director
 Jennifer Wittenbrink Ortega, Literacy Program Director
 Kris Arizmendi, Volunteer Coordinator

DURING 2016-17

180 children tutored
 25 schools represented

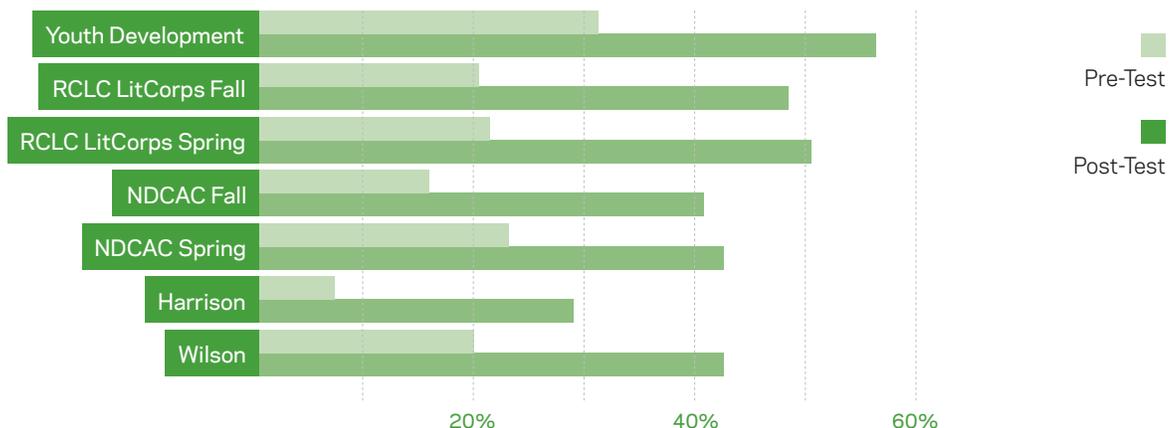
189 volunteers from 5 local colleges
 5,056 hours of tutoring

For more than 16 years, college student volunteers have been sharing their love of books and reading with youth, grades 1-12, as part of the RCLC Tutoring Programs. During 2016-17, these dedicated volunteers provided tutoring for seven cohorts of children at the RCLC, the Notre Dame Center for Arts and Culture, and the Boys & Girls Club sites at

Harrison and Wilson Primary Centers. Each week, participants received four tutoring sessions, which focused on areas of literacy learning such as vocabulary, sight words, reading, writing, and comprehension. Pre- and post-assessments were administered to measure literacy competency and identify individual goals for each child. As illustrated below, participants at

all sites showed growth in goal areas, with an average pre-post gain of 24.27 percentage points. Tutors and students also enjoyed sharing books during “read-aloud” times—*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *The Borrowers*, *Charlotte’s Web*, and *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello’s Library* were this year’s favorites!

Average Pre-Post Growth on Literacy Goals



Interested in learning some tutoring tips?
 Like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/literacycorpsrclc](https://www.facebook.com/literacycorpsrclc)

Enrichment Activities for Youth

The RCLC provides many enrichment opportunities for youth to engage their curiosity, learn new information, and use their imaginations in creative ways. RCLC enrichment activities range from Lego robotics to biogenetics to drumming to piano lessons. Field trips to the Snite Museum of Art, the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, the Shedd Aquarium, and DePauw University also helped RCLC youth expand their horizons.

Brain Health

Thirty-four children, grades 1-5, participated in the new Brain Health program, developed by biology professor Nancy Michael. The goal of the program is to improve children's understanding of their brains and beliefs about their ability to learn. The children learned the best ways to keep their brains healthy, and even got to hold real brains in their hands!

Notre Dame Center for Arts and Culture

More than 100 children, ages 1-14, participated in RCLC enrichment activities offered at the NDCAC, on South Bend's west side, including arts camps, jump rope club, yoga, Read Baby Read, and Project BEST (Building Excitement through Science and Technology). Children enrolled in the NDCAC after-school program worked with professional artists through the Indiana Arts Alliance and Crossroads Gallery for Contemporary Art. A highlight of the year was multiple visits to the Segura Arts Studio to learn about different types of printmaking.



MyAmerica

The MyAmerica program not only teaches RCLC youth about events in American history that still impact their lives today, but also encourages them to think about their own place in American history and how they will contribute to the future. As the culmination of this year's program, 14 middle and high school youth and six parents traveled to Philadelphia, where they visited Independence Hall, the National Constitution Center, Valley Forge, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

"I believe the MyAmerica trips provide students, staff, and parents with opportunities to get out of their comfort zone and see that there is a world outside of South Bend, and that they don't have to be in a certain space. On the trips they are allowed to dream, think big, and hope."

RCLC student



“Drama has been a hidden way for students to know and understand their self-worth. They see the important role that they play and the personality that they bring to the world.”

Sixth Grade Teacher

Robinson Shakespeare Company

Christy Burgess, Shakespeare Program Director

In January 2016, fourteen youth members of the Robinson Shakespeare Company (RSC) led a workshop for the Shakespeare Theatre Association National Conference at Notre Dame. The RSC received great acclaim for their workshop, and were invited to travel to Stratford-Upon-Avon to perform at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust’s New Place, located where Shakespeare’s family home once stood. Invitations to participate in classes at both the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the Globe Theatre in London soon followed,

as well as a request for RSC youth to give a talk to the Globe staff on engaging diverse youth with Shakespeare.

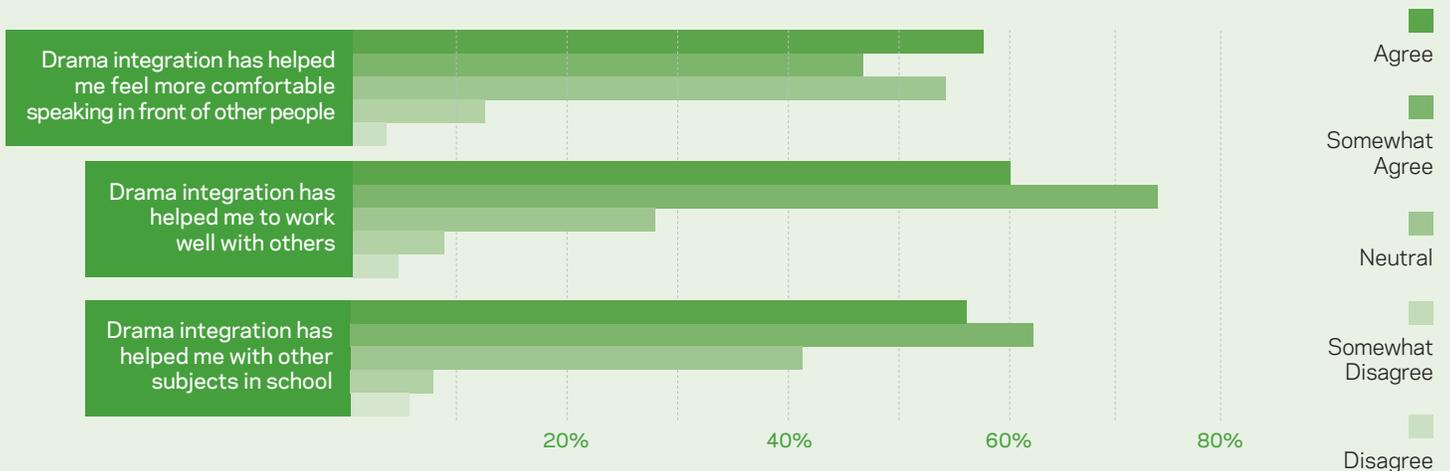
Check out the progress of the RSC UK Adventure at magazine.nd.edu/news/undreamed-shores.

Community Outreach

Since 2012, the RSC Outreach Initiative has provided opportunities for youth throughout South Bend to participate in drama activities by partnering with local schools. During 2016-17, after-school drama clubs

were implemented at Dickinson Fine Arts Academy, Muessel Primary Center, Jefferson Intermediate Center, Perley Fine Arts Academy, the NDCAC and the Center for the Homeless. RCLC staff also worked with teachers at the above schools, as well as at McKinley Primary Center, to incorporate drama integrated activities into the academic curriculum during the school day. As a result of these efforts, RSC staff served an average of 689 students per week: 253 in after-school programs and 436 through in-school drama integration instruction.

RSC Outreach Survey Responses



Like us on Facebook at [Robinson Shakespeare Company](https://www.facebook.com/RobinsonShakespeareCompany)

Advanced Skills and Youth Entrepreneurship

Michael Boyd
Advanced Skills and Entrepreneurship Program Director



More than 75 young entrepreneurs participated in the RCLC Youth Entrepreneurship program during 2016-17. They ranged in age from 11 to 18 and spent the year learning how to develop an idea from an “elevator pitch” to a full-fledged business plan, all the while honing their skills in public speaking,

critical thinking, teamwork, problem-solving, and professionalism. The curriculum included hands-on projects, presentations from local entrepreneurs and ND faculty members, and field trips to local businesses, including Martin’s Supermarket, Four Winds Field, and the South Bend Chocolate Factory.

The RCLC Entrepreneurship Team not only served youth at the RCLC, but also provided instruction at Jefferson Intermediate School, Dickinson Fine Arts Academy, John Adams High School’s Jobs for America’s Graduates program, Rise Up Academy, and the Career Academy.

RCLC youth received individual coaching and feedback from ND faculty and student mentors as they worked on their business plans. The culmination of the year was the Invention Convention Business Plan competition at the Mendoza College of Business. Ten middle and high school students presented their business plans to a panel of judges including ND business students and faculty.



Robinson Enterprises had another record-breaking year! A team of 14 youth worked with ND students and RCLC staff to manage seven parking lots during ND home football games. A group of 10-12 RCLC youth provided game day activities at the Notre Dame Football Fan Fest. This provided plenty of hands-on practice of skills taught in the Entrepreneurship program, such as customer service, professionalism, problem solving, and teamwork. Their efforts earned \$130,000 for the RCLC. Go Irish!

2017 Invention Convention Business Competition award-winning projects:

- *Abandon No More*—creating youth centers out of abandoned houses.
- *Airflow*—an environmentally friendly air compression engine.
- *Minority Music*—music therapy to help people through trauma or tragedy.
- *Hear Here Too*—a hearing device that reduces background noise to help students focus.
- *Ear-Pro*—a hearing insert that will translate spoken words into different languages.

GOAL 3: PARTNERSHIP

Provide space and support for programs through health care, business, school, and community organizations that promote education and enhance the quality of life.



Take Ten[©]

Ellen Kyles, Take Ten Program Director

Take Ten is a violence prevention/ conflict resolution curriculum that focuses on teaching skills to handle conflict in a peaceful way. Take Ten provides participants with the tools to “Talk it Out, Walk it Out, or Wait it Out” as alternatives to violence and builds their capacity to make better, more positive choices.

Take Ten in the community

A team of 139 college student volunteers and five AmeriCorps members taught Take Ten classes during 2016-17—spreading the message of nonviolence through 6,500 hours of community service. Volunteers came from five local colleges. A new partnership with Indiana University South Bend required students to include Take Ten in student teaching. Through these efforts, a total of 1,895 youth, grades K-12, received weekly Take Ten instruction at 17 local schools and seven local agencies. Take Ten instruction was also provided for adults

at the Center for the Homeless, the Indiana Department of Corrections South Bend Re-Entry Center, Hope Ministries, RCLC, YWCA, Women’s Care Center, and El Campito, reaching 210 participants.

Evaluation

The Take Ten program has conducted evaluations of its curriculum, administration, and methodology for the past nine years. During preceding years, evaluation findings demonstrated statistically significant positive growth in participants’ knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors related to violence. Recent results indicated that students with higher levels of Take Ten knowledge bullied less, fought less, and were more aware of the various types of violence in the surrounding environment.

The results of the 2016-17 evaluation also indicated positive growth, but not statistically significant growth,

a fact which was attributable to a “ceiling effect” that occurred when participants’ pre-test scores were so high that there was no room for significant post-test growth to be demonstrated. This ceiling effect pointed to the need for new measures of assessment.

In 2016, Take Ten received generous grants from the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation and the El-Hibri Foundation that were specifically targeted toward improving program evaluation. As a result, new Take Ten assessment measures were developed and implemented, surveys were administered with a new data collection protocol, and findings for 2016-17 are currently being analyzed. We look forward to sharing those results in next year’s RCLC Annual Report.

Full analysis of Take Ten Program Evaluation Data is available at taketen.nd.edu/evaluation.

Like us on Facebook at [Take Ten \(facebook.com/OfficialTakeTenSite\)](https://www.facebook.com/OfficialTakeTenSite)

Talk With Your Baby

Kris Arizmendi, Talk With Your Baby Coordinator

DURING 2016-17



312

parents and caregivers participated in TWYB classes.

18

new TWYB facilitators were trained to further spread TWYB's message throughout the region.

The mission of the Talk With Your Baby (TWYB) program is to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of talking and interacting with children right from birth in order to foster language, literacy, and social development.

TWYB offers both neighborhood classes and agency-based classes. This year, TWYB partnered with Women's Care Center, the St. Joseph County Health Department, El Campito, South Bend Community School Corporation Family Literacy, Hannah's House, the Department of Child Services, Youth Service Bureau, and Healthy Families to offer TWYB classes to 204 agency clients. TWYB also provided neighborhood classes for 108 parents at RCLC, St. Joseph County Public Library, Department of Child Services, NDCAC, Memorial Hospital, University Village, YMCA, the Salvation Army Kroc Center, and Harrison Primary School. TWYB also provides ongoing professional development for its facilitators through quarterly Lunch and Learn lectures.

Check out and like the Talk With Your Baby Facebook page! Posts include current research, parenting tips, links to events around the community, and fun activities to do with children!

facebook.com/talkwithyourbaby



"I have gained so much knowledge about the challenges that face non-English speaking families. This was a wonderful experience and one I will treasure for a long time. I have learned patience and compassion for these children in a way I never thought possible."

ND Student Preschool Volunteer

English as a New Language Preschool

Jennifer Wittenbrink Ortega, English as a New Language Preschool Director

Each Monday through Thursday, RCLC classrooms are filled with 85 adults from 24 different countries learning English as a New Language (ENL). This culturally diverse learning community is made possible by the RCLC's 16-year partnership with the South Bend Community School Corporation. Down the hall from the adults, their children are learning English in the RCLC's

ENL Preschool classroom. This year, 16 children (from seven countries and speaking four languages) were enrolled in the ENL preschool, which provides a literacy-rich program based on the HighScope curriculum. ENL families also engage in weekly parent-child activities to work on English skills together, and take field trips to learn more about their new community.

After nine months of preschool, children demonstrated an average gain of 19 months of English language development

Measured by the Peabody Test of Receptive Language.



Night at the Snite

Community Events

Andy Kostielney, RCLC Assistant Manager
Marguerite Taylor, RCLC Community Liaison

Each year the RCLC collaborates with community and Notre Dame partners to coordinate multiple large-scale events for RCLC participants as well as our neighbors. This year's events included the Northeast Neighborhood Council's Back-to-School Picnic (which unfortunately had to be quickly moved indoors when the heavens opened with torrential rain), Turning Over a New Leaf (during which the homes of 47 senior citizens were raked by 150 volunteers), the RCLC 16th Anniversary Celebration, and an All-In Block Party at NDCAC, which brought together 300 community partners, vendors, local artists, neighbors, and summer camp participants in a celebration of Indiana's bicentennial.



Back the Bend Day

ND's student government once again recruited and coordinated more than 600 volunteers from Notre Dame, other local colleges, and the community to participate in work projects throughout South Bend. These projects took place at the RCLC, Unity Gardens, South Bend parks, and throughout the city of South Bend, and

included planting gardens, painting fire hydrants, cleaning parks, and paving walkways. In addition, 56 seniors participated in a bus tour of ND and Holy Cross College. The day ended with a picnic for all at the RCLC.

Night at the Snite

For the fifth year in a row, ND's Snite Museum of Art hosted Family Night at the Snite for RCLC and NDCAC participants. More than 200 volunteers and children and their families attended (many of whom had never been to the museum before) and enjoyed making art, listening to stories, and completing a tricky scavenger hunt. It was exciting to have the museum all to ourselves!



AmeriCorps

On any given day in South Bend, one can find 30 enthusiastic young people in gray T-shirts with a large "A" emblazoned on the front serving our community. They can be found in schools, local agencies, Boys & Girls Clubs, and community centers. They are tutoring, practicing language skills with preschoolers, sharing Shakespeare with children as young as 8, teaching conflict resolution to middle schoolers, helping teenage entrepreneurs perfect business plans, or organizing activities for seniors. They are RCLC AmeriCorps members, and—as they say in their initial pledge—they "get things done for America."

AmeriCorps, a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, has engaged one million members over the past 20 years in service to communities. Members give a year of their lives, supported by only a modest living allowance plus an additional award which may be used for future education or to pay off student loans. We are pleased to announce that the RCLC was awarded another three-year AmeriCorps grant, so AmeriCorps members will be serving at the RCLC into 2020!

2016-17 AmeriCorps Members

Danielle Aase	Abby DeMars	Candace Lebron-Williams	Christopher Robinson
Chuck Ball	Ben Fouch	Andres Lincon	Pedro Rubio
Joseph Blakey	Alexandria Garner	Elliot Lorenc	Joe Russo
Jasmine Bradley	Thomas Graff	Valentina Marquez-Montero	Chelsea Smith
Katie Califano	Leigha Hathaway	Sheila McCarthy	Mark Shealy
EJ Chaleff	Katherine Hughes	Zoe Morgan	Alexander Uryga
Olivia Chen	Sam Jackson	Lauren Morisseau	Andres Vidaurre
Aurelie Delavignette	Abby Johnson	Kathy Reese	Joey Wikelski
	Grace Lazarz		

120,000

Total AmeriCorps hours served

160

Education Awards received

650

Volunteers recruited/
supported annually

2,000+

RCLC participants served
annually

183

RCLC AmeriCorps members
since 2011

27

AmeriCorps members served
more than one term

214,000 hours of service provided
for the community!

Many thanks to our 2016-17 sponsors!

The Robinson Community Learning Center would like to acknowledge our generous sponsors, without whom our work throughout the community would not be possible:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Arco/Murray National Construction | Jessie Ball duPont Foundation |
| The ArtsEverywhere Initiative of the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County | Key Bank Foundation |
| Better World Books | Notre Dame Alumni Association |
| The Bowsher-Booher Foundation | Notre Dame Center for Social Concerns |
| The Boys & Girls Club of St. Joseph County | Notre Dame Federal Credit Union |
| Carroll Charitable Trust at Wells Fargo Bank | PNC "Grow Up Great" |
| Dollar General Literacy Foundation | Serve Indiana/AmeriCorps |
| Holy Cross College | Shakespeare at Notre Dame |
| Indiana Arts Commission/Partnering Arts, Communities and Education | South Bend Community School Corporation |
| Indiana Michigan Power Company | University of Notre Dame |
| | Individual donors and those who wish to remain anonymous |

RCLC History

The RCLC was launched in February 2001 as an off-campus educational initiative of Notre Dame in partnership with Northeast Neighborhood residents of South Bend. While RCLC staff report to the Office of Public Affairs and Communication at the University of Notre Dame, programs are overseen by a program advisory board comprised of residents, program partners, ND faculty/staff, and students.

The Robinson Community Learning Center is a department in the Office of Public Affairs and Communication, under the direction of Jay Caponigro, Director of Community Engagement, Timothy Sexton, Associate Vice President, and Paul J. Browne, Vice President for Public Affairs and Communication. See more about Notre Dame's local outreach efforts at publicaffairs.nd.edu.

And to our 2016-17 RCLC Program Advisory Board Members

- | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Michael Ball | Kreece Fuchs | Nicole MacLaughlin | Kathy Reese |
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| Steve Egan | Reem Hassaen | Maria McKenna | Carmen Williams, co-chair |
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