

## **XEROX EMPLOYEES DEMONSTRATE WAYS TO SUPPORT LITERACY**

Driven by a desire to make a difference, employees and retirees of Xerox Corporation and its partner businesses have been working hard to bring the joy of reading to more people in their communities.

In Rochester, New York, where the company has its largest U.S. employee population, employees have long supported literacy through their work as tutors, tutor trainers, board members and community volunteers at Literacy Volunteers of Rochester, Inc. Many of their contributions are supported through the Xerox Community Involvement Program (XCIP), through which employees can apply for seed money to help fund community projects of their own design and choosing. XCIP is one of four programs that Xerox has in place to promote employee/community activities.

Projects involving three or more Xerox employees can receive XCIP funding to enable volunteers to participate in non-profit programs that contribute to the needs of others. XCIP emphasizes proposals that promote ongoing involvement in innovative programs that will have a lasting impact on the community, fulfill an important need not being met, and teach job/life skills. In Rochester, more than 1,500 Xerox employees and retirees participate in volunteer programs that are available for any interest. Nationwide, about 17,000 Xerox employees participate in various XCIP projects annually.

John Laurence, Manager, Marketing Operations with the Xerox Graphic Arts business, has been a tutor with Literacy Volunteers of Rochester for five years, and a member of the board for four years.

“I had been active with community activities through my children, he said, “and when they both left home for college, I felt that I needed something to keep active in the community. I read the Volunteer Opportunities Bulletin, a listing of organizations that are looking for volunteers put out by XCIP. Literacy Volunteers looked like something I would like to participate in.”

Xerox volunteers at Literacy Volunteers of Rochester have received XCIP grants for four projects in the last five years.

- In 1999, LVR introduced its Reading Rally, which recruits volunteers to read to children in daycare centers and secure sponsors. XCIP sponsored 10 readers.
- In 2001, XCIP provided support for an expansion of the LVR library with occupational and life skills materials, reading for pleasure and reading games for kinesthetic learners.
- In 2002, LVR received funding to upgrade the organization’s computers and network, resulting in a substantial gain in productivity.
- In 2003 LVR received funding for the creation of four training videos featuring volunteer tutors with students of varying levels of English proficiency. Laurence has had two students, one from Korea and one from Mexico, and is featured in one of the training videos.

Another literacy volunteer in Rochester, Peg Warrick, says she got involved after finishing graduate school. “I was thinking that before I got used to the free evening, I needed to start something else productive,” said Warrick, a Project Manager in Leasing, which is part of the Xerox Capital Services, LLC joint venture with GE. “I saw a small article on Literacy

Volunteers of Rochester and knew that's what I wanted to do. Not only do I love to read, but as I thought about it, I realized reading comes into absolutely everything I do. I couldn't imagine not being able to read signs, labels, messages and the like."

Warrick was responsible for having LVR listed with the Xerox Community Involvement Program and helping obtain XCIP enabler funding for projects.

Xerox employees have helped promote literacy and reading in other communities too. In Stamford, Connecticut, where Xerox is headquartered, Xerox people have participated in the "Business-to-Books" readathon for the past two years. Under "Business-to-Books," employees read stories to kindergarten and first-grade students in Stamford city schools, both to promote corporate and community partnership and to demonstrate the importance of reading.

Xerox people have also been granted paid sabbaticals to support community causes through the Social Service Leave program, which gives employees up to one year of paid time to work for a nonprofit cause of their choice. For example, Nancy Scott, a Xerox sales account manager in Durham, North Carolina, spent six months in 1998 working with the Durham County Literacy Council to promote adult literacy.

"The Social Service Leave experience was personally significant –to have the opportunity to bring successful business practices, philosophies and problem-solving skills from the Xerox world into a local non-profit and to see immediate, positive results was gratifying," Scott said. "Literacy is so key to the success of the American free enterprise system, I was struck by the difference even one person could make."

The organizational meetings for Literacy Volunteers of Rochester took place in 1964, making it one of the oldest branches of ProLiteracy Worldwide, which was formed in 2002 with the merger of Laubach Literacy International and Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. LVR serves about 600 students a year with volunteers providing about 28,000 hours of service.

NPES has joined ProLiteracy Worldwide as a partner to promote programs that raise awareness and improve adult literacy, recognizing the importance of literacy to the future of the nation and the graphic communications industry.

The Association encourages member companies to get involved on the local level and send information about your activities for publication in our Literacy Changes Lives – New Readers Are Print Consumers program. Members can also support literacy by printing materials through the Print Partner program. Contact Director of Communications and Marketing Carol Hurlburt at 703/264-7211 or e-mail [churlbur@npes.org](mailto:churlbur@npes.org) for more information. For information on literacy programs in your area, visit [www.proliteracy.org](http://www.proliteracy.org) and search Find a Program.