



Hilarie Chambers to lead Accelerated Focus on Adult Literacy and Workforce Development As New Executive Director of Reading Works

DETROIT, MICH., August 2, 2017 -- Reading Works, an organization focused on raising the adult literacy rate in metro Detroit, welcomes Hilarie Chambers as its new executive director.

It is estimated that 1 in 3 Michigan adults read below the 5th grade level, preventing people from applying for jobs, filling out forms or helping their own children with their homework.

Before Reading Works began in 2011, many disparate adult literacy organizations worked separately with limited impact. Since then, Reading Works created a network of 10 community-based literacy agencies as Impact Partners to raise the level of adult literacy in metro Detroit because Reading Works! - in the family and in the workplace. These Impact Partners work in a collective effort to share best practices, increase coordination and develop relationships with government and employers.

Before joining Reading Works, Hilarie served as the District Administrator and Chief of Staff for Congressman Sandy Levin (D-Mich., 9th) since 1993. In that role she oversaw legislative priorities, community outreach and constituent service. She helped to draft the Drug Free Communities Support law that funds community anti-drug coalitions, served on the local Base Re-alignment Commission that oversaw the transfer of the old tank plant property to the City of Warren and has worked on numerous issues including unemployment insurance, training, trade and health care.

“We are extremely fortunate to have Hilarie lead Reading Works at this time of vital transition in literacy, adult education and workforce development in our region,” said Thomas McGinnis, a partner with Deloitte and chairman of the Reading Works Board. “She has worked on behalf of our state in the legislative arena and is respected in Washington and here in Michigan and we are grateful for her leadership in elevating our organization’s work to raise the literacy rate.”

“I am thrilled to be able to help Reading Works continue its mission to improve adult literacy in our region as we focus like a laser beam on job readiness and community well-being,” Chamber’s said. “I have been so impressed with the work of the organizations partnering with Reading Works and I look forward to being an active part of their efforts.”

Since it started in 2011, Reading Works has accelerated learning by providing targeted funding to eliminate barriers like transportation, provided partners with the financial resources to expand and assisted the impact partners in applying for additional public and private funds. Reading Works co-sponsors professional development forums, launched awareness campaigns, piloted programs to test new models, and increased active learners from 2,000 in 2014 to 4,000 in 2017.

“Most importantly, we have raised awareness that adult illiteracy is a foundational problem in the region,” Chambers said. “Now government, employers, training programs and adult education and literacy providers are coming together to strengthen our workforce pipeline and I look forward to using all of my career experience to help this effort.”

For more information, visit <http://readingworksdetroit.org>.

Reading Works is dedicated to raising the level of adult literacy in metro Detroit and promoting the idea that Reading Works - in the family and in the workplace.

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