



Thank you so much for your interest in **Working In The Schools (WITS)**. Currently, we are working on getting all of our programs for the 2007-2008 school year started!

Working In The Schools (WITS) is a literacy organization that increases the reading proficiency and learning capacity of low-income and minority students in Chicago Public Schools. WITS recruits and supports dedicated business, government, and community volunteers who deliver measurable and consistent tutoring and mentoring services.

WITS offers tutoring/mentoring programs for both individual volunteers and corporate groups.

Individual volunteers participate in our Early Childhood, Classroom Assistant or Saturday programs.

Early Childhood: The Early Childhood Volunteer Program, is a literacy program in which individuals and corporate groups volunteer in preschool classrooms with three- and four-year old students. During their visit, volunteers participate in reading aloud with students in a one-on-one arrangement for three 15 minute intervals. The reading sessions take place at the students' school during the school day. Once a week, adult volunteers travel by school bus to their designated school. Volunteers are greeted by a school coordinator and meet their students in the designated classroom. Volunteers commit to the Early Childhood Volunteer Program for one school year and are encouraged to continue year after year. Currently, we have a program established at Peabody Elementary School (1444 W. Augusta Blvd.) that runs on Wednesday mornings. We are looking to start programs on Tuesday mornings at Haugan (4540 N. Hamlin Ave.) and Hibbard (3244 W. Ainslie St.) Elementary Schools as well as a program at Gladstone Elementary School (1231 S. Damen Ave.) on Thursday mornings.

Classroom Assistant: Classroom assistants, comprised of retirees, homemakers and community members, formed the backbone of the WITS program during its initial years. Classroom assistants are assigned to one teacher/classroom and may choose to tutor and mentor one-on-one with students, in small groups or as a whole classroom. Once a week, in 3- or 4-hour sessions, adult volunteers travel to an elementary school and to their designated classroom. Classroom Assistants are visited at their school throughout the year by a WITS Program Manager. Volunteers commit for one school year and are encouraged to continue year after year.

Saturday Program: The Saturday Program was launched by the WITS Junior Board in 2003. From January to April volunteers sign up to travel every Saturday (or every other if you alternate with a partner) to Walsh Elementary School. Adult volunteers are matched one-on-one with a student and spend two hours working on reading aloud, reading comprehension, site words and fluency. Volunteers must provide their own transportation to Walsh Elementary School but carpooling opportunities are available. Volunteers commit for the period from January to April and are encouraged to continue year after year.

Corporate partners participate in our Early Childhood, Power Lunch and Workplace Mentoring programs.

Early Childhood: Our newest program, the Early Childhood Volunteer Program, is a literacy program in which corporate groups volunteer in preschool classrooms with three- and four-year old students. During their visit, volunteers participate in reading aloud with students in a one-on-one arrangement for three 20 minute intervals. The reading sessions take place at the students' school during the school day. Once or twice a week, corporate volunteers travel by school bus to their designated school. Volunteers are greeted by a school coordinator and meet their students in the designated classroom. This program requires a smaller amount of volunteers to service a full classroom. Volunteers commit to the Early Childhood Volunteer Program for one school year and are encouraged to continue year after year.

Power Lunch: Power Lunch, our largest and most popular program, is a lunchtime literacy and mentoring program in which elementary school students are matched one-to-one with volunteers from companies and other community organizations. Adult volunteers promote reading for pleasure by reading aloud to the students and by providing positive support and encouragement. Once a week (or every other week if volunteers alternate with a partner), adult volunteers travel to a nearby elementary school, are welcomed by the school coordinator, and meet their students in a classroom, school library or other designated reading area. The school coordinator notifies the volunteers in advance if students are absent. Volunteers commit to Power Lunch for one school year and are encouraged to continue year after year.

Workplace Mentoring: Workplace Mentoring is an after-school tutoring and mentoring program in which elementary school students are matched one-to-one with volunteers from businesses. Adult volunteers promote reading comprehension, fluency and the love of reading by working through Scholastic Reading Lab. The Scholastic Reading Lab is a goal-oriented, structured and academically focused reading system that tracks student progress at all levels. Once a week (or every other week if volunteers alternate with a partner), elementary school students travel to business, are welcomed by the program coordinator, and meet their volunteers in a conference room or another designated tutoring area. The school coordinator notifies the volunteers in advance if students are absent. Volunteers commit to Workplace Mentoring for one school year and are encouraged to continue year after year.

**** All WITS volunteers must submit to a background check requested by Chicago Public Schools (CPS) prior to starting our programs.**

If you or your corporation is interested in participating in our 2007-2008 programs, please contact Lindsey Giacherio at lindsey@witsontheweb.org or (312) 606-2032.

We welcome all questions, comments, and concerns and are happy to set up meetings and presentations to discuss possible partnerships.

Please visit our website for more information at www.witsontheweb.org

