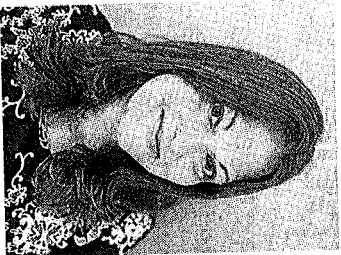


# Shannon Maitland empowers the Exchange Club with insight into Literacy Services

**J. VANCE BRINKERHOFF**  
VB EXCHANGE CLUB PAST PRESIDENT

On July 18, esteemed educator and advocate, Shannon Maitland, graced the Exchange Club of Vero Beach with an enlightening presentation, shedding light on the significant impact and vital role played by Literacy Services of Indian River County (LSIRC). Addressing an attentive audience, Maitland shared compelling numbers and intricate details surrounding the organization's mission to promote English language and literacy skills among local adults, empowering them to achieve their dreams.

The sobering statistics presented during the event exposed the stark reality faced by the community. Shockingly, 1 in 5 adults in Indian River County struggles with reading English, hindering their opportunities for personal growth and professional advancement. Understanding the gravity of this issue, the dedicated team at Literacy Services has



eracy skills.

At the heart of the LSIRC mission lies the desire to support adult learners in accomplishing their goals, which range from securing and advancing employment to becoming U.S. citizens, passing the GED exam, and becoming better engaged in their children's education. By assisting these students in achieving their aspirations, Literacy Services strengthens the fabric of the entire community. Through the unwavering dedication of over 150 volunteers, Literacy

taken on the challenge to provide comprehensive and innovative learning opportunities to individuals striving to improve their English language and lit-

Services has been able to reach out to 256 students hailing from 24 different countries. However, with 80 eager individuals currently on the waiting list, it is evident that the demand for support continues to grow. The primary language spoken by students seeking assistance is Spanish, followed by Creole, Tagalog, and Russian, underscoring the organization's commitment to addressing the diverse needs of the community.

Conveniently located at the main IRC library in Vero Beach, Sebastian Library, and 21 S Cypress Street in Fellsbury, Literacy Services has been able to extend its reach throughout the county. Yet to continue making a difference, the organization relies on generous contributions from the community. In 2022, Literacy Services operated on a budget of \$321,107, with a significant portion derived from individual donations and grants, and a smaller portion generated from special fundraising events. Despite the remarkable progress

made, the need for more volunteers and additional classroom space for evening classes remains pressing. LSIRC calls upon compassionate individuals who can contribute their time and expertise to join this noble cause. Furthermore, financial contributions from philanthropic souls are essential in ensuring that the organization can continue its invaluable work.

"We believe in the transformative power of education, and with your support, we can create a community where every individual has the chance to thrive," Shannon Maitland emphasized during her speech.

To learn more about Literacy Services of Indian River County and to find out how you can get involved, please visit their website at [www.literacy-services.org](http://www.literacy-services.org) or reach out via email at [info@literacy-services.org](mailto:info@literacy-services.org).

Exchange Club of Vero Beach Meetings are on Tuesdays from noon to 1 p.m. at Vincents. For information call Vance Brinkerhoff at 772-913-3426.

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