



In 1999 the cofounder and CEO of Beyond Basics, Pamela Good, walked into a Detroit school with a mission to make a difference by delivering coats; what she found was that the students needed much more. Thanks to her persistence and support from partners, sponsors and volunteers, Beyond Basics has transformed thousands of lives.

Twenty years later, nearly 5,000 students are reading after graduating from Beyond Basics' proven program in Detroit, Pontiac and Taylor, as well as pilot programs in El Paso, Texas and Immokalee, Fla., thanks to the generosity of its supporters.

Beyond Basics 20th Anniversary “Coming Together for Children” Gala is scheduled for the Detroit Athletic Club on Friday, March 1. It will begin at 6 p.m.

Beyond Basics will present the "Literacy Chair Award" to Judge Salomone for his efforts in bringing the organization to the Taylor School District. In 2016, the judge initiated an effort to bring the Beyond Basics intensive tutoring program to Taylor. He advocated on behalf of Beyond Basics with the PNC Foundation, McKinley Properties, Taylor Community Development Corporation, Board of Education, district superintendents and mayor.

Thanks to his leadership, Beyond Basics has implemented its holistic literacy program at Myers Elementary and the students who participated are now reading at grade level.

“We thank Judge Salomone for believing in the power of a literate child and the power of a united community,” Good said. “He went above and beyond with his advocacy for literacy. Without his vision for the children of Taylor, none of this could be possible. We had great success with the students and Myers Elementary was removed from the Michigan Department of Education’s ‘Priority List’ in March 2018.”

Judge Salomone has always been an advocate of children literacy. His goal of bringing every student in the Taylor School District up to proper reading levels by the end of the third grade was the mission of the Taylor Reading Corps, which he founded. The TRC created an adult network of volunteers who mentored young children right in their school. However, while the TRC was able to improve the reading scores, it was never able to achieve its ultimate goal of assuring every student was reading at a third-grade level by the time they headed for the fourth grade. As a result, he turned to Beyond Basics.

Others being honored include the “Partner of the Year” Farbman Group, due to its significant investment and its support since the beginning. “Volunteers of the Year Awards” will go to Susan Wilhelm of Birmingham and Susan Galambos of Bloomfield Hills.

Beyond Basics has published more than 75,000 books authored by children and given more than 30,000 coats to those in need. Beyond Basics has helped more than 100,000 southeastern Michigan students and in 2018, the inaugural Beyond Basics Family Literacy Center was opened to serve Southeastern Michigan. It is a family-centered, literacy-focused 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing holistic literacy programming to unlock the miracle and power of reading for children and adults.

Beyond Basics partners with principals and schools using proven methods to bring students to literacy in underperforming K-12 schools in metropolitan Detroit. It opened its inaugural Family Literacy Center in October 2018 to bring literacy, GED, online diploma and SAT prep and workforce development services such as resume and essay writing to families. By providing a literacy center in the heart of the community, entire families have access to the support they need to learn to read.

Beyond Basics’ certified and trained tutors create a literacy prescription tailored to the individual student needs – one-on-one or small group tutoring using a multi-sensory reading curriculum for one hour per day; literacy enrichment programs to provide new experiences and encourage lifelong learning; and partnerships and mentoring activities to develop trust and build vocabulary and comprehension.

