

The Lit Connection

LITERACY NEW YORK BUFFALO-NIAGARA NEWSLETTER

Corporation with a Conscience Lends a Hand

OtherWisz Creative Corporation leads the LNYBN website redesign and brand audit projects

Founded in 2000, OtherWisz Creative Corporation is a multidisciplinary design studio that specializes in brand identity design, website design development, marketing services, and exhibit design. Led by owners Mark and Jill Wisz, philanthropy is one of the team's guiding values.

"As a professional service provider, you should dedicate a portion of what you do to help not-for-profits because they can't always afford what we offer," says Mark. A former board member and supporter for over 15 years, Mark and the rest of the team have provided valuable time and services over the years to various companies and community organizations.

Past projects for Literacy New York Buffalo-Niagara include logos, website design, and promotional materials for fundraising events. Over the years, OtherWisz explored ways to present the experience of illiteracy while successfully communicating a message. The 2018 design for A Toast to Literacy (*on the bottom of next page*) was able to capture this through creative use of an altered typeface.

Buffalo has the fourth-worst poverty rate for families in the United States. The team at OtherWisz understands the powerful relationship between poverty and literacy.

"The power to read can really change people's lives. There are other things that are important. Housing. Wellness and health. Literacy seems to be at the center of a lot of those things," says Mark.

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The Literacy New York Buffalo-Niagara 2019-2021 strategic plan identified the need for better branding and effective marketing. With its first-ever website still in use, LNYBN board and staff knew it was time for a change. An updated identity for the organization will give more visibility to better reach those who need to improve their reading or learn English.

Leading the efforts in the creation of the new website and the brand audit is Athena Kolokotronis, Senior Designer. The OtherWisz team has consistently exceeded expectations and LNYBN expects some exciting changes in the next few months.

“You have a wide variety of comprehension levels between students and tutors and employees and it’s going to be a challenge that you don’t normally have in a brand audit,” says Jill. Reaching people with limited reading abilities and English proficiency poses branding and marketing challenges, but the longstanding history with OtherWisz makes them uniquely suited for the challenge.

With their 20th anniversary around the corner, OtherWisz has been diligent in offering skills based services and working with LNYBN to determine what could be helpful. “We’re trying to help the organization grow and stay on track. You can concentrate on doing what you do and we’ll help by doing what we do,” says Mark.

Volunteers have always been a cornerstone to Literacy New York Buffalo-Niagara. The time, skills, efforts, and donations that are contributed make a significant impact. LNYBN aims to raise its community profile to make its services more accessible in Erie and Niagara Counties.

More information about OtherWisz can be found at OtherWisz.com.

<p>One in three Wednesday October 24th, 2013 from 6:00 to 8:30 PM Resurgence Brewing Co.</p> <p>Drinks, food, silent auction, literacy lottery, 50/50 raffle is functionally illiterate</p> <p>With Guest MC Ellen Buhdy, Senior Reporter WSPD NEWS</p> <p>Thank you for supporting our mission</p> <p>TOAST to Literacy</p> <p>COMPLIMENTARY DRINK TICKET Good for One Beer, Wine or Non-alcoholic Beverage</p>	<p>43 percent of Wednesday October 24th, 2013 from 6:00 to 8:30 PM Resurgence Brewing Co.</p> <p>Drinks, food, silent auction, literacy lottery, 50/50 raffle lowest literacy levels live in noverts</p> <p>With Guest MC Ellen Buhdy, Senior Reporter WSPD NEWS</p> <p>Thank you for supporting our mission</p> <p>TOAST to Literacy</p> <p>COMPLIMENTARY DRINK TICKET Good for One Beer, Wine or Non-alcoholic Beverage</p>
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<p>COCKTAILS in CHARACTER 2013</p> <p>Margaret Ballmann // Becci Labovitz Wednesday October 23rd 100 E. Lake Street Buffalo, NY 14202</p>	<p>SOCKTAILS in CHARACTER 2013</p> <p>Margaret Ballmann // Becci Labovitz Wednesday October 23rd 100 E. Lake Street Buffalo, NY 14202</p>	<p>COCKTAILS in CHARACTER 2013</p> <p>Margaret Ballmann // Becci Labovitz Wednesday October 23rd 100 E. Lake Street Buffalo, NY 14202</p>
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In Memoriam

On April 5, 2019 we lost Janice Cuddahee, a lifelong literacy advocate. Janice was the Executive Director at Literacy New York, our state technical assistance center. She began her journey in 1984, as an AmeriCorps VISTA supervisor, assigned to what was then known as Literacy Volunteers of America-New York State. As a VISTA, Janice was dedicated to fighting poverty and helping disadvantaged communities. She found her life's calling in working for the rights of those seeking literacy help, doing so for the past 35 years. We are thankful for all she did and will continue the work she passionately cared about.

The Scoop

What's going on: shout-outs, achievements, and other goings-on.

- Our staff won a radio contest and were gifted Yoga, Café, and Salt Spa time by Soma Cura Wellness Center. Thank you!
- We received \$2,000 from Tegna Foundation to support our Niagara County programs.
- Cheektowaga Sam's Club donated \$1,000 to support our Adult Literacy Tutoring programs.
- Our organization was a 2019 VolunteerWNY Why Not You Awards Finalist for Outstanding Non-Profit Volunteer Program (or Project)
- In celebration of their grand opening of their Amherst Branch, Tompkins Bank donated \$1,000 to support our adult literacy programming.
- Our Director of Development, Erika Kastel became a U.S. Citizen!

Would you like any updates or news featured in The Scoop? Contact Naomi by email naomi@literacybuffalo.org.

Community Connections

Coming together in the name of literacy

Just Buffalo Literary Center generously opened up their acclaimed BABEL series to our community of volunteers, students, and staff. 20 of us were able to attend BABEL and experience authors Min Jin Lee and George Saunders as they shared their words with us. We are thankful for the opportunity!

For more information about Just Buffalo Literary Center or the BABEL series:
<https://www.justbuffalo.org/>





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