



AMERICA READS

Did You Know?



In 1996, the Department of Education partnered with AmeriCorps and launched the America Reads Initiative with the idea that a “Citizens army” of volunteers could be assembled to assist in teaching America’s children to read. The goal was to ensure that every child could read independently by the end of the third grade. Today the America Reads Program employs federal work study students on approximately 1200 college and university campuses nationwide.

In 1997, the Center for Community Engagement at ETSU initiated the America Reads Challenge Program. Since that time the staff have recruited, screened, hired, trained, and placed approximately 1,000 college students at partnering schools and community centers in Johnson City, Washington, Carter, Unicoi, and Sullivan counties, and Bristol providing individualized reading instruction to over 5,000 children.

Table of Contents

ABOUT AMERICA READS

OUR PARTNERS

FEATURED SITE &
FEATURED TUTOR

BOOK OF THE MONTH

TUTOR TIPS

DATES & EVENTS





Who **ARE WE?**

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OFFICE INFORMATION

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Office Hours:

Monday - Friday

9:00 am - 4:30 pm



America Reads at ETSU

Our program provides students in local school districts personalized tutoring to help them excel in reading, boost their motivation to read, increase their confidence, and improve overall academic achievement.

Plus, educators receive needed assistance in their efforts to ensure student achievement as tutors complement and reinforce classroom instruction. It's a win for students *and* teachers!

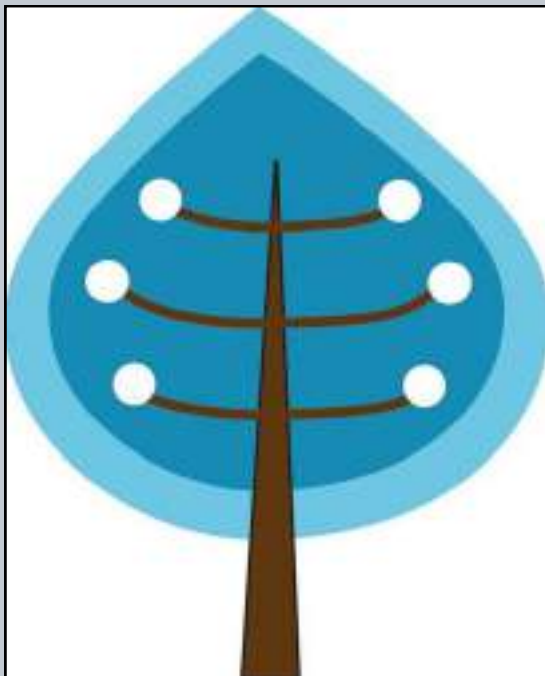
Our Partners THANK YOU!



- University School
- Woodland Elementary
- Lake Ridge Elementary
- Town Acres Elementary
- South Side Elementary
- Fairmont Elementary
- Mountain View Elementary
- John F. Kennedy Elementary
- Jeremiah School
- Girls Inc.



FEATURED SITE Jeremiah School



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Jo Cullen

SCHOOL MISSION:

Jeremiah School is a faith-based school for students on the autism spectrum. We provide a safe, therapeutic, and educational environment where students develop the skills to build positive relationships and reach their greatest potential.

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Jeremiah School's director, Jo Cullen, says:

"Jeremiah School is thrilled to partner with the America Reads program! As a private, non-profit school for autistic students ages 8–19, we provide a curriculum tailored to each learner's unique needs and learning style. Our holistic approach goes far beyond academics – it encompasses social and life skills, community-based learning, service opportunities, and preparation for adulthood. Every aspect of our program is designed to fulfill our mission of giving students 'Hope and a Future' (Jeremiah 29:11).

Reading is the foundation of all learning, yet many of our students face challenges with comprehension. The America Reads tutor provides targeted one-on-one and small group instruction that meets each student right where they are. Beyond academic growth, our tutor has become a mentor and role model – her encouragement, patience, and positive energy have made a lasting impact on our students' confidence and love of learning."

We are so thankful to Jeremiah School for letting AR tutor at their amazing school!

Featured TUTORs

SKYLAR LOWERY

- **Site or school served:** University School - After Care
- **Current major:** Studio Art with a minor in EDFN
- **Favorite children's book:** *The Lorax* or *One Fish, Two Fish*
- **Why did you want to be an AR tutor?** I chose to become an America Reads tutor because I remember how much teachers and tutors influenced my own love of reading. I wanted to be that same kind of positive influence for younger students—someone who makes reading fun and helps them feel confident in their abilities. Also, as someone pursuing a career in education, I wanted to gain real-world experience working one-on-one with students. The America Reads Program gives me the chance to develop my teaching skills, learn effective literacy strategies, and better understand how to meet students where they are academically.
- **What is your favorite AR moment?** I've really enjoyed seeing students grow more confident in their reading over time. Watching their progress and realizing that I've played a small part in that has been really rewarding.



Thank you, Skylar, for being such an incredible tutor!



ROSIELLE PEÑA

- **Site or school served:** South Side Elementary School
- **Current major:** Criminal Justice & Criminology
- **Favorite children's book:** *Fancy Nancy and the Delectable Cupcakes*

- **Why did you want to be an AR tutor?** I found myself wanting to become an AR tutor because of the illiteracy rate in the country. After reading about it, I became concerned and wanted to be part of improving literacy rates, hopefully leading to a better education future.
- **What is your favorite AR moment?** I work closely with many Hispanic kids, many of whose first languages are not English. Our heritage allows us to connect on a deeper level. Being bilingual and using both languages to explain certain concepts to them was a groundbreaking moment, since things finally seemed to “click.” They would express the fact that they were finally able to understand the concept when it was explained in a language that they mastered. I was quickly able to build a good rapport with the kids and even got the nickname of “Señorita Rosita.” One day, while I was working with a group of kids in the hallway, a young girl from another class came up to me and asked, “Is it true you speak Spanish?” I nodded and said, “Yes, I do. How did you know that?” She expressed that her friends had told them that they were working with a tutor who spoke both English and Spanish, and how exciting it was to have someone who fully understood them. After that interaction, the little girl would always hug me whenever she saw me in the hall, and we would have short conversations in Spanish at times. The countless interactions I’ve had with my Hispanic students have reminded me how much representation matters, especially at such a young age.

Rosie is graduating in December. Rosie, thank you for all of your dedication to the AR program — we will miss you!

WE NEED YOU!

We are currently seeking faculty members to lead our monthly tutor trainings! This is a wonderful opportunity to partner with our program and share your expertise.

If interested in leading a professional session, please contact our office at 439 - 4161 or PickardJ@etsu.edu.

**EACH TUTOR TRAINING IS
TYPICALLY 1 TO 2 HOURS.
ALL TOPICS WELCOME.**



Local Public Library Events

JOHNSON CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

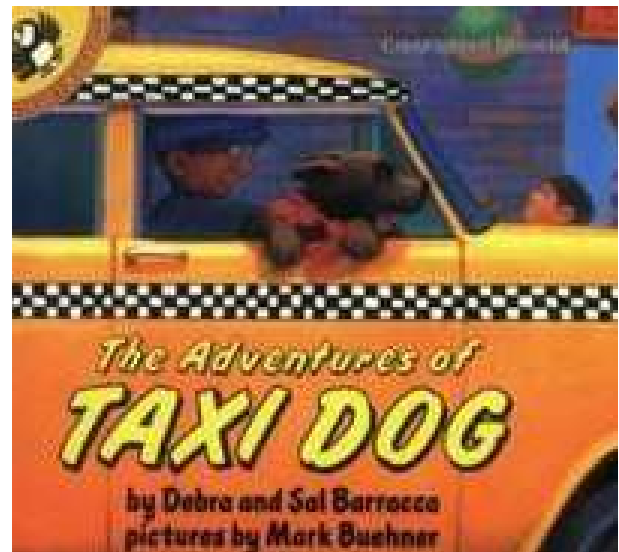
Spanish at Your Library - Practice your Spanish speaking skills with bilingual volunteer-led conversations each Thursday at 6pm in the Library's Jones Meeting Center. All language levels are welcome; whether you're a beginner or a fluent speaker, join the conversation to hone your skills.

Book Worms - Book Worms is a program for children ages 5-8 to bridge the gap between preschool storytime and book clubs for older kids. Participants will hear a fun story then take part in a hands-on activity that "digs in" to the text on the first Thursday of each month at 4pm in the Library's Jones Meeting center. **Registration is required.**

Bilingual Storytime - Families are invited to Bilingual Storytime at 11am in the Library Storytime Room. Native Spanish speaker Mar Carter leads a story, conversation, and activities to increase bilingual literacy.

6

Book of the Month



The Adventures of Taxi Dog

Written by: Debra & Sal Barracca

Illustrated by: Mark Buchner

A stray dog in New York City is adopted by a taxi driver, with whom he rides and shares adventures each day.

Click here to watch a read-aloud!

https://youtu.be/_1Whec--hzM?si=IXgpLZNzhdVTu4OM



VOLUNTEERS & COURSE WORK REQUIREMENTS



ATTENTION FACULTY

America Reads tutors may also be utilized for course work requirements! If you would like more information or questions about our program please contact our office at (423) 439 - 4161 or amreads@etsu.edu.

DID YOU KNOW?

In addition to hiring FWS students, ETSU America Reads also takes volunteers. Anyone who would like to gain experience working with elementary students can apply to be a volunteer with the program.

Our program houses a lending library of resources including books on all reading levels, lesson plans, instructional activities, and reading programs. All resources are available for check out by tutors and education students.

Tutor Tips!

Struggling with classroom management in your AR placement? Below are two articles with some great tips and tricks on how to have an effective classroom management plan.

Classroom Management Rooted in Patience, Planning, and Connection

(originally from Edutopia)

Essential Classroom Management Strategies: Mastering the Fundamentals

These articles, along with other resources, can be found on the AR D2L page under "Tutor Tips."



*Thank
you!*

- Dr. Janna Scarborough
- Dr. Cindy Chambers
- Ryan Parvin
- Sarah Shanks
- Rachel D'Angona
- Taylor Boles

And to all others who assisted in the America Reads program so far this year.

WE APPRECIATE YOU!

Dates to Remember

11/11 Veterans Day
(University Closed)

11/21 Tutor Meeting
2:30 - 4:00

11/26-28
Thanksgiving Break
(University Closed)

Contact Us!

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EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY