

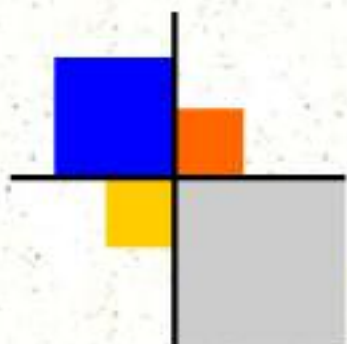
ANNUAL REPORT 2008-09

# SIT STAY READ



YOU  
make  
reading  
fun!





# Board Members and Staff



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**MaryEllen Schneider, Executive Director**

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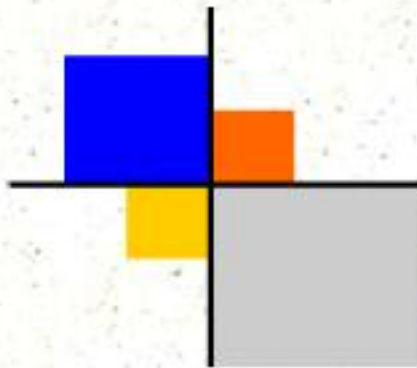
**Volunteer Manager**

**Kelsey Jones,**

**Communications Coordinator**



Sit Stay Read staff members and interns pose with Shandy, the very first Sit Stay Read dog.



# Mission Statement



Proven results make Sit Stay Read the leading literacy organization in the United States to use dogs as a tool to improve reading skills and foster a love of learning in children living in poverty.

Founded in 2003, Sit Stay Read improves reading fluency, makes reading fun, and **inspires children to become lifelong readers.** Using a curriculum designed with the University of



**Keep Reading!** 

Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Center for Literacy, trained volunteers and certified dog teams bring much needed reading help to children, ages 7-9, in Chicago inner-city schools and community centers.

Sit Stay Read, Inc.  
3425 N. Milwaukee Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60641  
773.545.6629



## Letters to Our Contributors

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As with the rest of the world, the economy continues to have an effect here at Sit Stay Read. Our 2008 September newsletter arrived in mailboxes the same week as the first big dip (or whatever we're calling it) and produced a disappointing \$210 in donations. Ouch.

Despite a \$25,000 shortfall in our barebones budget of \$175,000 for 2008-09, our staff and board felt it was imperative that we reach the 500 children we committed to in our annual strategic plan. I am happy to report that we reached that goal by the end of our fiscal year in June!

Reaching 500 children with a 15% budget cut was a great challenge. Eliminating a projected staff increase meant looking to other sources for extra help. We were fortunate that Tara Gaffney, a Sit Stay Read board member and former teacher, recognized our need and dedicated one year to Sit Stay Read. Taking a year off from teaching, Tara stepped forward and took on additional responsibilities in the office and classroom to ensure school programs were successful.

In addition, our Communications Coordinator developed a comprehensive, on-going internship program. We now have interns from DePaul University volunteering in programs as well as helping with communications and office assistance.

In partnership with generous donors like you, Sit Stay Read will weather this economic storm and continue to bring reading help to Chicago's most vulnerable children.

MaryEllen Schneider  
Executive Director



photo ©2008 David B. Sutton/  
suttonstudios.com

It seems as though our Wheaten Terrier, Alice, was a puppy just a few short months ago, but she just turned eight. In my favorite photos of Alice, she is wearing a green bandana, working in a Sit Stay Read program, watching a young student read a book aloud. Alice doesn't know it, but she and her canine pals in Sit Stay Read are helping to improve literacy in Chicago, child by child, book by book,

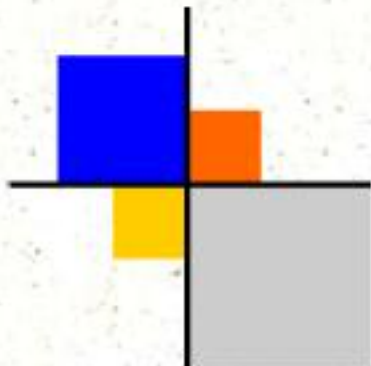
school by school.

Sit Stay Read has grown with Alice, from a few scattered library programs to the 2,600 school and community-based reading sessions of our past fiscal year. Over those years, our programs have expanded to include guest readers, reading rewards, and summer fun packs. Local and national media have recognized the uniqueness of our programs and their proven success.

We have talented volunteers, employees, and interns who bring their own insights, ideas, and enthusiasm to their work with Sit Stay Read. We have a vibrant and impressive organizational strategic plan. And we have you, our loyal supporters, whose generous contributions provide the financial support required for each Sit Stay Read child's reading achievements.

Thank you for your continued support, and please continue to be a part of our future success!

MK Czerwiec  
Out-going Board President

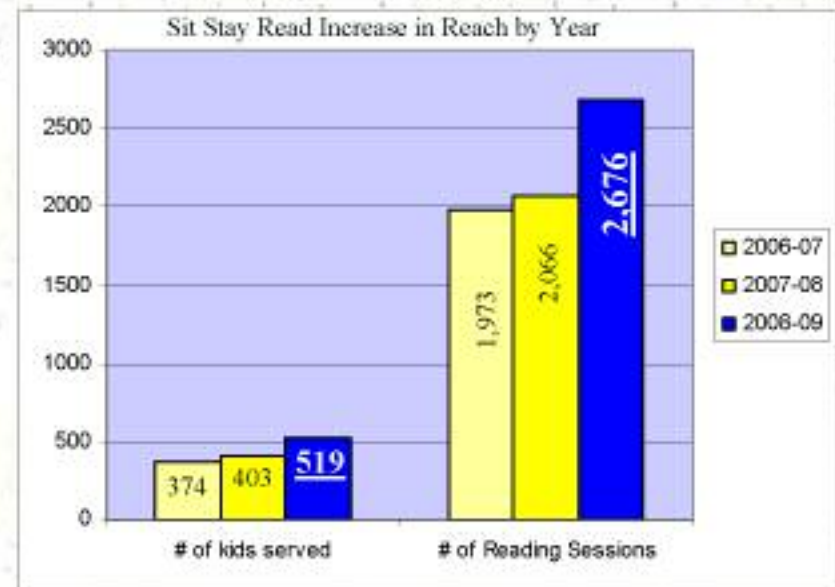


# *Your* support helps reach more children in need

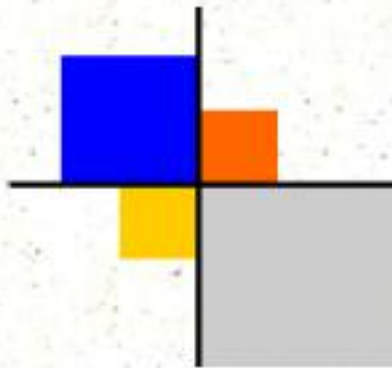


Thanks to your generous support, **more than 500 children from Chicago's poorest neighborhoods** received the reading help they needed this year! Kids and dogs shared the joy of reading during 2,676 individual reading sessions.

To keep kids reading all summer long, every student in our school programs received a **Summer Reading Fun Pack**. With the help of our volunteers, 375 Fun Packs were filled with everything needed for literary exploration and were distributed to thrilled second, third, and fourth graders. Each backpack contains dog-themed books, pencils, sharpener, eraser, and composition book to record summer reading adventures!



Word is spreading about Sit Stay Read's innovative and effective literacy programs. **32 Schools are still on our waiting list to receive a Sit Stay Read program!** Your continued support is vital to build the infrastructure to reach more children in need.



## Teachers tell all... Good things of course!



*"The students are so excited about Sit Stay Read. This program is great; it covers all aspects of literacy. My students are learning so much because of the motivation the dogs in the classroom provide. We look forward to Wednesdays!"*

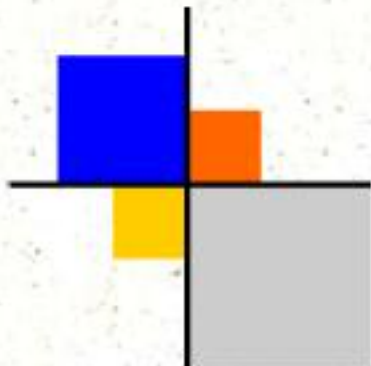
—Sandra Trigg,  
2nd grade teacher

*"I was amazed, even on the first day, in the transformation I saw in David, a student with a lot of potential. He smiled (a rarity)! He was using expression and even helping other kids with their reading. He couldn't wait to go see Tibbie and read with him. Writing was even better! I couldn't believe that David had completed an entire page for his story!"*

—Emily Keller, 2nd grade teacher

*"Sit Stay Read motivates my students to read and want to do better. Out of my 25 kids, 21 increased their reading fluency by at least 15 words."*

—Josy Nolin,  
2nd grade teacher



# Look at these results!



For three years now results of the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency Test (used by the Chicago Public Schools and recommended by our partner, the UIC Center for Literacy) continue to show a significant difference between classes with a Sit Stay Read program and those without.

**Average increase for Sit Stay Read Classes: 43 words per minute**  
**Average increase for Comparison Classes: 35 words per minute**



That's a 20% greater improvement for our kids!

We're excited to announce that doctoral student Corinne Smith will soon publish her dissertation on the many benefits of the Sit Stay Read program! Her work explores the effect on reading fluency, learning engagement, and the psychological impact on children.





# Sit Stay Read in the news...

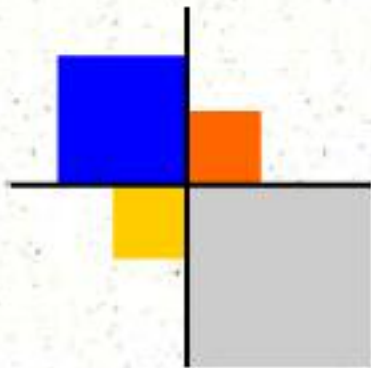
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Here's a look at who's been taking note of the important work SIT STAY READ is doing to improve childhood literacy in Chicago...



- 7/06/2009, Blog Talk Radio,  
*Out-U-Go Podcast*
- 5/30/2009, Cubs game with *Build-A-Bear Workshop*
- 8/04/2008, NBC Nightly News,  
*What Works with Brian Williams*
- 4/25/2008, NBC Channel 5,  
*Special Report with Allison Rosati*
- 3/30/2008, Chicago Tribune,  
*Sidewalks by Rick Kogan, feature story*

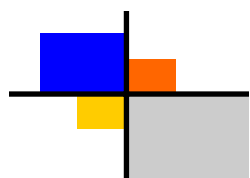


# Financial Summary



## Sit Stay Read Inc. Statement of Activities

	<u>Jul '08 - Jun '09</u>		<u>Jul '08 - Jun '09</u>
<b>Income</b>		<b>Expense</b>	
<b>Contributions Income</b>		<b>Administration</b>	\$27,882
Donations	\$33,090	<b>Fundraising</b>	\$12,867
Grants Restricted	\$3,200	<b>Fundraising Event Costs</b>	\$7,303
Grants Unrestricted	\$93,500	<b>Marketing</b>	\$3,045
<b>Total Contributions Income</b>	<u>\$129,790</u>	<b>Office</b>	\$15,255
<b>Fundraisers</b>		<b>Programs</b>	<u>\$80,493</u>
Classes & Tests	\$465	<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>\$146,845</u>
Events	\$17,758	<b>Net Income</b>	<u>\$1,744</u>
Merchandise	\$576		
<b>Total Fundraisers</b>	<u>\$18,799</u>		
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>\$148,589</u>		



# Donor List 2008-09

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Sit Stay Read is proud to thank donors listed below for their generous contributions.

This list represents donations received between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009. If you have a correction to this list, please don't hesitate to contact us.

## **\$15,000+**

Bears Care  
Chicago Sun-Times Charity Trust

## **\$6,000 to \$14,999**

Charter Oak Foundation  
The Northern Trust Centennial Fund,  
a donor advised fund of the  
Chicago Community Trust  
The Powell Foundation

## **\$2,500 to \$5,999**

CNA Foundation  
Dr. Scholl Foundation  
The Kaplan Foundation  
GATX Corporation  
Polk Bros. Foundation

## **\$1,000 to \$2,499**

Anonymous  
DeLong-Sweet Foundation  
Tara and Cory Gaffney  
Suzanne Joseph  
Ken and Linda Robin Charitable Fund  
Kovler Family Foundation  
Sarah and Tim Murphy  
Margot and Tom Pritzker  
Barbara Shomaker  
The Siragusa Foundation

## **\$500 to \$999**

Cindy Homan & MK Czerwiec  
Kelle Frymire  
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## **\$250 to \$499**

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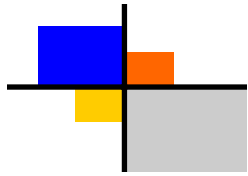
## **\$100 to \$124**

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# Donor List 2008-09

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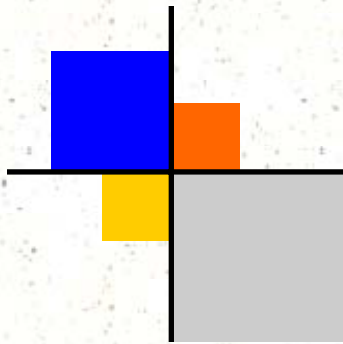
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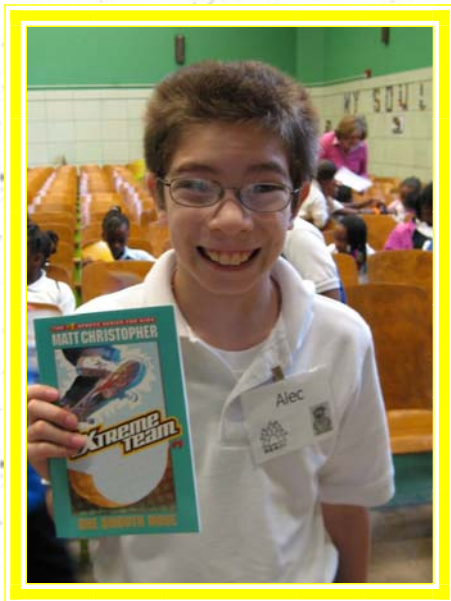


# We owe it all to YOU!



On behalf of all the Sit Stay Read students...

# THANK YOU!



Along with reading, writing is an integral part of every Sit Stay Read program.

We hope you enjoy the following examples from this year's student-authored books.



Tibbie

## My Dog going to see OBAMA

By: Charles Clayton

ME AND TIBBIE ARE GOING TO SEE OBAMA AND  
THEN WE START TO WALK IN THE LIBRARY. WE  
SAW OBAMA AND THEN I TOLD TIBBIE THAT WAS  
OBAMA AND THEN TIBBIE START TO RUN TO OBAMA  
START TO KISS HIM AND THEN WE WENT IN THE  
LIBRARY, WE START TO READ BOOKS TO HIM AND THEN  
I TOOK TIBBIE OUT FOR A WALK AND THEN I FEED  
HIM AND TOOK HIM BACK IN THE LIBRARY AND THEN  
WHEN START TO TALK TO OBAMA  
AND THEN I GAVE TIBBIE SOME TREATS  
AND THEN WE START TO GO TO THE  
WATER FOUNTAIN.





Lucy



## A Great dinner for Lucy

By: Taylor / Avery

I would cook a 5 star dinner for Lucy. She would have a three course meal. The first course would be shrimp and oysters, ~~clam~~ clam, and lobster. The next course would be chicken, steak, steak tartar, and baked potatoe. For the third course I would serve her pie, cake, cheese, apple pie, cookies, ice cream, and chocolate. She eat every thing up really, really, really, fast. Then she says thank you and go to sleep on her very own water bed.

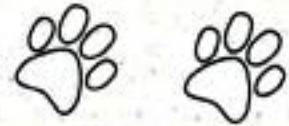




Shandy

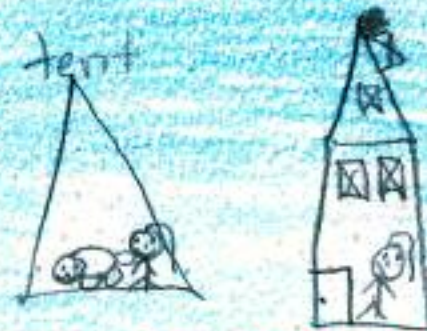
## at a party with shandy

By: Malayah Vaniece Johnson



When i go to a party with  
shandy she will want some  
food. She might want some fruit  
or juice. We are going to  
have a Halloween party or a  
christmas party. I love to

go to a party with all the sit stay read  
Dogs that comes here. My friends will come with  
me with there Dog. We will have so much  
fun at all the partys we  
go to. Shandy will want all  
the food at the party. We  
will have to eat, but shandy  
ate all the food. Sandy will  
want lots of water at home.





**READ!**

We make reading fun