

# YOU Make Reading FUN!

Annual Report 2009-10

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE





## our MISSION

**SitStayRead improves literacy skills and fosters a love of learning in at-risk children.**

Proven results make SitStayRead the leading literacy organization in the United States to use dogs as a tool to improve reading fluency, make reading fun, and inspire children to become lifelong readers. Using a curriculum designed with the University of 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 facilities.



## Letter to our contributors

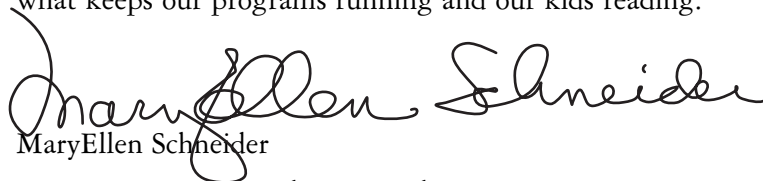
In September seven years ago we were preparing to enter our first classroom. While we were confident of the need for SitStayRead, we were anxious about how well the program would work, how the dogs would behave, how the children and teachers would react. As it turned out, the need was as real as we thought and the program as effective as we had hoped.

That first year in 2003 we were thrilled to provide an eight week dog-themed reading program to two second-grade classes at Hendricks Academy. When the teachers saw their students' enthusiastic response to the program, they asked us to help keep the reading excitement going all year. We rose to the challenge and added components to the program and expanded to follow students through fourth-grade. **SitStayRead is now in second-, third-, and fourth-grade classrooms *all year long* at Hendricks and six other Chicago Public Schools.**

To mark our seven year milestone, Dr. Denise Davidson of Loyola University surveyed the eighth graders (our first graduating class) to find out what our program looks like from a student perspective. She found an overwhelming outpouring of positive responses. Students rated every aspect of the program highly. They remember that SitStayRead significantly changed the way they thought about reading, making it a positive, fun experience

We are committed to bringing reading help to more children every year and our board is finalizing our next five-year plan so we have a road map to do just that. We're dreaming big and achieving more every year.

Thank you for being our partner in this important work. We look forward to another year spent reading, writing, and succeeding. Your continued support is what keeps our programs running and our kids reading.

  
MaryEllen Schneider

Executive Director and Co-Founder

Mike is hungry for chicken wings.

By: Jesus



one morning Mike was hungry. I  
order pizza But he said grrr I thought  
he hated it. Then I order nachos he  
hated it too I gave him dog food.  
he didn't like it I tried every  
thing but he said no. We went to the store  
he stared at the chicken wings.

But I said no.  
I gave up and bought the  
chicken wing. And he  
ate it all. Now people call  
him Chicken wings.



Shandy  
Breed: Beagle Mix  
1993-2010  
The very first SSR dog!

  
**Sit Stay Read**

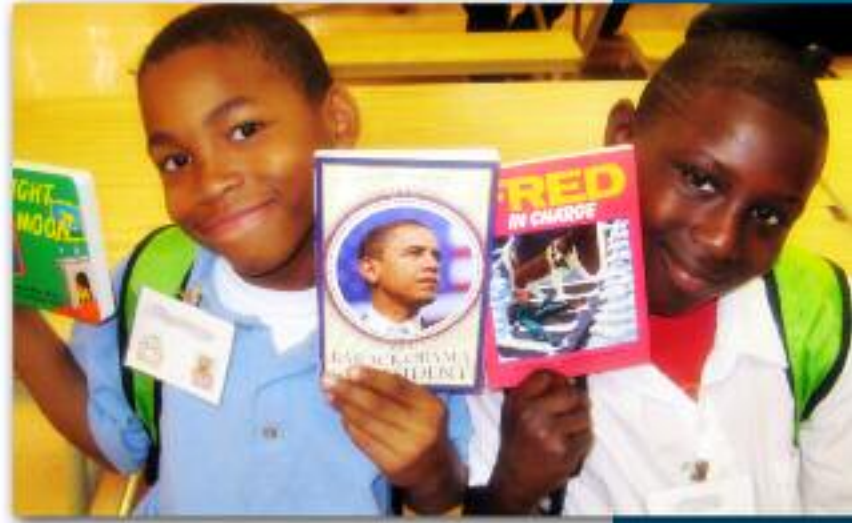
773.545.6629  
www.sitstayread.org



Lucy  
Breed: Spinone Italiano  
Born: August 5, 2005  
SSR Dog Since: 2007  
Dog of the Year 2010!

"My class looks forward to  
Sit Stay Read on Tuesdays every  
week. I have seen wonderful  
improvements in both reading  
and writing in all my students.  
We feel very fortunate to have  
Sit Stay Read be a part of  
our classroom!"

-- Margaret McIlvain,  
3rd grade teacher



## Your support helps reach more children in need

With the generous support of donors like you, **551** children in Chicago's inner-city received much needed reading help from SitStayRead this year. Kids and dogs shared the joy of reading during **2,500** individual reading sessions.

To celebrate a total of **8,212** books read this year, every student in our program received a Summer Reading Fun Pack. Their backpacks were filled with everything needed for literacy exploration and were distributed to thrilled second, third, and fourth graders. Each backpack contained books, pencils, sharpener, eraser, and composition book to record summer reading adventures and to keep all 551 kids reading all summer long!

Transforming struggling students into strong, confident readers is the foundation of SitStayRead's mission. Your continued support is vital to reach even more students this year!

# 2009-10 Donor List

## \$20,000+

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Bears Care  
Chicago Sun-Times  
Charity Trust

## \$6,000 to \$19,999

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Carmen Vazquez

## \$50 to \$99

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# Thank YOU!

*Thank you to our generous donors who contributed throughout 2009-10. You keep our programs running and our kids reading!*

# Swimming With Jerry

By: Lizzette



me and Jerry we are going to the pool to swim. we will have fun. Jerry is a love. I swim and the water. me and Jerry have fun. Jerry is a fun dog. I love Jerry. Can I take Jerry home? come on Jerry so we can go swim. Love you Jerry. you is a very love dog. I will read a book to Jerry. Will go to the pool. we will swim and swim. I love swim you love to swim Jerry. Jerry we can go to the beach. we and Jerry put on the sun lotion for the beach I love you Jerry Sit Stay Read Day.



art by nik czerwiec ©2006 Sit Stay Read! Inc., Chicago IL, www.sitstayread.org

"When a student masters a new word or comes up with a really funny sentence that we laugh at together, I know that a positive change is happening."

-Christie,  
SitStayRead Volunteer



Sammy  
A male Golden Retriever  
Born on June 18, 2001  
SSR Dog Since day one!



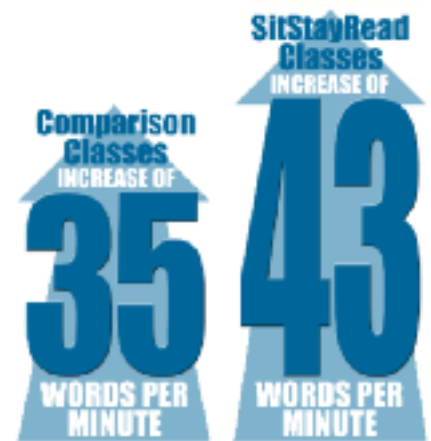
Jerry  
A male Shih Tzu/Beagle Mix  
Born on May 29, 2007  
SSR Dog Since 2009



## Look at These Results!

We were honored in 2009 when Dr. Corinne Smith published her dissertation\* on the SitStayRead program. Her work explores the effect of the program on reading fluency, learning engagement, and the psychological impact on the children.

Dr. Smith's evaluation of the DIBELS oral reading frequency assessment (results show at left) confirms three years of data showing a statistically significant difference between classes with the SitStayRead program and those without!



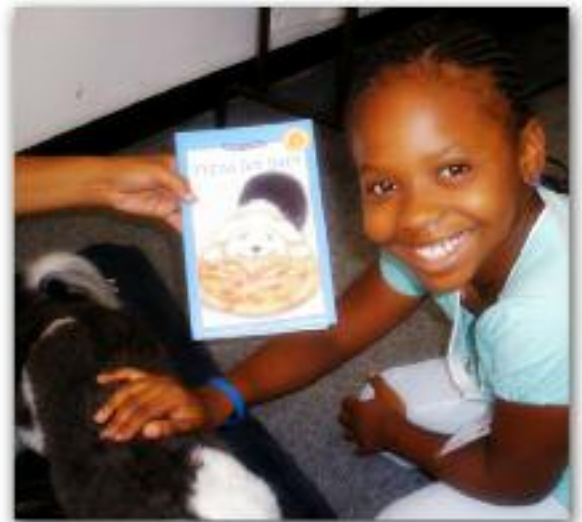
*"That's a 20% greater improvement for our kids!"*

## SitStayRead Increase in Reach by Year

551 Children Reached



\*Dr. Smith's complete dissertation is available [here](#).



## Financial Summary

Sit Stay Read Inc. Statement of Activities

	July 09-June 10
<b>Income</b>	
Contributions Income	
Donations	\$63,560
Grants Restricted*	\$32,600
Grants Unrestricted	\$113,417
<b>Total Contributions Income</b>	<b>\$209,577</b>
Fundraisers	
Classes & Tests	\$490
Events	\$28,983
Merchandise	\$414
<b>Total Fundraisers</b>	<b>\$29,887</b>
Interest Income	\$125
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$239,589</b>
<b>Expense</b>	
Administration	\$32,912
Fundraising	\$17,616
Fundraising Event Costs	\$6,184
Office	\$3,109
Programs	\$91,001
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$150,822</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$88,766*</b>

\*Grants of \$32,600 received in FY 2009-10 to be used in FY 2010-11



## Board members and Staff

### Board Members

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### Staff

- MaryEllen Schneider, Executive Director
- Kate McIlvain, Volunteer Manager
- Kelsey Jones, Communications Coordinator
- Allison Jasinski, Administrative Assistant



This annual report marks the debut of our new logo!

After an intensive review of SitStayRead's communications this year by a team of doctoral candidates from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), it was determined that a new logo was needed to clearly illustrate our commitment to literacy.

The simple silhouette of a child reading to a dog evokes our core mission and the clean lines give SitStayRead a refreshed look. Many thanks to the team from UIC for their research and guidance.

[www.sitstayread.org](http://www.sitstayread.org)