

THE XPRIZE EFFECT REACHES IRVING TEXAS



The XPRIZE Effect Reaches Irving, Texas

by Delia Watley, Program Manager, Irving ISD (Dallas County Consortium)

There is a big wave of excitement stretching across the nation that will undoubtedly impact the literacy levels of thousands of low literacy learners in the course of one (1) year. This global competition, the Barbara Bush Foundation Adult Literacy XPRIZE, seeks to improve literacy through the use of smart devices. Over the next year, eight semi-finalist teams will be testing their mobile applications across a number of cities. Currently, three cities (Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Dallas) have launched the competition in their communities. One of the communities within the Dallas County area that has joined the initiative is Irving, Texas.

The Irving Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Program serves hundreds of adult students each year through literacy programs such as ESL, EL Civics, Family Literacy, Computer Literacy, Workplace Literacy, and Integrated Education and Training. The adult program within the Irving Independent School District (ISD) has been delivering classes throughout Irving Texas since 2002. In the summer of 2014, Irving ISD became a state provider under the scope of the Dallas County Consortium for AEL. The Irving ISD AEL program positively impacts the economic development of its community by providing classes that improve the lives of adults and their families. Not surprisingly, when the XPRIZE competition was introduced to the Dallas County Metroplex, Irving ISD AEL was one of the many programs who wanted to join the challenge of champions.

Champion partners for XPRIZE can choose to be one of 3 types: Assets, Amplify or Quantum champions. The **Assets** champions share their facilities to conduct the pre-assessment needed to register students for the app. The **Amplify** champions conduct community outreach while the **Quantum** champions recruit adult learners to use the application. Irving ISD AEL signed up to be a Quantum Champion assigned not only with the task of recruiting adults but also with the role of sharing facility space needed to conduct the pre-assessments.



Mayor Mike Rawlings of Dallas and the Irving ISD AEL team

On Tuesday, August 8, 2017, champion partners from across the Dallas metroplex joined the XPRIZE group for the celebration launch activity in the Flag Room of Dallas City Hall. Those in attendance included the City of Dallas Mayor, Mike Rawlings, President of Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas, Laurie Larrea, Dallas County Community College District Chancellor, Dr. Joe May, Senior Director of

XPRIZE, Shlomy Kattan, the State Director of Adult Education and Literacy, Anson Green, and Liza McFadden of the Barbara Bush Foundation. XPRIZE representatives energized the audience as they looked forward to entering the field testing phase of the competition.

The Irving East Library marked the first field test location for Irving ISD AEL. The Irving ISD AEL program partners with the City of Irving and three of the Irving public libraries to deliver classes to adults all over the community. Rose Mary Cortez, Library Branch Manager, looked forward to the big day and ran a mass marketing effort to reach as many people in the community as possible. Her efforts paid off when the doors opened and a line of students stretched from the front doors of the library to the parking lot. Nearly 100 people entered to register for the AEL classes and to be screened for the XPRIZE app.



State Director of AEL Program Anson Green with the Irving ISD Team



All students qualifying for the app received a \$25 gift card and received a full year use of one of the 8 competitive apps. The winning application will be announced in the early part of 2019.

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