



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Nassau and Suffolk Join Forces to Fight Against Adult Literacy Budget Cuts**

Farmingdale, N.Y. –Students, volunteer tutors and administrators from adult literacy programs across Long Island will join together at Farmingdale Public Library to show their support for the program and call on state lawmakers to restore funding to the statewide Adult Literacy Education (ALE) program.

*Details of the press conference are as follows:*

**Who:** Literacy New York (LNY)  
Literacy Nassau County, Inc.  
Literacy Suffolk County

**Where:** Farmingdale Public Library  
116 Merritts Road  
Farmingdale, NY 11735-3251

**When:** Friday, April 9, 2010  
12 noon

The current state budget proposals would cut more than \$2 million – or about one-third of all state funding to literacy assistance programs across New York. This cut is in addition to a \$612,000 cut under the 2009-10 Deficit Reduction Plan (DRP). With last year’s DRP reduction of funding, literacy programs throughout the state are now faced with a nearly 40 percent potential cut from last year’s funding level.

“Twenty-two percent of New Yorkers are below basic literacy level,” said Kevin Smith, executive director of Literacy New York. “And every year thousands of New Yorkers volunteer their time to help others learn how to read and become less dependent. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the value of their contributed volunteer time would have been approximately \$6.5 million. We understand these are tough times; we are not asking for what our program is worth, only enough so our doors don’t have to close.”

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*Since 1977, Literacy New York (LNY) has been a leading advocate for adult literacy in New York State and nationally. Literacy New York provides technical, program, and training assistance and workshops to a network of 37 local, community-based affiliates who annually provide over 400,000 hours of reading and basic skills instruction to adult learners.*

*As a learner-centered literacy service since 1968, Literacy Nassau provides services each year for hundreds of Nassau adults who are functionally illiterate, assisting them, their families – and hopefully future generations – toward self-sufficiency and personal success. Since its inception Literacy Nassau has had a single and unwavering mission: to promote and foster literacy in Nassau County among adult learners in need of improved skills in Basic Literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages. Through trained volunteer tutors in one-to-one and small group learning experiences students are matched with tutors to achieve the educational, economic and social goals they and their tutors have identified as important to them.*

*Literacy Suffolk, Inc. is dedicated to providing a variety of literacy services to adults, thereby enabling them to achieve their personal goals. Literacy Suffolk recruits volunteers and trains them to tutor fellow adults in basic language skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking. Part of the Literacy Suffolk Initiatives include: Health Literacy, Law Literacy and Removing the Barriers to Literacy and Learning: Shame. Since its inception in 1978, Literacy Suffolk has helped thousands of adults to acquire the skills necessary to realize their potential and become fully participating members of society.*