



# BETWEEN THE LINES



Fall 2018

## Adult Literacy League Announces New Executive Director

### Joyce Whidden to Retire After Nearly 25 Years



Since May of 1994, Joyce Whidden has served as the League's agency executive – first as the Program Director and beginning in 1998 – as the first-ever Executive Director. The League was then housed at the Christian Service Center serving fewer than 100 students with about 75 volunteers annually. The only program was One-to-One Tutoring for basic literacy students. Today, the League provides both adult and family literacy services at our Michigan Street literacy center and in partner locations throughout the region. In 2018, we are on target to serve more than 3,000 adult learners and 1,000 infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and their parents! This year, after nearly 25 years of service, Joyce announced her intention to

retire.

**Today, the Adult Literacy League Board of Directors is very pleased to announce that Gina Berko Solomon, MBA, has accepted the position of Executive Director to succeed Joyce.**

Gina is no stranger to the League. She has served as Program Director, Instructor, Director of Adult Education and most recently, Chief Development Officer in 14 years of service. She is a winner of the Martin L. Bell Scholarship awarded to nonprofit executives to attend the Crummer

Graduate School of Business at Rollins College for an Executive MBA. Gina truly knows every aspect of the Adult Literacy League's organization and mission. In addition to all these hats, she continues to find time to tutor a student! Please join us in congratulating and welcoming her to this new role which she will take on beginning January 1, 2019



## Thank You For Helping Us Celebrate Our 50th Anniversary



The Adult Literacy League is coming to the end of a wonderful year of celebration of 50 years of service to Central Florida. In the fall of 2017, a team of ALL volunteers brainstormed ideas for making sure we celebrated in style and shared our story with as many leaders and individuals in the community as possible. A great plan was put together and included requesting a "Fifty for Fifty!" matching challenge grant from the Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation. We are proud and grateful to announce that we successful met this challenge of raising \$50,000 well within the time set out by the foundation.

This year's Reading between the Wines focused on our anniversary and we were honored to have two of our founders there. Barbara Roper and Flo Nelson joined us that evening so we could honor them. Our students, Brittani and Raul, shared their stories so compellingly. And, our Family Literacy children made a great video to help



introduce 2018's author, Brad Meltzer.

Thanks to Mayor Dyer, we received a proclamation in honor of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary which graces our literacy center. It was a year of increased media attention and social media visibility thanks to Dr. Phillips Charities who supported our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary strategic expansion goals by funding our Community Engagement Specialist, Alex Pak, as well as our Family Literacy Assistant, Bronwen Jurado.

**Welcome Bronwen and Alex!**



The year is not over yet and we hope that you will consider making a year-end gift to help us continue the hard work that Joyce Whidden and her team have done during anniversary of our 50 celebration!

You can make a gift online at  
<https://www.adultliteracyleague.org/donate/>

## **Announcing Our Author**

### **Reading Between the Wines 2019**

We are beyond thrilled to announce that Pulitzer Prize winning author, Gilbert King, has agreed to headline 2019's Reading between the Wines fundraiser! Gilbert King is the author of three books, most recently, *Beneath a Ruthless Sun*. His previous book, *Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America*, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction in 2013. A New York Times bestseller, the book was also named runner-up for the Dayton Literary Peace Prize for nonfiction, and was a finalist for both the Chautauqua Prize and the Edgar Award. King has written about race, civil rights, and the death penalty for the New York Times, the Washington Post, and The Atlantic, and he is a contributor to The Marshall Project, a nonprofit news organization covering the U.S. criminal justice system. King's earlier book, *The Execution of Willie Francis*, was published in 2008. He lives in Brooklyn, N.Y. Mark your calendars – the event is slated to take place on **Wednesday, April 17, 2019** at the Orlando Science Center!



