



## **Literacy Works, Inc.**

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### **LITERACY WORKS NAMES LANSDOWNE RESIDENT "STUDENT OF THE YEAR"**

BALTIMORE (June 6, 2003) – Literacy Works, Inc. has named Michele Schleicher its "Student of the Year."

"Michele epitomizes what our program is all about. She has overcome multiple barriers to work toward her educational and career goals," said Milton Dave, Literacy Works' distance learning coordinator. "Her positive, 'can do' attitude has propelled her down a path towards success. Her example is emulated by other students and serves as a 'reward' for teachers in this program."

A 26-year-old single mother of four (ages seven, six, four and 17 months), Schleicher previously dropped out of high school in her senior year because she was pregnant with her first child. Subsequently, she has been on Welfare and had difficulty securing jobs more advanced than cashier's positions.

Two years ago, she began attending classes at Literacy Works' Lansdowne learning center. Since then, she has earned her high school diploma, as well as several computer training certificates, first aid/CPR certificates, Notary public certification, and – for the first time in her life – a driver's license. Additionally, she is now off Welfare and employed full-time as the learning center's administrative assistant.

"I'm not the only one who can turn their life around," said Schleicher, a Lansdowne resident. "Anyone can try just as hard as I did to improve."

While she has taken approximately 11 courses from Literacy Works – including Windows '98, Excel, Internet and PowerPoint – she is enrolled in additional courses through the organization's *Literacy Connects* Internet-based individualized distance learning program. (In this program, students have set times for individualized course work, as well as live chats with their instructors and other students. Upon the conclusion of a minimum of 60 hours of instruction, students are post-tested. They do not advance until they demonstrate proficiency.)

Overall, Schleicher hopes to utilize her new skills to earn a college scholarship and ultimately fulfill her lifelong dream of becoming a nurse. "If you just put your mind to it, look at all the accomplishments you can achieve," she said.

Founded in 1990, Literacy Works, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that coordinates, promotes and supports adult and family literacy services. It operates adult learning centers in Rosedale/Essex, Lansdowne, Randallstown, Chase and two new locations in Washington Village/Pigtown. For more information about the organization and its programs – for students and volunteers, call 410-887-2001.

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