Illinois Student Adam Hebert: College Grad and Construction Manager

In 1992, Adam Hebert was one of the first students in Reading Recovery at Bradley East School in Bradley, IL. Adam’s Reading Recovery teacher, Carol Sue Painter, recalls that Adam was the first student she took behind the glass. “We were both learning about Reading Recovery at that point.” Adam successfully completed his Reading Recovery lessons and finished first grade reading at a high level.

Adam’s parents, Brian and Anita Ebert, and aunt, Pat Kirchner, were so grateful that they made three monetary contributions to Reading Recovery at his school. The donation allowed teachers to purchase more books for Reading Recovery students.

Adam’s scholastic success continued through school as he earned straight As during his last semester at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School. After high school, he attended Kankakee Community College, then University of Illinois. In 2009, he graduated from Illinois State University in Bloomington, where he earned a bachelor’s degree with a focus on construction management. He is currently the district project manager of Wesco Distribution in Peoria, IL.

Kentucky Student Alyssa Hahn: Student Nurse

Alyssa Hahn was a quiet, rather shy child in 1995 when she began Reading Recovery lessons in Bourbon County Public Schools, KY. Her teacher, Carolyn Coons, remembers that Alyssa had quite a few known items but read at a low text level when she began her series of lessons. With Reading Recovery lessons, Alyssa’s sense of confidence emerged and she progressed steadily.

“Meeting Mrs. Coons affected my life in many great ways. She worked one on one with me where my embarrassment didn’t matter … I graduated from high school with a 3.76 GPA,” Alyssa wrote in 2011.

This fall, when Carolyn checked in once more, Alyssa had completed her junior year as a nursing student at Morehead College. She was excited to be one of 15 students selected to work three shifts a week in a student externship program at Baptist Health Lexington. In addition, she was a camp counselor in The Promise Program, a project teaching science and reading to K–8 students in the Paris School District. Alyssa wrote, “Where I am today would not have been possible without amazing teachers like Carolyn Coons who work with Reading Recovery to guide a child who had fallen behind. Dreams are possible with this outstanding program.”

Georgia Student Michael Cranford: Beginning Medical School

Michael Cranford was a Reading Recovery student at Mountain Park Elementary in August 1997. He successfully completed Reading Recovery lessons with teacher leader Angie Bennett in 16 weeks. Learning to read and write sparked an interest in reading and playing piano. By third grade, Michael qualified for the gifted program and became an accomplished classical pianist. He was editor of the school newspaper at Parkview High School in Lilburn, GA, and graduated in 2009 with a 3.9 GPA. Michael went on to Emory University in Atlanta and graduated with a double major in music and biology. He was accepted into the Philadelphia School of Osteopathic Medicine (Georgia campus) and began medical school this fall. He plans to become a primary care physician specializing in geriatric medicine.

Michael is a man of many talents and interests. He is a certified emergency medical technician as well as a member of the Emory University Chorus, Concert Choir, and The Emory Master Singers. In addition to his music, Michael is a site coordinator for Project SHINE, a service-learning program that links Emory students with refugees and immigrants who are trying to learn English, become U.S. citizens, and succeed in school. He also volunteers at Wesley Woods, a comprehensive outpatient and acute-care facility that specializes in geriatric care. Through his
work as a music therapist, Michael sees great rewards in his work with his elderly patients. He says, “When you see firsthand how music unlocks something in the very core of their minds, it is so satisfying.”

Michael is also an AmeriCorps VISTA member with Action Ministries as well as the coordinator for Smart Lunch, Smart Kid program in Tucker, GA. Each day this summer, Michael coordinated the delivery of over 400 lunches to seven different apartment complexes, extended-stay hotels, and mobile home parks. These lunches are going to children who otherwise may go without lunch because they are not getting free lunch at school. He also sang with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus last year and hopes he will find the time to sing with them again this year.

Nevada Student Andres Silva: Sheriff’s Deputy

In kindergarten, Andres Silva spoke almost no English, and by first grade was still among the lowest first graders in reading in Washoe County School District in Reno, NV. After less than 20 weeks of Reading Recovery lessons with teacher Sonia MacDonald (one of the first teachers trained in Reading Recovery in Reno), he was average in reading and writing. Andres maintained his skills and has been an example for his whole family.

In high school, Andres was a good student, a football player, and helped both his sister and mother, Martha, with schoolwork. (Martha had gone back to school to pursue a degree in elementary education.) Andres was her study partner, encouraging her as she prepared for final exams and professional tests. After graduation, Martha taught first grade and completed training as a Reading Recovery advocate, sharing many insights of second language learners with colleagues.

After high school, Andres attended University of Nevada-Reno and received an associate degree in criminal justice. He is a deputy for the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office, is married, and has a daughter. His mother, Martha, is currently teaching at Alice Maxwell Elementary School in Sparks, NV.

2006 Massachusetts Student
Hannah Powers: Published Author

Hannah Powers began her academic career at Sippican Elementary School in Old Rochester Regional School District, MA. Hannah’s mother said her daughter “wasn’t interested in learning to read” as she began Reading Recovery lessons taught by Kelly Kelleher.

“When I think of Hannah, I remember a very conscientious, thoughtful little girl, who adored animals, especially horses,” Kelleher said. “It was her love of animals that allowed me to tap interest for book selection and writing topics. Since writing was a strength for Hannah, we capitalized on this strength to develop a reciprocal relationship between reading and writing.”

Now a freshman at Old Rochester Regional High School, Hannah is a published author of a 23,000-word novel. She wrote the book while in the Minecraft Club, an after-school program where members participated in National Novel Writing Month. Hannah and her book were featured in a September article in the local paper.

Hannah’s book, Night and Day, was published as she completed 8th grade last year. When Hannah’s mother told her the book was available on Amazon, she said, “How come, mom? All I wanted was to get five free copies so I could lend them to my friends.”

Photo courtesy of Chris Reagle/GateHouse Media New England