

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION
UNVEILS SECOND ANNUAL 30 UNDER 30 LIST**

List recognizes innovative young leaders transforming literacy worldwide

NEWARK, Del. (Sept. 1, 2016) – The International Literacy Association (ILA), a global advocacy and membership organization dedicated to advancing literacy for all, announced today the honorees named to its second annual 30 Under 30 list. The list recognizes the next generation of innovators, advocates and educators who are leading efforts to advance literacy for all, whether in their community or around the world.

“Today, there are still 781 million people around the world who can’t read or write, 126 million of whom are youth. This list highlights the next class of leaders who are taking steps to advance literacy and helping us reverse those alarming statistics,” said Marcie Craig Post, executive director, International Literacy Association. “The work of these impressive young leaders is closely intertwined with our mission to transform lives through literacy, so we are thrilled to welcome them to our growing list of 30 Under 30 honorees.”

ILA’s 30 Under 30 list highlights rising leaders from 12 countries and includes nonprofit leaders, classroom teachers, authors, volunteers, researchers, and social entrepreneurs. Each honoree has created and implemented an initiative that has directly improved the quality of literacy instruction or increased access to literacy tools in the classroom, community and/or online.

ILA’s 2016 30 Under 30 list includes:

- Deborah Ahenkorah Osei-Agyekum, 29, Cofounder/Executive Director, Golden Baobab; CEO, African Bureau Stories, Ghana
- Babar Ali, 23, Founder/Headmaster, Ananda Siksha Niketan, India
- Qasim Aslam, 29, Cofounder, The History Project, Pakistan/India
- Hikmat Baba Dua, 26, Executive Director, League of Young Female Leaders, Ghana
- Humaira Bachal, 28, Founder, Dream Model Street School, Pakistan
- Milagros Barsallo, 29, Cofounder, RISE Colorado, Colorado, U.S.
- Michelle Brown, 29, Founder/CEO, CommonLit, Washington, DC, U.S.
- Alex Corbitt, 26, Seventh-Grade English Teacher, MS331, New York, U.S.
- Tanyella Evans, 29, Cofounder/CEO, Library For All, New York, U.S.
- Jeff Fonda, 29, Founder/CEO, The Literate Earth Project, Pennsylvania, U.S.
- Gustavo Fuga, 23, Founder, 4You2, Brazil
- Anneli Hershman, 26, PhD Student/Research Assistant, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Massachusetts, U.S.
- Imani Henry, 15, CEO/Publisher, 100 Men Reading, Delaware, U.S.
- Surya Karki, 25, Founder/CEO, Diyalo Foundation; Country Director, United World Schools Nepal, Nepal/Maine, U.S.
- Ashlyn Kemp, 22; Student, Longwood University, Virginia, U.S.
- Kathryn Lett, 27, EL Teacher, Kentwood Public Schools, Michigan, U.S.
- Tynea Lewis, 28, Site Administrator, LitPick Student Book Reviews, Pennsylvania, U.S.
- Kuan-Wei “Ray” Lu, 28, CEO, Junyi Academy, Taiwan
- Sean T. Lynch, 29, English Department Head, Commonwealth Academy for Inner City Scholars, Massachusetts, U.S.
- John Maldonado, 25, Special Education Teacher, P368K Star Academy, New York, U.S.
- Shuko Musemangezhi, 23, Founder, Zambian Association of Literacy, Zambia

- Aarti Naik, 28, Founder, SAKHI for Girls' Education, India
- Ekaterina Popova, 28, Board Member/Secretary, Reading Association of Russia; Sociology of Education Lecturer, State Academic University for the Humanities; Researcher, Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia
- Swetha Prabakaran, 16, Founder, Everybody Code Now!, Virginia, U.S.
- Matt Presser, 28, Former Teacher and Instructional Coach, King-Robinson Inter-District Magnet School; Classroom Fellow for the U.S. Department of Education, Connecticut, U.S.
- Kellyn Sirach, 23, ELA Teacher, Booth Elementary School, Illinois, U.S.
- Kelly Taylor, 23, Language Development Teacher, Peel Language Development School, Australia
- Sonesoulilat Vongsouline, 26, Education Director, Big Brother Mouse, Laos
- Melissa Wells, 29, Literacy Coach, Arcadia Elementary School, South Carolina, U.S.
- Matiullah Wesa, 23, Founder, Pen Path Civil Society, Afghanistan

ILA's 30 Under 30 honorees are featured in the September/October issue of Literacy Today, ILA's bi-monthly magazine, which published today. To view the Literacy Today feature and read more about the honorees' accomplishments, visit literacyworldwide.org/30under30.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION

The International Literacy Association (ILA), formerly the International Reading Association, is a global advocacy and membership organization dedicated to advancing literacy for all through its network of more than 300,000 literacy educators, researchers and experts across 75 countries. With 60 years of experience in the field, ILA believes in the transformative power of literacy to create more successful societies, healthy communities and prosperous economies. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather and disseminate high-quality resources, best practices and cutting-edge research to empower educators, inspire students and inform policymakers. The International Literacy Association publishes several peer-reviewed journals, including The Reading Teacher, Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy and Reading Research Quarterly. For more information, visit literacyworldwide.org.

Media Contact: For all media inquiries, including photos of 30 Under 30 honorees, please contact press@reading.org.