



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Giving Children the Tools To Read - And Elders Succeed**

By Eric Nelson  
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**San Francisco, CA** - Experience Corps Bay Area (ECBA), a local non-profit with 18 years experience helping Bay Area students improve their reading skills, is pleased to announce the expansion of its program to San Mateo County. Beginning in January of 2016, ECBA will be partnering with Selby Lane Elementary school to provide its literacy program to Kindergarten through 3rd grade classrooms to help insure all students are reading at grade level.

Reading literacy levels continue to be a major concern for Redwood City School District educators, parents and civic leaders. According to the Peninsula Literacy Coalition, close to 66% of Redwood City public school students are at risk of not meeting grade-level reading proficiency. This is startling, in that achieving reading proficiency by 3rd grade is the most important predictor of students graduating from high school.

Warren Sedar, principal at Selby Lane Elementary, welcomes the ECBA literacy program to support the ongoing efforts of teachers to build students' reading skills. "We are proud to serve such a diverse student population, and with a large percentage being English Language Learners, we're looking for the ECBA program to become one of the important factors in helping our students achieve reading proficiency".

Paul Olsen, Director of Experience Corps Bay Area, notes that while addressing the literacy needs of students remains the primary mission of the organization, the fact that all its volunteers are over the age of 50 is important as well. "With today's changing demographics, over 100 million adults in the US are over the age of 50 and approximately 8,000 more a day are turning 50. As these people see their work lives changing, they represent an incredible resource for social change. Our program gives them an opportunity to use their skills, their time and their hearts to help young children succeed in school and in later life". Plus, a growing body of research shows the benefits of volunteer service. Older adults who spend just a few hours a week tutoring children have demonstrated increased physical mobility, cognitive capacity and a heightened sense of well-being.

Experience Corps Bay Area is seeking volunteers over the age of 50 to become part of the new Selby Lane Elementary program. The unique experience and talents of older adults is the foundation of Experience Corps, so no prior classroom experience is necessary. Volunteers receive comprehensive training and on-going support from staff and through team meetings with their fellow volunteers. Anyone interested can contact Eric Nelson, Recruitment Coordinator, at 415-759-4222 Ext. 7315 or email at [enelson@aspiranet.org](mailto:enelson@aspiranet.org).

### About Experience Corps Bay Area

Experience Corps Bay Area engages adults 50+ as tutors to increase the literacy skills of children in grades K-3. It is a proven, time-tested program and its volunteers have been indispensable to that success. Through this generational exchange, children succeed, older adults thrive, and communities are made stronger. Numerous Bay Area community organizations have recognized its track record of excellence in improving students reading skills. To learn more, visit [www.experiencecorpsbayarea.org](http://www.experiencecorpsbayarea.org).

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