

Where Are They Now?

Former SMART Student Jen Ashley Shares SMART Experience and Benefits

Fifteen years ago, Jen Ashley was six years old and living in small-town Merrill, Ore. Her school was tiny and the majority of students were being taught English as a second language. As a result, Jen began to fall behind in reading.

Enter Ingrid, an older woman from Germany who changed Jen's life and ignited a passion for reading.

"Ingrid was the sweetest woman," Jen recalls. "She would always be waiting for me in the SMART reading room and would greet me with a big smile. She would actively engage me in the stories and would ask me about what I had been reading. I would always make sure I came up with something because I wanted to make sure I had an answer for her every week."

With the help of Ingrid and her parents, Jen passed all her state reading tests with flying colors, and, by the end of 3rd grade, she was reading at the 5th grade level.

Today, Jen is a senior at the University of Oregon majoring in Public Relations and Advertising with a minor in Business. She is certain that her SMART experience influenced the kind of person she is today.

"I have confidence with every challenge given to me because, at a young age, presented with a large problem like learning to read, I was only encouraged and pushed to do the best I could," Jen says. "Trying was all that mattered."

According to Jen, she will be a lifetime SMART supporter: "Volunteering one hour a week to have a lifetime effect on a child's education and well-being is not only easy, it's the right thing to do. SMART provides a service to children that most would not have anywhere else. Whether it is because of the mentorship or the help in reading, SMART does amazing work."

And, Jen is a phenomenal example.

Give the Gift of Reading

Simplify your gifts this holiday season!

Give the Gift of Reading to your friends and family and sponsor books for local children who participate in SMART. SMART students receive two books per month to take home and keep—14 books per program year. Supporting the purchase of these books in your area helps a child build his or her own library of books!

For every donation made through this promotion, SMART will email you an

electronic template you can share with your loved ones, letting them know you gave the Gift of Reading in their honor to SMART. Visit <http://www.getsmartoregon.org/donate/gol.html> to make your gift today!



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SMART Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2011

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In Their Words...

Excerpts from stories shared at:
www.CelebrateSMART.org:

I couldn't read until the 3rd grade. We found out later that I was dyslexic, but it was not diagnosed for quite some time. I got involved with SMART because I wanted to help kids who struggle like I did.

*Ann Onstott, Wasco County
Volunteer Reader*

Reading has not come easy for my son. He works incredibly hard and is dedicated to doing his best in school. His struggles have been frustrating for him. He connected with SMART in grade school and the added one-on-one time was priceless. Having a partner to spend time with him reading and making it fun was a big help. Our family appreciates the good work that the SMART organization offers. With heartbreaking budget cuts and crowded classrooms, SMART is an invaluable addition to any public school.

Rosi, Marion County, Parent

I am just turning 20 years old and was one of the first SMART students at Vernon Elementary School. My love for reading was founded on the SMART Reading program. I remember being so excited to get out of class and go read with my mentor and go on mini adventures in my head while reading books like Green Eggs and Ham, Corduroy, The Berenstain Bears, Junie B. Jones, and all the TreeHouse books.

*Dea'Naisa Willingham, Multnomah County
SMART Alumna*

SMART Celebrates 20 Years of Making Readers Message from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

December will mark my first year as Executive Director of SMART, and, what a year it's been! I've met with SMART staff, Board members, volunteers, educators, donors and partners across the state to discuss the future of SMART, and our evolving place within an educational system faced with changing regulations, dwindling budgets and growing classrooms.

I've learned a tremendous amount through these conversations, and have been heartened by two

common threads that have emerged: an intrinsic understanding of the importance of reading in a child's life, and a firm commitment to ensuring children are entering school ready to learn to read, and leaving 3rd grade reading and ready to learn. We will continue to work with our partners in the months and years ahead to remain a relevant, valuable and cost-effective partner within Oregon's schools.

This fall – in SMART's 20th year of service – thousands of our volunteers are heading back into Oregon schools, poised to read with more

than 7,700 children in nearly 235 sites across the state.

We plan to give away more than 100,000 books for students to take home and keep. And, we will accomplish these impressive feats because of support from our many dedicated volunteers and donors.

There are a variety of activities and events happening across the state this year to commemorate our 20th anniversary. Please read on for an account of all that's in the works and planned for the coming year.

Thank you for your continued support of SMART. Here's to 20 more years of making readers!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Otis'.

Chris Otis



Program Spotlight:

KSMART Model Provides Nimble Alternative to Scheduling Changes



the classroom receives one-on-one reading time within the literacy block.

What is a literacy block?

A literacy block refers to the mandated 90 or 120 minute per day literacy and reading instruction part of the curriculum.

Why did SMART develop the KSMART model?

KSMART was developed by a principal and teachers at Cook Elementary School in McMinnville as a way to serve more students and to simplify the SMART scheduling process. By building SMART into the Kindergarten school day, the teachers were able to use this time to do targeted small group instruction and literacy activities, while a portion of the class was reading with SMART volunteers.

Do students still get the same amount of one-on-one support in the KSMART model?

Absolutely. One teacher said: "This program has been helpful when teachers struggle with larger class sizes and less time for the individual student. Not only are the students given a chance to read, the remaining students participate in smaller

groups and, thus, obtain more individualized instruction."

Why is KSMART a better option for some schools?

KSMART can sometimes be scheduled as part of the Kindergarten instructional literacy block. As one group of students reads with SMART volunteers, the other two groups can be engaged in other literacy activities. Often, the teacher meets with one group and an assistant leads the third group. This allows time and attention for reading and writing activities that are more difficult to do with the entire Kindergarten classroom.

How do we know KSMART is effective?

At one elementary school, 89 percent of KSMART students met or exceeded expectations in a Concepts About Print (CAP) assessment. Only 75 percent of students who did not participate in KSMART did the same. Teachers also reported that the level of response during book discussions greatly increased among KSMART students.

In response to changing school environments, SMART has developed alternative models, including the KSMART model focused on kindergarten students. The KSMART model aligns with growing emphasis and research – at the state and national levels – on early engagement. SMART is committed to serving as a flexible partner to Oregon's public schools— and the KSMART model is an example of how we've improved the adaptability of our programs in order to reach the maximum number of children in need.

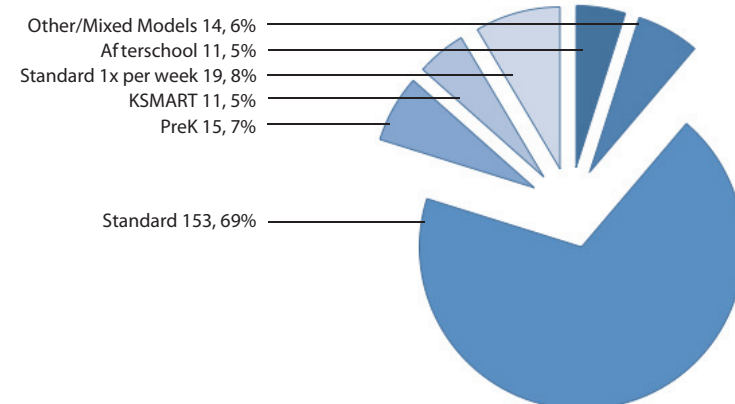
About KSMART:

What is KSMART?

In KSMART, the entire kindergarten classroom gets a chance to read with volunteers in 20-minute blocks. Each volunteer reads one-on-one with three students per hour, and each student receives two books per month to take home.

How does KSMART differ from the Standard SMART model?

In the Standard SMART model, students are identified by their teachers as being in need of one-on-one support and/or mentorship. They read with volunteers for two 30-minute blocks outside of the classroom, and get two books per month to take home. In KSMART, every student in



Delivery Models 2010-11

Celebrating SMART's 20th Anniversary

20 WAYS TO GET SMART

To mark our 20th anniversary year, we're holding a variety of events and activities to engage SMART volunteers and supporters, connect new individuals to the organization, and spread the word about the important work we do— ensuring that Oregon's children are learning to read so they can read to learn.

20 Ways to Get SMART is a statewide campaign to increase awareness about SMART's mission and the importance of children's literacy. We aim to ignite and inspire current supporters to spread the word about our program, and empower students and families with useful information and resources to foster reading readiness. To see the list of ideas or share how you can get SMART, visit www.CelebrateSMART.org.

Share your SMART Story

We're asking anyone whose life has been touched by the SMART program to share their experiences with us. Were you read to in the SMART program as a child? Are you a SMART volunteer, parent or principal? Your stories are ours— and we want to hear them! Share your story and read the stories of others at www.CelebrateSMART.org.

20th Anniversary Gala: Oh, the Places You'll Go!

SMART is having its first fundraising dinner and auction on **Thursday, Feb. 16, 2012 at the Portland Art Museum**. The celebration will include cocktails, dinner, live auction, and paddle raise to 'Make A Difference.' We hope to bring nearly 500 of our friends together to celebrate 20 years of reading support, adult mentorship, and putting books in the hands of children who need them most.

Want to know how you can get involved?

Help us celebrate 20 years of making readers!

- Share your SMART story at www.CelebrateSMART.org
- Get SMART! Check out our 20 Ways to Get SMART campaign. Visit www.CelebrateSMART.org to learn more.
- Attend a local fundraising event. See sidebar on this page!
- Sign up to be a SMART volunteer! Visit our website at www.getSMARToregon.org, to fill out an application.
- Donate! You can do this online or by sending us a donation to:

101 SW Market St.
Portland, OR 97201

Upcoming Fundraising Events

South Central Area:

Saturday Night Sock Hop (organized by the Youth Advisory Board)

Saturday, January 21 – Klamath Falls
For more information, please contact Holly Stork, South Central Area Manager, at (541) 273-2424 or hstork@getsmartoregon.org.

Rogue Valley Area:

Give Your Heart To SMART Fundraiser

Thursday, March 8 – Medford
For more information, please contact Julie Brimble, Rogue Valley Area Manager, at (541) 734-5628 or jbrimble@getsmartoregon.org.

South Valley Area:

South Valley Fundraiser

Tuesday, March 20 at 5 p.m. – Springfield
For more information, please contact Liz Degner, South Valley Area Manager, at (541) 726-3302 or ldegner@getsmartoregon.org.

Northwest Area:

A Taste for Literacy Fundraiser

Sunday, February 26 – Sunshine Mills in The Dalles
For more information, please contact Alison Bruun, Development Associate, at (971) 634-1620 or abruun@getsmartoregon.org



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