Bethune Learning Centers (BLCs) boost the reading and writing skills of low income and low skill children and adults across the United States. By providing learners with opportunities to develop their skills using software in community settings and at home, working in teams with each other and with their parents, BLCs ensure that every child becomes a strong reader. Once they are reading, children perform better in math, pursue their interests in and outside of school, and go on to live more satisfying lives.

Children love the software that they use in the virtual Centers. They work together on games that help build essential phonics skills and develop each child's reading vocabulary. Included eBooks provide children a way to listen to books read out loud, an opportunity to read to friends and parents, and finally an opportunity to read alone; encouraging them to read for pleasure. Comprehension activities ensure that learners are capturing the meaning of what they read. Writing activities give them the skills to express themselves. Most important, each child progresses at their own pace following their own interests. Learners are in charge of their own learning, building self-confidence as they go.

Bethune Learning Centers can be operated by any organization with no requirement for trained teachers or computer hardware. As long as an adult (or responsible teen) is available to hand out the tablets supplied in the BLC kit (or assign children to existing computers), turn them on, and launch the BLC app, children can use and benefit from them. Everything needed is in the software and at the end of a session, all the coordinator needs to do is collect the tablets and plug them in for the night.

One unusual feature of the program is that we keep no records of student use or status. We take this approach on purpose. There is no database to hack, no records to protect and no legal requirement for the host organization to protect sensitive information about young people. Learners are truly in charge of their own learning – the approach recommended by the research and proven to be most effective in programs across the country.

Most parents will first experience the software with their children. Up to about age 10, most learners are comfortable with our traditional game interfaces. We also offer a version of our software for use by older children and adults (Reading Skills for Today's Adults – Professional Edition) which can be provided to support complementary adult education programs in the same location.

Bethune Learning Centers turn any community center, church, juvenile program or after school program into a community reading center. Parents already know where to go, and children are already familiar with the location. All you need to do is to order the BLC kit and follow the instructions – the software does the rest. BLCs are the solution for better reading, better school outcomes and better communities in our cities.

Jereleen Hollimon-Miller (the great grand-niece of Mary McLeod Bethune), Jon Bower and Peter Dublin (the CEO and President/founder of The Family Learning Company), and a group of former Harlem Globetrotters have combined forces to create Bethune Learning Centers. The non-profit has created a literacy program for community centers, churches and after-school programs nationwide. Installations are generously supported by private donations, by education grants, and by government funding.

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