



# PRESS RELEASE

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## New Donation Means Future Milestone for Adult Students

**Gonzales, LA** – Ascension Parish Library is pleased to announce a donation of \$5,500 from the Air Products Foundation to fund five scholarships to its Excel Adult High School program. This donation will support another group of local adults in achieving their academic goals and pursuing new opportunities for success. Libraries are often associated with growth and learning opportunities for youth; however, Ascension Parish Library proudly serves individuals at every stage of life, with critical resources and educational experiences for all ages.

“We’re proud to partner with the Ascension Parish Library to help support adults working to achieve their high school diplomas,” said Danna Leblanc, Commercial Executive Director of Air Products’ Louisiana Clean Energy Complex. “We are developing a new facility in Ascension Parish that will create 2,000 construction jobs and employ 170 full-time workers when it comes onstream, and we want to make sure that these opportunities are available to as many local people as possible.”

The donation comes at a time of celebration, as five other students recently earned their accredited diplomas from the program and are set to graduate in an upcoming ceremony.

“These graduates are proof that learning has no age limit, and with the right support, anyone can reach their academic milestones,” said John Stelly, library director. “Education changes lives, and we are grateful that this partnership with the Air Products Foundation allows us to support more adult learners on their journeys.”

APL is one of a handful of library systems in Louisiana that offers the Excel Adult High School program to residents 21 and older. In addition to the five who earned their accredited diploma this year, 10 more adult students continue to work through the program. Last year, in the program's inaugural year, six students graduated.

Over the summer, APL was invited to take part in a case study for an upcoming white paper on adult learning in public libraries sponsored by Gale and the Public Library Association. They noted that the library offers a robust and diverse portfolio of adult education programs that address local needs while emphasizing lifelong learning, equity, and community partnership.

“This reinforces our belief that libraries are more than places for books. We are seeing how investing in libraries means investing in people – and that support leads to a stronger community,” Stelly said.



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Program participants must live in Ascension Parish and have an APL card (free at all library locations). Courses are 100 percent online and self-paced, and they include unlimited one-on-one tutoring sessions and support from success coaches. Students have 24 months to complete the program.

Those interested in being considered for the program should email [AdultHS@myapl.org](mailto:AdultHS@myapl.org). Candidates for the program must pass a short preliminary course and be interviewed by the library's adult literacy coordinator to determine if this online learning platform is a good fit.

## About APL

Ascension Parish Library (APL) is an award-winning library system committed to providing opportunities for lifelong learning to all ages. APL delivers needed resources through traditional library services, digital materials, and innovative programs. Ascension Parish Library encourages residents to read, learn, and create by visiting their local library. To learn more, visit <https://www.myAPL.org/>.

## About Air Products

Air Products has operated in Louisiana for more than 50 years and currently employs 330 people. The Air Products Foundation supports efforts to make the communities where its employees live and work better for all people. Its investments in the Ascension Parish community include supporting schools and other local organizations and improving public space.

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