



## WOLCOTT SCHOOL RECEIVES “IT TAKES A VILLAGE OF READERS AWARD” FOR EXCELLENCE & INNOVATION IN DYSLEXIA EDUCATION

*Chicago’s first college prep school exclusively for students who learn differently is honored by Everyone Reading Illinois; recognized for its collaborative instructional model*

CHICAGO, IL – OCT. 6, 2016 – Wolcott School, which prepares college-bound secondary students who struggle with learning differences to excel academically and in life, has received the “**It Takes A Village of Readers Award**” for its multifaceted, interdisciplinary approach to breaking down barriers for students with dyslexia. The award was bestowed today by **Everyone Reading Illinois**, a 38-year-old nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives of people with dyslexia, which is characterized by difficulty mastering traditional reading skills.

**Everyone Reading Illinois** chose to recognize Wolcott for its singular collaborative instructional model, which pairs master teachers in all subjects with learning specialists, who together identify the combination of learning strategies best suited to each individual student, and then work with the students to implement them.

Wolcott class sizes are small, its course work is academically rigorous, and its philosophy encourages self-advocacy and independence. Approximately 70 percent of Wolcott’s students have some form of dyslexia, according to Wolcott Head of School Dr. Miriam Pike, adding that the “Wolcott Way” plays to students’ strengths, minimizing the effects of dyslexia and other learning issues on their lives and maximizing their potential to flourish - in college and beyond.

“We deeply appreciate receiving this year’s ‘It Takes A Village of Readers Award’ from Everyone Reading Illinois because it validates the Wolcott Way,” Dr. Pike added. “We are devoted to building lifelong learners who emerge from Wolcott confident that their unique perspectives will make them great contributors to the world.”

Teachers and specialists at Wolcott agree that the school’s interdisciplinary approach fosters success. “The curriculum may be rigorous and challenging, but each student is allowed to experience the material differently,” said Claire Walter, English Department Head. “Some via audio, some via vocalization, some via a tactile experience, some a combination of all. No two approaches are the same, but all students are headed in the same direction.”

“Because Wolcott exists to help a particular type of learner succeed, the students are able to come to school relaxed, many for the first time,” said Daphne Sajous-Brady, Director of Student Services. “Before Wolcott, families and kids always had to battle – for special accommodations, recognition of issues, acceptance. But we’re working in concert with them, not pushing against them.”

Founded in 2013, Wolcott’s unique educational model benefits students and families far beyond its location in Chicago’s West Town neighborhood. The region’s first college prep school for students who learn differently, Wolcott is not only designing and implementing best practices in the field, but exporting them to the wider community through its James Tyree Center and other programs.

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### **About Wolcott School**

Wolcott is Chicago’s independent college prep high school for students with learning differences. Located in Chicago’s West Town neighborhood, Wolcott’s students, faculty and staff are dedicated to a strength-based curriculum and dynamic student life culture. The school exports best practices in the field through its James Tyree Center, and will be opening its new Arts and Athletics Center just blocks from its main campus in September 2017. Wolcott serves a diverse student body, and employs a needs-blind application process. Scholarships are available for qualified applicants. To tour Wolcott or for more information, visit [www.wolcottschool.org](http://www.wolcottschool.org).

### **About Everyone Reading Illinois**

Everyone Reading Illinois is one of Illinois’ leading organizations in dyslexia awareness and education. As a non-profit organization founded in 1978, it serves the entire state of Illinois and works to improve the lives of individuals with dyslexia, from childhood through adulthood. Everyone Reading Illinois’ “It Takes A Village of Readers Award” was established in 2000 to meet the needs of students with dyslexia, support best practices, and widen the organization’s reach. For more information, visit <https://everyonereadingillinois.org/>