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Monica Horan Rosenthal was born and raised in Delaware County and starred in *Everybody Loves Raymond*, which was created by her husband Phil Rosenthal. The Rosentals awarded the Delaware County Literacy Council a generous grant through the Rosenthal Family Foundation in support of this fall's Literacy Is Essential Telethon.

## **Literacy Telethon Reaches Goal with Boost from Rosenthal Family Foundation**

The Literacy Is Essential Telethon brought together a bevy of stars and community leaders to shine the spotlight on adult literacy and to raise awareness and needed funds for the Delaware County Literacy Council (DCLC), all while keeping attendees safe. The fundraising goal of the innovative online event was to raise \$45,000.00 in honor of the 45 years that DCLC has been providing free literacy services to local adults.

Held online on October 21st, the Telethon succeeded by all measures. Sponsors supported the event; celebrities, entertainers, and civic leaders shared their talent and insight during the event; individuals donated to the event; and attendees thoroughly enjoyed the event. But the ambitious goal of raising \$45,000.00 was achieved only because of a generous \$15,000.00 matching grant awarded to DCLC by the Rosenthal Family Foundation.

The Rosenthal Family Foundation was created by Monica Horan Rosenthal and Phil Rosenthal. Monica hails from Delaware County and shared a personal message during the Telethon. She is best known as Amy MacDougall/Amy Barone from *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Phil created, wrote, and executive produced the beloved TV show and currently has a food travelogue series on Netflix called *Somebody Feed Phil!* When Monica heard about the Delaware County Literacy Council (DCLC) and the Literacy Is



Essential Telethon, she took it upon herself to learn more. Touched by the stories of adults who persist in their studies, often despite challenging barriers, Monica then wanted to *do* more in support of DCLC's students.

In Monica's Telethon message she explained, "I was born and raised in Delco but I had no idea about the incredible work the Delaware County Literacy Council has been doing for 45 years. And I was so touched to learn that it all started because Chester community members noticed that their neighbors were struggling with reading, writing, math, and they didn't just notice, they did something about it."

Thus inspired, Monica Horan Rosenthal and Phil Rosenthal took action and awarded DCLC a matching grant from the Rosenthal Family Foundation to help spur donations during the Telethon. As a result, the first \$15,000.00 raised during the Telethon was matched and doubled to become \$30,000.00, which launched the event two-thirds of the way toward its overall fundraising goal. Donations and sponsorships combined to raise the remaining \$15,000.00, helping DCLC raise the 45th anniversary target of \$45,000.00!

The Literacy Is Essential Telethon's generous sponsors include Major Sponsors Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union, Harrah's Philadelphia, and PECO; Supporting Sponsors Brinker Simpson, Sun East Federal Credit Union, and White Horse Village; Gold Sponsors the Ed Snyder Family Foundation, King's Automotive, and Wayne Jewelers; Silver Sponsors John Cipollone Heating and Cooling and Rose Valley Appraisal; Bronze Sponsors Vinnie Arcana and R&N Enterprises; and individual sponsors David Belanger, Madeline Bialecki, Michael Hartnett, and Carol A. Weiss.

Helmed by emcee Shonette Harrison Carew, the Literacy Is Essential Telethon honored the 2020 Champions of Adult Literacy for furthering the cause of adult literacy in Delaware County. During the Telethon, awards were presented to Student Champion Maria Torres, Community Champion Jonathan Abdur Rahim King, and Hometown Hero Champion the Delaware County Citizen Corps.

The roster of stars appearing in the Telethon was impressive and included celebrities, entertainers, and civic leaders with roots in or connections to Delaware County. From the sports world Dan Connor and Vince Papale each shared an inspirational message. Former Champions of Adult Literacy and local entertainment standouts Jahlil Beats and Dyana Williams also gave messages of support. Sharing their personal connection to literacy and to Delaware County from the world of TV and movies were Monica Horan; Fran Brill, a Sesame Street puppeteer; Byron Johnson, a hairstylist for Tyler Perry Studios; Cheri Oteri, best known for her work on *Saturday Night Live*; and Tina Fey, who presented Maria Torres with the Student Champion of Adult Literacy award.

Also appearing were television news anchors Lucy Bustamante of NBC10/Telemundo62 and Jessica Kartalija of CBS3, and local leaders Congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon, Mayor Thaddeus Kirkland, PA Representative Jenn O'Mara, and DCCC President Dr. L. Joy Gates Black.



Entertainment was provided by singer-songwriters Danie Ocean and Matthew Ryan, both from Chester; Lost Northern Tribe, a local band out of Media; and Broadway performer Kathy Deitch, originally from Ridley Park.

A special raffle prize was also generously provided by Phil Rosenthal of the Rosenthal Family Foundation. The “Dinner with Phil” raffle offered attendees the chance to have a free meal delivered from a local restaurant and then to share that meal with Monica Horan Rosenthal and Phil Rosenthal by video chat. Bonnie Hallam of Drexel Hill won the raffle prize.

More than 130 individuals donated to the Telethon, and as many as 500 people viewed the event live. A replay of the Telethon can be seen at <https://bit.ly/TelethonReplay>.

The Rosenthal Family Foundation works alongside grassroots activists to address issues of inequity. While most of the funding is focused in Los Angeles, the foundation supports a number of organizations working in the Philadelphia area and New York City. Key focus areas include developing a leadership pipeline for community based organizations and ensuring arts education is core curriculum in public schools. The Rosenthal Family Foundation recently launched a new program titled *Somebody Feed The People*, to support organizations working to alleviate hunger and food insecurity in communities across the United States and the globe.

The Delaware County Literacy Council (DCLC) helps adults develop reading, writing, math, and English language skills so that these adults can thrive in the workplace and community. To learn more or to get involved, visit [www.delcoliteracy.org](http://www.delcoliteracy.org).