2026 Impact 100 RVA Executive Summary

Name of Organization: Reading and Education for Adult Development, Inc. (READ RVA)

Overview of the Organization:
Since 1984, READ RVA has advanced its mission to change lives through free adult literacy instruction. Over 100,000 adults in the region struggle with limited literacy, making it harder to find jobs, access health care, manage finances, and support their families. For these adults, difficulty reading is a hidden barrier that limits their choices and independence, while making everyday tasks such as filling out a job application, understanding prescriptions, or helping children with homework much harder. By teaching essential reading, writing, and communication skills, READ RVA helps adults handle daily life with greater confidence and self-sufficiency, uplifting their families and communities. From its current Willow Lawn location, READ RVA has nearly tripled the number of adults it serves over the past three years, from 114 to 312.

Overview of the Project:
READ RVA now has the physical space to expand its proven services to the East End, where a disproportionate number of households live below the federal poverty level. This new literacy center will provide instruction, technology, and personalized support to adults who need it most. A $100,000 Impact 100 award would be transformative, enabling READ RVA to establish an immediate East End presence and launch a sustainable community resource with long-term impact. The funding will support skilled instructors, tutor training, learning materials, and a community computer lab that will open doors to digital literacy and technology-based learning.

Expected Impact on the Community:
READ RVA aims to serve 200 East End adults in the first academic year (2027-28), establish a strong foundation for growth, and position itself to triple its reach over the next four to five years. The benefits will extend far beyond improved reading, writing, and technology skills. East End students will be poised to experience the same wins as Willow Lawn students: 79% read bills, shopped, and used transportation more confidently; 74% felt more confident visiting doctors and understanding health care instructions; and 74% reported increased confidence reading to children at home. These impacts will reach the next generation, as a mother's reading ability is the strongest predictor of her child's academic success. By strengthening parents' literacy skills, READ RVA helps families thrive and break generational cycles of educational and economic disadvantage. READ RVA will measure progress using nationally approved adult literacy assessments, individual learning goals, learner engagement, and community participation. Impact 100's investment will jump-start READ RVA's East End expansion, bringing resources and opportunities to underserved families and building a stronger, healthier community, one deserving student at a time.