

## Our Story

Growing up in the 1st Ward, Allentown's poorest neighborhood, Gabriel Rendon often translated for his parents at the bank, school, doctor's office, and more. He helped his mom make appointments, write checks to pay bills and travel on the bus all over the Lehigh Valley. These experiences created the desire and ability to help other families facing the same struggles. Gabriel was able to purchase his first home by the age of 21, and financial literacy played a crucial role in his ability to support his young family.

From 1999 to 2016, Gabriel helped thousands of families and business owners in the banking industry. He helped them save money, buy homes, reduce debt, start and grow their businesses, and more. His ability to relate to his community helped him build a successful career, but over the years, he noticed that young clients were less financially literate than before. Clients had more trouble with fundamental banking issues, preventing them from increasing savings, improving credit scores, buying homes, and reducing debt. Furthermore, he could see a significant education gap in addressing this unmet need.

First, our schools don't have the capacity, experience, or tools to provide the financial education high school graduates need to be prepared for adulthood. Second, adults can only rely on learning from organizations that sell financial services, often creating a conflict of interest.

This means that adults with stigmas about financial institutions, who often need the most help, rarely trust financial institutions enough to work with them. Worse yet, as they look elsewhere, many end up working with predatory lenders or similar agencies

that take advantage of the most vulnerable residents in our community.

In January 2017, Gabriel decided to walk away from the financial services industry to address this problem by providing a safe place for residents to gain the fundamental skills needed to build financial stability. Financial Literacy Center embodies Gabriel's desire to remove barriers for residents, enabling them to succeed through financial education.



**Gabriel Rendon**

## What we do and why

Our programs are headed by Paul Jensen, an FLC board member with over 40 years of experience in business, including being the CFO of an investment bank. Paul is a CPA, has an MBA, and a Master's in Education. He is also certified by the National Financial Educators Council (NFEC).



**Paul Jensen**

Our main programs are an 8-week foundational course, which can be taught in person or online, and a 4-week course focusing on the importance of banking, developed for the BankOn Allentown Coalition.

In addition to courses, we offer students one-on-one coaching to develop a personal financial plan based on their goals. We measure success by tracking the growth of students' net worth, improvement in credit scores, and reduced debt while also ensuring the avoidance of common pitfalls, such as evictions and foreclosures.

Lastly, FLC can provide workshops and seminars to students working with agencies throughout the Lehigh Valley. We can support both staff and residents, helping these agencies increase the effectiveness of their programs.

FLC has helped hundreds of Lehigh Valley residents increase financial knowledge and confidence by providing relatable and easy-to-understand courses. As we adapt to the needs of our community, we understand that each student has different goals and needs, and financial education cannot be addressed with a one-size-fits-all approach.

### How do we use our money?

We aim to make the Financial Literacy Center the leading provider of financial literacy services in the Lehigh Valley. To meet this objective, we desire to provide services in several languages with a strong presence in Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton. To meet this goal, we must hire and train staff, including teachers, coaches, and administrators. Today we are a 100% volunteer organization,

meaning all donations go directly toward building capacity.

Our immediate funding needs are:

- Hiring a Community Coordinator
- Hiring teachers and coaches
- Bilingual program development

### How you can help

Your gift has the potential to change the lives of an entire family both today and for many years down the road.

Our goal for 2024 is to reach 300 students over 12 months with courses and coaching in multiple languages. Our estimated funding need is \$118,000, or ***less than \$400 per student.***

With a *monthly donation of \$25 or an annual donation of \$300.* you could make a significant difference in someone else's life.

Without your support, thousands of families in our community will continue to repeat the same negative cycles that lead to poverty, crime, recidivism, and more. Your donation, no matter how large or small, is significant! Please consider donating today at [flclv.org/donate](http://flclv.org/donate).

Estimated Fundraising Need	
Courses (300 Students)	<b>\$25,000</b>
Coaching (100 Students)	<b>\$25,000</b>
Community Coordinator	<b>\$35,000</b>
Recruiting, Training, & Admin	<b>\$26,000</b>
Bilingual Instruction	<b>\$7,000</b>
Total	<b>\$118,000</b>



484-553-8250  
[www.flclv.org](http://www.flclv.org)  
1620 W. Hamilton St Unit 2  
Allentown, PA 18102

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Scan this code and give today!



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