

# Meet Talethe Jackson of Reading to Kids in Greater Los Angeles



Today we'd like to introduce you to Talethe Jackson.

**Talethe, let's start with your story. We'd love to hear how you got started and how the journey has been so far.**

At an early age, I enjoyed helping people and wanted to make a difference. Growing up in a small town of Marianna, Arkansas, I was taught that going to college was my golden ticket to have a successful career and begin the journey that I longed for since I was a teen. I am also the youngest of seven children in my family, so my hardworking mother always pushed me to never

settle on my goals. Thanks to my older siblings, I learned so much from them during my teenage years and it helped me prepare for my future.

Fast forward to my senior year of high school, I accepted two academic scholarships that would cover my financial fees for enrollment at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. During my collegiate experience at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UA Little Rock), I learned about the Nonprofit sector which really opened my eyes to what I wanted to do in the public sector. Therefore, I majored in Political Science and chose to minor in Nonprofit Leadership Studies (NPLS).

Through the Political Science Department and my NPLS Program at UA Little Rock, I was able to intern at UA Little Rock Children International (UA Little Rock CI) and other local nonprofit organizations in the Little Rock community. I learned early on from my undergraduate program how important it was for me to network and seek internship opportunities. After various internship experiences, I knew the exact direction that I wanted for my career.

My internship experiences played a major role in my previous job opportunities because it gave me hands-on experience of what I really wanted to do. It really expanded my views of what it is like to serve in the Nonprofit sector and how governance plays a role in so many ways. Immediately after earning my B.A. Degree with UA Little Rock in May 2016, I began working with UA Little Rock Children International. To this date, UA Little Rock Children International will always have a special place in my heart because of my experience serving with them as a Youth Program Assistant and being promoted as Program Coordinator within six months. UA Little Rock Children International allowed me to grow professionally and opened up so many doors for me in my career. After serving with Children International (CI) for three years, it was a pivotal moment in my life when I relocated to California to expand my professional work in the Nonprofit sector and reunite with my husband who also accepted a job opportunity in California earlier that year.

**We're always bombarded by how great it is to pursue your passion, etc – but we've spoken with enough people to know that it's not always easy. Overall, would you say things have been easy for you?**

Prior to my CI departure in May 2019, my career in California wasn't a smooth transition that I'd hope for. I was offered temporary work opportunities in Los Angeles, but I felt that the opportunities available at the time weren't a strong connection for my interest. I applied for countless work opportunities and landed my first temporary job a month later in California serving as a Senior Administrative Assistant with Community Partners. During the three summer months from June 2019 to August 2019 temporarily working with Community Partners, I applied for outside permanent positions. Once again, I started the interview process for various employers in Los Angeles, California and none of the opportunities were quickly coming back my way to be hired. During that time, I received many "Thank you for applying", "Can we keep your resume on file", "You were a top candidate" emails from countless jobs. My last day with Community Partners was approaching due to it being a temporary role and I was becoming impatient. I was ready to start working full-time again in the field that I love. After a deep conversation with my husband, he told me to give myself some time to adjust to living in LA and just wait for the right opportunity. He was certainly right! A few weeks after my departure with Community Partners, I was offered a permanent role serving as Program Coordinator with Reading to Kids, a nonprofit in Los Angeles, California.

**We'd love to hear more about your work and what you are currently focused on. What else should we know?**

When I was offered the job with Reading to Kids, I happily accepted because I fully support the mission of the organization and believe that our team shares a common passion for what we do. Reading to Kids is a grassroots organization dedicated to inspiring underserved children with a love of reading, thereby enriching their lives and opportunities for success in the future. I am truly thankful to be able to wake up each day and love what I do. As the Program Coordinator, my day to day tasks are focused on daily communication within our eight school partners in the Los Angeles Unified School District, creating special content for our Social Media outlets, and oversee the coordination of our monthly reading clubs that are held on the 2nd Saturday of every month. Although our reading clubs are now held virtually each month, there is still just as much work behind the scenes being prepared daily to make sure our programs run smoothly for the families and schools we serve.

**Has luck played a meaningful role in your life and business?**

All of the good and challenging moments throughout my life have allowed me to be where I am in my life. From my personal and professional experiences, I wouldn't change a thing. I believe that things in your life take place for a reason, whether it's a lesson or a blessing. At this moment, it's a very exciting time for me right now as I celebrate my one year anniversary serving with Reading to Kids on September 12th and I just finished my Online Master of Public Administration from Arkansas State University of Jonesboro this summer. In addition to continuing my passion working with Reading to Kids, I've also founded my own nonprofit organization back home in Marianna, Arkansas. R.E.A.L. Scholars Program is a nonprofit organization that I decided to bring back to my hometown to provide educational learning opportunities to scholars in need. The best is yet to come and I'm just getting started!

**Contact Info:**

- **Website:** Reading to Kids Website | [www.readingtokids.org](http://www.readingtokids.org)
- **Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/forever.tnc/>
- **Facebook:** R.E.A.L. Scholars Program  
| <https://www.facebook.com/REALScholarsProgram>















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