

LOOK AT US!



A Newsletter of the Los Angeles Public Library
Adult Literacy Services
Edited by Ruth Gooley
Winter 2007

IT WAS A MATCH!

Patrick and Nestor

The end of a relationship
By Patrick Bollig

Nestor and I have decided on very good terms to discontinue lessons. December 20 was our last session. The main reason is that Nestor is fairly advanced and I can't competently teach him anymore without reviewing grammar material myself. We made it to participles and gerunds. Who vs. whom is child's play for him, though he came to the program not knowing long from short vowel sounds. (!!!) I am amazed at his rapid progress and his zeal for learning. Nestor got an A on his grammar final at Pierce College. This success seems to have motivated Nestor, and I have no doubt that he will take this head start from the Adult Literacy Program and run with it. He wrote me a nice letter that ended, "Everything you have taught me is simply priceless."

Climbing the Mountain

My name is Nestor Gonzalez and the library program was my savior because it gave me the help that I needed when I needed the most.

I'm a fulltime working parent, trying to go to college. When I entered college, I was struggling with the only class I had, English. I needed a lot of help and I tried to get it through my college, I tried a local high school, I asked people around and nothing seemed to help. I was frustrated that no one would help me. Then, I saw an ad on television for the Adult Literacy Program. I wasted no time and called them right away.

After my interview with Mary Anne, one of the program's coordinators I was scheduled to work with Patrick as my tutor. Patrick is a well educated person who loves to teach people. He took me underneath his wings and taught most of the things that I was having problems with. He taught me very important information that I had not heard of before. He showed me the short vowel, the long vowel, the being verbs, action verbs, the noun, how to compose an essay and many more important things that I needed help with. Since English is not my first language, I

found it very hard to take an English class and not be able to at least identify a run-sentence or many of the eight parts of speech.

I think that with out the help of the library's Adult Literacy Program I would have failed my English class. Thanks to the program, the people who run it, and Patrick (my tutor), I was able to pass my class. What makes this program great is the convenience of the class meetings, the patience of the tutors, the support of the coordinators and best of all, the program is free.

If I was to write a short movie scene to describe my experience with the program, I would simply write the following scene.

A man wants to climb a high mountain and does not know where to start. He has no map, no tools, no food or water, for the trip. He then yells for help. A genie appears out of nowhere (the Library Adult Literacy Program) and hands him a map (the tutor), some tools (books and supplies), and food and water (support from the program coordinators) and tells him here is what you need, go on climb the mountain and good luck.

CONGRATULATIONS

Adult Literacy Services would like to say congratulations to the following Learners:

Solange Boujolly has started a course of study to earn a California certificate as a Certified Nurse Assistant. She and tutor Arline Zuckerman work together on medical terminology and accent reduction. Solange reports that she is doing very well in her program of study. *That's great, Solange. We wish you the best!*

Marcela Corona, with the help of her tutor Frantz Pierre, received her Certificate of Completion in English as a Second Language, which allows her to attend high school. She was very happy when she told coordinator Diego Mora the news. "I am so proud of her because she has been one of my most dedicated and loyal students," boasts Diego. *We are all proud, too. Congratulations, Marcela!*



Franz and Marcela

Terry Moore, eager to get ahead at his new job, worked with tutor Eileen King to make word cards for 19 words he needed to know. The pair followed the guidelines in *Patterns in Spelling*, including listening for beginning and ending letter sounds, identifying by ear the number of syllables, recognizing word families by ear and by sight, and so on. After a week spent tracing, spelling, and writing the words, Terry typed the words into a word processing program and printed out the page to carry in his wallet. This was the first time Terry did word processing, and he enjoyed it very much. At the end of the month, he

could spell 5 words correctly all of the time and 5 others most of the time, while he used his new spelling pattern skills to try and figure out the rest. This is a giant leap forward for Terry, comments Eileen proudly. *What a fabulous leap. Hats off to you, Terry!*

Liliana Ramirez recently transitioned from the Limited English Proficiency to the Adult Literacy Program. After 8 months working with coordinator Diego Mora on her reading, conversation, and writing skills, Liliana received a Certificate of Completion in English as a Second Language from Evans Adult School and was matched with tutor Mary Kip. Liliana's goal of graduating from high school and qualifying for a CPA license is a lot nearer. *That's wonderful Liliana. Keep up the good work!*

Kayoko Sasagawa was terribly resistant to the idea of reading a book, any book. Too busy. Hated books. Too long. Well, she has fallen in love with the Thumbprint Mysteries. She reads them, learns new English vocabulary, new English idioms and synonyms. They are just long enough for her to get through easily. When she is done, she tells the story to the rest of the conversation class she attends at the Mid-Valley Branch. The class then discusses the story, in understandable English. Reading a book has sneaked up on Kayoko, and she's enjoying it. "What a kick!" exclaims Literacy Coordinator Mary Anne Arensdorf. *What a kick, indeed!*

Graduates of the October 2006 Tutor Training Workshop:

Andrea Berridge
Sandra Block
Rachel Bowen
Lori Broniak
Charles De Rosa
Katherine Ferguson
Fabio Gamboa
Clare Gmur
Amy Hanrahan
Bethany Hanson
Elizabeth Hogg
Erica Ibarra

Yvonne Lacey
Genna Lee
Michael Lee
Jennifer Lincourt
Maria Lynn Manasan
Natalie Marin-Sharp
Nancy Marino
Carolyn Nolasco
Liz Parker
Phil Patton
Henry Redd III
John Stock

Annie Thomas
Cindi Thompson
Elizabeth Torres
Cristina Versage
Oscar Williams
Pamela Wu
Joseph Yanuzzi
Karen Zarsadiaz



Tutors in training

Graduates of the November 2006 Tutor Training Workshop:

Betty Archer	Sioux-z Jessup	Kelly Rugely
Raphael Arner	Robert Jones	Vivien Straus
Sally Bagley	Robert Mitchell	Mariejoy San
Phil Binderman	Mary Kip	Buenaventura
Denise Cameron	Lisa McDivitt	Angie Tibbitts
Warren DeBear	Susan Ngo	Brian Tolentino
Laurie Duley	Jessica Orellana	John Welch
William Gubin	Sarah Ortega	Leslie Whitmore
Barbara Hanna	Cheryl Oubre	Lapu Yabut
Tove Hansen	Shari Prince	Courtney Yingling
Brenda Hinerman	Eve Reagan	
Steve Hochman	Sherron Robinson	

Graduates of the December 2006 Tutor Training Workshop:

Aday Adetutu	Larry Leigh	Teresa Nicoletto
Myrna Brilliant	Stefanie Mancia	Von Omari
Stephanie Brown	Melinda Marvin-Strong	Judith Rand
Vera Chelyapov	Michelle Monroy	Risa Rosenberg
Dolores de Guzman	Teresa Herrera	Brenda Schonfeld
Andrew Forman	Montenegro	Joel Warshaw
Brian Hedrick	Robert Mosqueda	Jane Winer
Christopher Kaufmann	Audrey Nero	

FUTURE TUTOR TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Tutor training workshops will be held on the following dates at the following locations. Please call your local Adult Literacy Coordinator for information.

Saturday, January 20, at the Pacoima Branch from 10-5

Saturday, February 10, at the Alma Reeves Woods – Watts Branch from 10-5

Saturday, March 17, at the Pio Pico – Koreatown Branch from 10-5

Monday & Wednesday, April 16 & 18, at the Will and Ariel Durant Branch from 1-4:30

CELEBRATIONS

Openings:

Adult Literacy Services is happy to announce the opening of a new Center at the Platt Branch in Woodland Hills. This is what the coordinator, Susan Casmier, has to say about the experience:

It was exciting to open a brand new Adult Literacy Center at the Platt Branch Library (in the far west San Fernando Valley) on October 16, 2006. We have a small office, a collection of literacy books, and some children's books for the adult students who are

learning to read to their children. We already have several tutor/student matches and some students waiting for tutors. The Platt library staff are all very helpful and supportive of the literacy center. I'm looking forward to seeing the program grow here at Platt.

Susan B. Casmier
Literacy Center Coordinator
Platt Branch, LAPL
213-623-4078 x.16590

Book Displays

Check out our fabulous collection!
By Holly Schoch



The Panama City Library is a wonderful place to visit. I feel blessed to actually get paid to work here and do what I do as a Literacy Coordinator. We are a friendly group of co-workers and also enjoy a little friendly competition.

So in this spirit, our Senior Librarian, Cathy Ortiz, decided that each of us would take a turn deciding a theme and stocking the books for our display shelves that are in a prominent location in the library. Each of us was assigned a month, and we got to choose the theme and the collection for that month. At first I thought about all my favorite books and all my favorite topics. But it suddenly occurred to me that here was my opportunity to put up a display that I am passionate about.

Well, that would be my job as a Literacy Coordinator. I could display the materials from the Literacy Center. We have fabulous materials and I thought perhaps they weren't getting the exposure that they needed.

So, when my turn came in October, I was ready! I displayed many of our lovely CD's, which were a big hit. Our videos were displayed as well. We found many new readers for our mystery collection. It was a fabulous month and I was constantly having to replenish the collection because it was so popular. It was fun and we had a friendly competition to see which month got the most circulation. I'm sure I won.

Stop by any of our Literacy Centers and see what's new.

Tutor Appreciation Dinners:

Three Tutor Appreciation Dinners were held in November to honor the splendid work our volunteers have been doing over the past year. The first dinner, which was held on November 8 at the West Valley Regional Branch in Reseda, featured a welcome by Holly Schoch and short speeches by coordinators Mary Anne Arensdorf, Susan Casmier, and Luva Coulson. Eighty tutors and guests attended.

The following dinner, held at the Baldwin Hills Branch on November 14, offered a speech by Bill Wells and “thank you’s” from David Baggott, Amit Mehta and Rueben Serrano. Seventy tutors and guests attended.



Guests having fun

The crowd expected at the Central Library was so great that the event was moved outside to the Thorton Courtyard, where one hundred and ten tutors and guests heard a welcome from host June Brandon. Jackie Browne, Alicia Chavarin, Carolyn Francis, Diego Mora, Julie Simonson, and Beverly Pichardo added their thanks as well. The ambience in the lantern-lit courtyard was warm and attendees lingered to talk over their tutoring experiences with one another.



“Thank you” from the Literacy Coordinators

Each tutor received a mug with the Adult Literacy Program’s insignia. Long time volunteers—those who have tutored over fifteen years—were given gift baskets from Starbucks in recognition of their exceptional service. Program administrators Toria Aiken, Sheila Weisberg, and Jim Kennington, who attended all the dinners, were very pleased, both with the attendance and the chance to meet the volunteers, who contribute so much to the success of the program.

Thank you all for coming. Next year’s dinners promise to be even better, so stick around!

Awards

Tutor Mary Kip received an award from Reed Smith, the law firm where she works, for her participation in the Adult Literacy Program. For her community activism, Mary received a paid

day off of work and the Adult Literacy Program was honored with a check for \$750.00. The library would like to thank both Mary and Reed Smith for their generosity.

CREATIVE CORNER:

The Happiest Day By Hla Hla Win

My family and I had never been to Las Vegas. One day our family talked about Las Vegas and we had a plan to go there. One of my friends said to me, "How come you've never been to Las Vegas?"

On Friday we prepared to go there. We came back home early from work to prepare for everything on Friday night. Friday is the busiest day at my job. We had a rush at the job and finished them all quickly. I was so tired that day.

When I got home on Friday night, my family and I started to prepare everything for the trip. We were so excited to go there that we couldn't sleep well.

We woke up early the next day and went to Las Vegas. It took six hours to get there. My brother drove the whole way. When we got there we were very happy. Everything I saw there was new to me. I thought it was a very nice place.

We loved the games, even though we lost some money. We want to go again next time. I was so happy that day. I thank God for this experience. I have never said these words to God before. But this time I want to say, thanks to God, and thanks to my brother and my sister, because this trip was prepared by my brother and my sister.

This was one of the happiest days of my life and I'll never forget it. I look forward to going there with my family again. I hope dreams will come true in my life from now on. I wish for happiest moments to get in my life till the end.

Poems:

Spring
The spring is coming
After a lethargic winter
The air is fresh
And there are beautiful flowers
Everything is growing
Spring
By Zoila Rodriguez

Sun
Bright, shiny,
Rising, Covering
Softly all the earth
Sun.
By Peace Cho

Snow
Comfortable, safe,
Easy footing, stimulating
Nicely on the ground
Snow.
by Peace Cho

PROVERBS:

From Mexico (retold by Daniel Rojas):

- The shoemaker's son always goes barefoot
 - “En la casa del se usa cuchillo de madera.” Literally: In the steelworker’s house is used a wooden knife.
- You behave one way in public and another way in private
 - “Farol de la calle, oscuridad de su casa.” Literally: Light of the street, dark of the house.

From Korea (retold by Peace Cho):

- Unity makes life; separateness makes death.
- Smiling brings happiness to your home.
- If you respect your parents, heaven will give you a child.

From El Salvador (retold by Zoila Rodriguez):

- A better perfume is in a small bottle.
- From the tree that is in the ground, everyone gets wood.

THANK YOU

My name is Francia Astudillo. I'm from Ecuador. I came to the U.S.A. on December 15, 2000, because my husband brought me here.

At first, it was very sad to be in this country. I couldn't work in my field as a teacher; the problem was I was not fluent in the English language. However, I had the opportunity to study at Evans Adult School.

Then, I started to study at Central Library in June 2004. I improved here, in my reading, writing, speaking and listening. I enrolled in Conversation Class. At the same time, I took the Reading Upgrade Course online, and afterwards I took the Comprehension Upgrade Course online, too.

In November, 2004, I got my first tutor: Miss Jackie Guzman. I'm very thankful to her. She was an excellent tutor for me.

Today, I have had my second tutor, Miss Tobi Dragert, since April 2006. I'm happy with her, because I have figured out a lot of things, especially phonetics. She helped me to prepare for the citizenship test of the U.S., and I passed it.

On December 15, 2006, I had the swearing-in ceremony. Now, I'm a U.S. citizen and I'm very proud of it. My future plan is to continue to study English and become a teacher in this country.

My special gratitude to Miss Tobi Dragert, who has contributed greatly to the development of my speech and reading.

In addition, I want to say thanks to the teachers of the Adult Literacy Program at the Central Library: Beverly, Julie and Diego. This program is helpful and stimulating for learning. Thus, I want to invite everyone to come to study perfect English.

A TUTOR IN THE NEWS

By Luva Coulson

A tutor at the Pacoima Library, Jose Estrada, had an article written about him in the Valley News. While he was a student at the Pacoima Skills Center, he came to the Adult Literacy Center to say that he wanted to be a tutor in our program and help other adults as soon as his own English had improved. He is a native of Guatemala and has now been in the United States for 2.5 years.

As a model student at the skills center, he beat out 170 other applicants to win a \$1,000.00 scholarship. He was a representative on the skills center student council, the class president, and is now also a tutor at the Pacoima Branch Library. Now he is taking classes at Valley College as he pursues a degree in teaching or in computer science.

His former teacher at Pacoima Skills Center said, "Without a doubt, he's one of the best students I've ever had. He's a very kind, conscientious person. He's very charismatic. He's a born leader. When I think about Jose, I think about a person with so many dreams and he's not afraid to go after them. He knows he's going to do it and he gives other students hope."

Now, Jose is also giving hope to his student at the Pacoima library literacy program. Thank you, Jose, we are so proud of you!"

LEARNING DISABILITIES, Part 1

What is a learning disability (LD)?

By Susan Casmier

First let's talk about what a learning disability is not. It does NOT mean that people who have trouble learning are dumb. On the contrary, most people who have learning disabilities are of above-average intelligence. Did you know that Albert Einstein didn't learn to read until he was nine years old? Some other successful and intelligent people with learning disabilities include Walt Disney, General George Patton, Whoopi Goldberg, and Charles Schwab.

According to the National Institutes of Health, *one in seven* Americans (15% of the population) has a learning disability. That means that those people have trouble learning in one *or more* of these areas:

- Reading [About 80 per cent of the people who have LD have trouble with reading.]
- Math
- Writing
- Sequencing
- Spatial relations
- Memory
- Auditory and/or visual processing
- Non-verbal communication [in which people don't understand gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, sarcasm, which are forms of non-verbal communication]
- Attention

Why might we have trouble learning in these areas? Because our brains are wired a little differently; in other words, it's a neurological difference.

In future issues of this newsletter, we will discuss learning differences and strategies to overcome them in more detail. In the meantime, if you have specific issues or questions you want discussed, send an email to scasmier@lapl.org

FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Mommy & Me
By Jackie Browne

Since early September, 2006, the Mommy & Me Class has been meeting Thursday mornings at the Singleton Adult Literacy Center at the Central Library. We have a core group of four moms and five children, but other moms, and sometimes dads, attend. We sing songs and dance, share stories, watch videos on parenting, and read books from our Families for Literacy collection. But best of all, it has become a meeting place for recent parents who are often far from extended family and may feel isolated and uncertain in their new role as parent.

Coordinator, Julie Simonson, and I share the planning, the teaching, and the pleasure of watching the program, and the children, grow. We select a topic and try to coordinate an FFL book, with thought to topic or progression. The class is parent focused. At the first session, we watched the "Read to Me LA" video, and in succeeding sessions, we have often shown a video from the "First and Foremost" series, an audio or other activity. Topics have included food and nutrition, bedtime, children's fears, story telling, trips around town and traveling, and of course, discipline. At the end of each session, we read the FFL selection and each parent receives her own copy. Many participants have tutors for additional reading, or they can read with Julie or me.

In practice, the class has become pure joy. Ximena has made new friends, and her son Matias is ready to walk; Eun Ji seems less overwhelmed, and her son, Andrew shares more readily; Sarah brings baby Cameron and big sister Amelia, who always follows along when we read anything; and Juleh told us how much her husband enjoys reading to Emily. From classroom encounters,

the mothers and children have become friends: meeting at the park, visiting each other's homes, sharing native foods, and in the search for more English practice, they are starting their own book club.

As our Mommy & Me class continues, we plan to delve further into topics and activities, incorporating reading, writing, and conversation, as we meet the needs of the parents and children. Feedback from a recent survey indicates that we are headed in the right direction.

- "I love the class because I can learn parenting, practice English. Most of all, I met friends here. Especially, I learned how I can spend time with children well."
- "I like to share the experience with other moms. I observe more to my son."
- I learned "to care for a baby: how to play, how to scold. I have made friends. We sometimes have lunch."
- "Great class for children & moms. I learned to read a book to our child, and communicate with other moms."



Coordinator Julie Simonson leads a discussion

CLASSES:

Adult Literacy Services are proud to offer the following classes. Please call the appropriate Center for more information.

Singleton Adult Literacy Center at the Central Library:

English conversation class: Monday-Thursday 3:30-5
Friday-Saturday 2-3:30

Writing class: Monday 2-3:30
Tuesday 10:30-12 and 2-3:30

Mommy and Me: Thursday 11-12

Mid-Valley Regional Branch:

Conversation class: Wednesday 12:30-2
Thursday 3:30-5

Pio-Pico Koreatown Branch:

Conversation class: Tuesday 3:30-5

Vocabulary: Please contact coordinator for times.

FOR TUTORS

Words from the Wise By Elizabeth Ives

I began my tutoring program by assessing the literacy level of my student, Lisa Bi, through a mixed bag of reading comprehension, phonics, and both speaking and writing skills. Having determined my student's literacy level, I used the following language program (with constant review).

Language Experience Approach (with heavy emphasis on phonics).

Each lesson includes word study involving activities in vowel and consonant blends, spelling, vocabulary, parts of speech, sentence structure, etc. to improve Lisa's reading and writing comprehension. All of the latter is reinforced by written exercises and quizzes. The last twenty minutes of each lesson are reserved for reading by Lisa and a discussion of what has been read. Every third lesson is spent on computer skills, learning about the Internet as well as Microsoft Word. Lisa has progressed from sixth grade reading comprehension to tenth grade reading, writing, and vocabulary skills and is now speaking and pronouncing words with more clarity in a confident manner. She is totally thrilled with herself and would love to continue the literacy program for another six months.

THANK YOU

Adult Literacy Services would like to thank the staff for their invaluable help at the following branches, where Literacy Centers are located: Baldwin Hills, Cahuenga, Central, Exposition Park, Jefferson, Lincoln Heights, Mid-Valley, Pacoima, Panorama City, Pio Pico-Koreatown, Platt, Robert Louis Stevenson, Venice, Washington Irving, Watts, and Wilmington.