

## LOOK AT US!



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

### IT'S A MATCH!

#### Michael and John

John's Story  
By John Butler

I became a literacy tutor with L.A. City Library's program in April 2005. At the time, I was a freelance marketing writer living in West Hollywood, and I had seen a flyer at the Durant Library in Hollywood announcing the need for tutors. The experience has proved to become one of the most life-changing of my 32 years.

After my training, Michael and I met for a cup of coffee to introduce ourselves. I was so impressed with his drive to learn to read and write that I promised him we'd do it together—no matter how long it took. Over the past year two years, we have not only worked toward his goals, we have developed a terrific friendship. I am very lucky to be able to spend a few hours a week with him, and I am constantly impressed by his drive, dedication and commitment to improving his life. I cannot in good conscience call myself his teacher, as he has taught me more than I ever could him.

Michael's Story  
By Michael Singleton

On Saturdays, I go to the library and study. I thank John for helping me read and write. John helps me write sentences and letters. At the library, he has me reading about shopping at the department store. I have heard that a person can get many things in the library. I am learning to read the church newsletter and the Bible. I would like to read a story about carpentry and home repairs. Each day brings something new to me.

## **Elena and Aditya**

### Aditya's Story by Aditya Moorthy

I began working with Elena Charlton in early October of 2006. At the beginning, she was a very nervous person, who was quite uncertain of how this program would work. This was in October 2006. As of now, Elena is not only a much more confident person, but her progress has been remarkable. Her work speaks for itself. Considering that English is her second language, I am truly amazed at how fast she has progressed. She asks me very good questions and has taken our sessions seriously. Her writing skills have improved dramatically and she continues to try and look for any mistakes in her work. I am very proud of Elena and am truly honored to be her teacher.

### Elena's Story By Elena Charlton

Adu Moorthy has been my mentor for about 6 months. Adu has helped me to improve my written and oral communication in English by reviewing and correcting my documents. He also stresses the importance of pronunciation and grammar.

When I first met Adu, I was afraid to read out loud. Now, thanks to Adu and his encouragement, I very often read the newspaper to my husband.

For sometime, I could not drive to the library as a result of a medical procedure I had done. During this period, Adu called me at home and listened to my reading on the telephone, and as usual corrected my pronunciation.

In a few words, Adu is a very kind, understanding person, and a great mentor.

## **CONGRATULATIONS**

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

Terry Moore continued working toward his goal: to write what he was thinking and enter his thoughts in a journal. He also decided that he wanted to be able to write a letter... After the State of the Union address, Terry decided to write to the president. He selected the full block letter form, the salutation, and the complimentary close. He used his library skills to inquire, search for the Dewey call number of a reference resource, and locate the address of the White House. He also chose to use his newly acquired letter writing skills to write a letter of appeal to the company for which he was working. The company replied and requested more written information from Terry. He worked on his written presentation to the company during three weeks. Terry's goal of writing these letters, and his ability to accomplish the task took precedence over his apprehension of writing – a remarkable accomplishment, exclaims tutor Eileen King.  
*Remarkable, indeed. Keep those letters coming, Terry!*

Ruby Telemi, who is from Armenia, was very anxious about her English when she first came to the Literacy program. She would not answer the phone when it rang at home because she was convinced that the person calling would not understand her, and she would ask her daughter to call the library every few days to ask if we had a tutor for her. Finally, she was matched with a tutor, and the pair has been meeting for over a year. Her tutor, Anita Ruis, says that they are having a wonderful time together. Ruby is becoming more independent every day. She is now going to an English class four days a week; she answers the phone when it rings; and she goes shopping alone. Her tutor says that Ruby's goal is to get a job where she will use her newly-acquired English language skills.  
*Way to go Ruby. We know you will reach your goal.*

Graduates of the January 2007 Tutor Training Workshop:

Demetrius Bady	Cam Frierson	Ben Oswald
Joel Bloom	Gail Gentry	Oscar Padilla
Katherine Cleland	Betsy Kelso	Leonard Pringle, Sr
Rosanna Cohen	Adam Knowles	Jenece Reza
Christine Corr	Shelley Louden	Lee Salo
Jonathan Daniel	Nancy Lyon	Layton Tolson
Merit Dowling	Anjani Madhure	Ebony Utley
Joan Druzman-Jones	James Mahaffey	Adam Urena
Angela Filose	Lisa Manafian	Mary Vandenberg
Burl Fisher	Wendy McLaren	Christina Young
Joy Fisher	Marianne Milham	

Graduates of the February 2007 Tutor Training Workshop:

Aline Bernstein	Diane Katz	Pearl Raines
Jose Carrillo	Joe Lewis	Loretta Stanley
Gretchen David	Sharon McCormick	Flor Vico
Luciana Diamante	Jim McGowan	Carlo Coppola
Minerva Finkley	Juliet Myrtetus	Stephen J. Kern
Judy Fleming	Graciela Pulido	

Graduates of the March 2007 Tutor Training Workshop:

Lisa Amico	Dominick Falzone	Teri Lifshutz
Laurie Asjes	Howard Fine	Francine Lyles
Grace Bantol	Brian Funnagan	Jose Luis Martinez
Douglas Berard	Dolores Goree	Mary McBride
Kimberlyn Cao	Arienne Griego	Angela McKnight
Keisha Chandler	Victoria Halpin	Alison Mercer
Craig Clere	Jo Holzman	Alpheus Merchant
Elizabeth Cornell	Danielle Katzir	Eileen Miech
Frances Crayton	Pamela Lamont	Dan Mitchell

Caitlin Morley  
Barbara Namerow

Barry O'Rourke  
David Ouyang  
Erin Rehberg

Mike Rendon  
Lachlan Sosa  
Angelica Whitefeather

Graduates of the April 2007 Tutor Training Workshop:

Joel Berkowitz  
Ken Boschwitz  
Eileen Davis  
Caroline Dos Santos  
Miriam Elkins  
Shel Erlich

Reva Funk  
Sharon Hersch  
Lisa Hsia  
Erick Huerta  
Marshall Kramer  
Jeff Mandon

Penny Mickelbury  
Marian Mulrone  
Bernard Ravitz  
Janine Shields-Dethloff

Graduates of the May 2007 Tutor Training Workshop:

Maureen Abts  
Karen Aguilar  
Dan Baker  
Patricia Blair  
Victoria Burner  
Ron Code  
Laura Corrin  
Brian Coulson  
Mario Diaz

Babette Dickerson  
William Dowdall  
Lillian Epstein  
Lisa Fox  
John Garner  
Kate B. Glaspey  
Suzanne Howell  
Edie Liberatore  
Dave McGregor

Takako Misoni  
Michelle Oberman  
Linda Ruggeri  
Gary Swinhart  
Joe Wathen  
Erin Wilson  
Milton Wolf

Graduates of the June 9, 2007, Tutor Training Workshop:

Donald Aronsohn  
Patricia Bailey  
Anthony Baldassano  
Barbara Baldassano  
Teresa Barron  
Deanna Battaglia  
Cathy Cantu  
Mary Carpenter  
Wendi Dante  
Maria Dawkins  
Rita Dotts  
Sandi Durow

Michael Fowler  
Roberta Fowler  
Kerri Lee Gehersky  
Dan Juarez  
Richard Keenan  
Flora Lugo  
Diana Magana  
Julio McCarthy  
Julie McIntyre  
Heather Mills  
Sandra Ortiz  
Cynthia Papero  
Leopoldo Pena

Ina Perry  
Cheyne Phillips  
Aida Reeser  
Robin Ruggles  
John Ryan  
Sharpe Margaret  
Stella Simms  
Jay Springer  
Leon Thomas  
George Williams  
Greg Woods  
Fay Wright

Graduates of the June 16, 2007, Tutor Training Workshop:

Milton Cisneros  
Rochelle Fernandes  
Nigel Shaw Filson

Nicole Gardner  
Cathy (Cherise) Hall

Grace Hodgson  
Leonie Janken

Shari Marshall  
Harold Martin  
Max McCloud  
Catherine McNulty  
Laura Meriweather

Lilya Paredes  
Erika Reyes  
Colleen Riley  
Kacee Sims

Grace Tanaka  
Yvonne Teofan

## **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, July 21, at the Venice Branch, 10-5.  
Saturday, August 18, at the Baldwin Hills Branch, 10-5.  
Saturday, September 15, at the Mid-Valley Branch, 10-5.  
Saturday, October 20, at the Cahuenga Branch, 10-5.

## **CELEBRATIONS**

### **Openings**

Adult Literacy Services is happy to announce the opening of a new Center at the Robertson Branch in the Western Region.

At the Robertson Branch  
By Penny Mickelbury  
Adult Literacy Coordinator

The Literacy Center at the Robertson Branch library officially opened the last week of April and immediately received a warm welcome from senior librarian Eva Mitnick and the entire library staff—and from the surrounding neighborhoods and community as well. In the first month, more than a dozen volunteer tutors and eager students found their way to the Robertson Literacy Center.

The Center itself is a welcoming space. It is situated at the far end of the library's beautiful main room behind a glass partition and door that gives it the feeling of being an integral part of the overall operation, while at the same time conveying a sense of privacy for tutors and students. The wood-beamed ceiling and high windows add a light, airy touch. It's a perfect room for nurturing students—and green plants—of which there are two new ones that call the literacy center home. In fact, the center is so attractive that library patrons often wander in to ask, "What is this place?" and "Can we work here, too, and use the computer?" There are two computers and a video monitor/TV for the students to use. Several make use of the Clear Speech, Easy English and American Accent Training DVD's and videos and find them helpful. Other favorite materials are the News For You newspaper and a little book entitled *101 American English Idioms*.

Tutor/student matches are growing at such a rate that not all the tutoring can take place within the Center, so Eva has generously made the Community Meeting Room available for literacy tutoring when the room isn't booked for use by one of the Library's many groups or activities. However, both tutors and students enjoy working in the Center, and I enjoy having them there—it makes me feel that I am constantly connected and constantly learning, too.

## **Events**

A Special Treat  
By Carolyn Francis  
Adult Literacy Coordinator  
Alma Reaves Woods Watts Branch

February 20, 2007, our staff enjoyed a special treat here at the Alma Reaves Woods Watts Branch. Joe Lewis, the last surviving vocalist of the original "DRIFTERS", came in to our Literacy center to meet and tutor his first student in the Adult Literacy program. When Joe finished his lesson, he was invited by Lucille, our senior librarian, to eat a slice of the birthday cake for Sally, our children's librarian. Lucille requested that Joe sing "On the Boardwalk" and "Save the Last Dance" for Sally and the staff. Joe was very happy to serenade us upstairs in our staff lunchroom.

Joe later introduced a community youth advocate to me on this same day. I took this opportunity to show her our literacy center. In our conversation, I learned that she is an active participant in several community groups. We agreed to arrange for me to visit some of these groups in order to introduce them to the library as a resource center for adult learners.

Later, at a farewell event honoring Antonio Gomez, a former tutor and library employee, who accepted a position at another library, Joe Lewis brought his keyboard and set it up in our community room. He sang songs such as "On the Boardwalk" and "Save the Last Dance for Me". The staff members enjoyed his performance so much when he asked them to join him in singing some of the songs.

Joe Lewis' enthusiasm is contagious and has motivated a student at Watts to request to be registered for the Reading Upgrade program.

## **The Community**

A New Community Partner  
By Sheila Weisberg

The Los Angeles Public Library's Adult Literacy Services has a new community partner. Hope Chapel San Pedro has had a literacy program called R.E.A.C.H. (Reaching Each Adult Creating Hope) for a short time but decided that by partnering up with L.A.P.L. they could reach more people. Our coordinator at Wilmington, Rueben Serrano, had been talking to the Hope Chapel people for a while working out all the details.

On June 9th our training team went to Hope Chapel and gave a workshop for thirty-eight new tutors. The purpose of a community partnership is for the agency to supply tutors and students and a place for them to work and the Library to supply training, materials, and the expertise of a coordinator to work with them.

Hope Chapel supplied a room and equipment for the workshop. They also had a continental breakfast, a catered lunch, and refreshments for the whole day. We will do another workshop there when they have new tutors to train.

They join community partners UCLA and Faithful Central Bible Church.

## **CREATIVE CORNER**

### **Students Write Letters, Stories, and Poems**

Dear Jim,

Last week I received your letter from Spokane, Washington State. As you told me, in this season the weather is very cold. The temperature is always below zero degrees Farenheit (0F). It is windy and snowy. From home you can see flurries of white flakes drifting on the street. Traffic is difficult. All the trees are bare.

To me I think this landscape is very exciting because I have lived in the United States of America for along time but I have never seen snow. I wish I could see it sometime. Snow is very nice, especially the white flakes, as I saw on television.

Sorry I haven't written for so long! I must go to work with my friend right now. I will write you later. I wish you get a good job and earn a lot of money. I invite you and your family to see us in LA the next month.

With love,  
Hoa

By Hoa Bui

\*\*\*

Friends  
By Maria Estrada

I want to start by saying that I believe that every person on earth has a light path that they have to follow to accomplish their own personal journey, even if the road seems too long to walk and full of tricky obstacles. My mother always said to me that the harder the road is to reach the stars, the more we appreciate the reward. I'm not sure if this is the correct translation, since my mother said it in Spanish.

Also, I have to say that I believe with all my heart that every person on earth has their own angel with two legs. Here in my heart I have more than one angel that I love very much.

One of these angel friends is Denise Cameron, my tutor, a person I love and admire and respect for all she has done for me.

\*\*\*

An Original Story  
by Betty M. Green

I have a little story to tell you about a little squirrel named Peter. You see, we have a squirrel that is all over the place where I live at Hope Garden. Peter would come every morning and look in my window. He was looking at himself and also at the feeding tray. He would try to jump to get the food but he would miss. So, when I saw that Peter needed help I slid open the glass window, then I put a big rock on the feeding tray that looked just like a big nut. Peter saw the big nut. He jumped. He made it. With my help, Peter got what he wanted.

So me, myself, I need help now. I want to learn to read and write better. Thanks to God for the Los Angeles Public Library Adult Literacy Services. I also thank my teacher, Mr. Ade Adetutu. I am hoping to get better. Someday I want to write stories for children. My teacher is a very good teacher. He will help me.

\*\*\*

My Journey to Los Angeles  
By Prasad Young Lee

I came to America in June, 1971. It was my first experience on an airplane and also my first trip outside of the South Korea. I was eighteen, but far from being as sophisticated or mature as today's youngsters. Still, I was very outspoken and being the youngest child in a large family I never was shy in my life. I was sort of a brave girl among my friends. So, when my brother gave these options; I could travel to America by myself or wait one more year and travels with my second sister and her family, obviously, I chose not to wait for another year.

My oldest sister has been living in America for the past 12 years and she sponsored our mother to come to the America, then within a year my mother obtained a Green card. With her green card now she was able to sponsor her husband and unmarried children. My second brother and third sister were in America already and I was on the way to join with them soon. The night before the departure, my big brother explained this journey to me step by step and I assured him "no problem". The next day, with my big brother's carefully written instruction in my hand luggage I boarded in Japanese Airplane to Tokyo. In Tokyo I transferred to Pan Am Airline, and then stop again in Honolulu Hawaii. There I must be checked with people who are immigrating to this country, like me; they inspected all the legal documents and x-rays and suitcases. While I was standing in the line I recognized few Korean people; we all left Kim-Po Airport in Seoul 12 hours ago. They got all excited because our long journey is soon to be over. They also told me many nice things about Los Angeles and their future plans and complemented me for being so brave as to travel all alone across the Pacific Ocean.

It was late in the night when the plane landed at Los Angeles airport. One young couple shook my hand and said "good luck" as we all walked out from terminal to the dark night of Los Angeles. There was a large crowd of people waiting, hugging, laughing, or shouting names. I sort of expected my family to be there to greet me as my brother explained, but to my surprise I didn't see any of them anywhere, I waited a little bit and walked over to the middle of the wall, where there was better light and exposure; then the LAX was not a big and bright as now. After a while, one by one all the people who came in with same airplane were gone on their way. I was getting little cold, because I thought it's always warm in Los Angeles, so, I wasn't preparing for the chilly night. Either from low temperature or fear; I couldn't stop shaking. I had my sister's phone numbers and U. S coins that my brother prepared in the envelope for emergency, I thought I should be looking for phone, but at the same time, I was truly getting scared and nervous for the first time in my life. I didn't see anybody who looked like Korean or Asian for that matter, I looked around, hoping somebody notice me. Not knowing what to do or nobody there to guide me; I was petrified! For some reason I never thought the American people would understand my accents or I wouldn't understand them. I was sobbing hysterically in the information booth when my sister and second brother found me.

That was the most frightening moment in my life. Even to this day, I do remember the experience of my first day in Los Angeles. Yes, I was terribly scared, but I also remembered a kind lady who was working at the information booth that night, she stood next to me and patted my shoulder the whole time while I was crying.

\*\*\*

Modern Cinquain  
by Susana C. J.

Moon  
Of Silver  
Round and silent  
Peaceful friend illuminate the  
Planet.

### **Students Write Blogs Too**

Blog  
By Wanda Zepeda

He is pain and you are happiness - Just talking to him puts me in pain. Everything he says makes me sad . But one word from your lips puts a smile on my face and my whole day becomes happy. If he hurts, I hurt and I cry next to him. He knows I'm in love with you. But I don't want to hurt him and I'm the only one who knows what's happening with him. If I don't hear from you, my soul dies little by little. I must hear from you or I'm sad all week. I can't do this any more. One of you must go. It's better if it's him and not you because as I said time and time again I don't see self without you... or without you in my life."

The Tutor's Response  
By James Mahaffey

It took a month and three sessions for Wanda to finish her blog. I made sure that she made the changes herself. I didn't tell her that this word is misspelled or that punctuation is wrong. Instead I asked questions like, "I'm a little confused - what is this word?" or "Could you read this sentence for me?"

It's really 'Detective Colombo's' disarming interrogation technique and that way Wanda understood how she'd misspelled or misplaced a word or phrase. With it we got down to what she really wanted to communicate. What she communicates is an ageless conundrum and I am astounded by how well she manages it. To show her how good her writing is, I promised her I'd find a comparable passage from a great writer so she could see how her words compared to published literature.

I could have scanned Shakespeare's sonnets or Byron's poetry or Browning's "Desire for George Sand" and found more flowery language but nothing as direct and clean as what Wanda wrote. I finally found a few sentences from Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "Love in the Time of Cholera," that come close to Wanda's work: "When she awoke, she opened the letter... She was impressed by its simplicity and seriousness, and the rage she had cultivated with so much love for so many days faded away on the spot. She kept the letter in the bottom of her trunk, but she remembered that she had also kept Florentino Ariza's perfumed letters there, and she took it out of the chest to find another place for it, shaken by a rush of shame."

When Wanda and I did her Interest Inventory during our first meeting, her answers to "Name three things you wish you could write," were "screenplays, letters and poetry." Now Marquez is not only a great contemporary writer, but he's a recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Sometime this year, "Love in the Time of Cholera" will be released as a film and I will buy Wanda a copy of his book and take her to the film. She can begin to read that novel and compare it to the story from the film. Wanda's blog is a letter and her language is poetic; next on our agenda we plan to turn that into a five-minute screenplay, so she'll be prepared to enroll in a film class.

**SPECIAL SECTION: OUR WONDER STUDENT**

Adult Basic Reading and Writing – Sanchez Shockley  
By Kathrin Buschmann

The first book Sanchez Shockley read cover to cover was Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* – that was when he was 44 years old. Now, eight years later, he recounts the story leading up to this accomplishment. Placed in special education class in elementary school, Sanchez was promoted throughout the following years. He left high school with a diploma, but without being able to read or write. He remembers his mother telling him, "You can't read well – go into the army." Not following that particular piece of advice, he chose to dedicate himself to

fashion design instead. Naturally adept, he enjoyed this line of work. At the same time, it helped mask his low literacy, as he explains, “I’m good at illustration, so nobody ever noticed.”

Candidly speaking about his troubled history of addiction, Sanchez says that concurrent with the start of his recovery almost a decade ago, he wanted to improve his reading and writing. A counselor at his treatment center suggested the Los Angeles Public Library’s Adult Literacy Center. He followed the suggestion and has been coming to the center at the downtown Central Library faithfully twice a week ever since. With his tutor he chooses a book, which they read and discuss together. Currently, he is in the middle of Julia Cameron’s *The Artist’s Way – A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*.

Sanchez describes his situation as “A handicap that people can’t see,” although he is quick to add, “Now I make sure people know.” Over these past years his passion has been redirected from fashion to the cause of literacy. Aside from having his own first hand experience, he is regularly confronted with the enormous need for literacy programs. As one striking example, he recounts the occasion of speaking to a group of recently released prisoners at a recovery center. Shaking his head, he exclaims: “Out of the twelve guys in the room, only two could read!” For himself, learning to read and write has brought impressive changes, “It’s freed me up for a lot of things – I travel, write checks without assistance, and my confidence is off the hook – I’m more confident when I pick up something to read, even in how I present myself.”

To more effectively promote literacy, Sanchez now is planning on taking a fundraising and event-planning certificate class at UCLA. And, speaking from his personal experience, he urges, “No matter what age, go for it – because things change – I vote, I’ve done jury duty – a lot more things open up when you’re able to read.”

(Reprinted by permission of the Literacy Network of Greater Los Angeles)

In addition to this, Sanchez has been awarded a Grant for the Summer Quarter from UCLA Extension, where he will be studying “The Art of Fundraising.”

*Sanchez never ceases to amaze us with his determination and drive. Way to go, Sanchez!*

## **TUTOR TIP**

### Writing Exercise

The difference between a written composition that is great and one that is ordinary comes from the details that the author includes. Beginning writers can be so focused on the technical aspects of writing—grammar, spelling, and punctuation—that they ignore description. This activity will help a student use more description and details.

- Ask your student to think of a favorite food and write it down.
- Ask your student to think of the ingredients in his/her favorite food and write them down.
- Ask your student to think about how food is prepared and write it down.
- Ask your student to think about how the food looks, smells, sounds and tastes.
- Ask your student to think about why the food is good for him/her or not good for him/her.
- Encourage your student to think about how the food makes him/her feel, in addition to its nutritional value.
- Have the student write a paragraph describing the food without naming it.

- See if you can identify the food.  
(From LitScape, a publication of Pro-Literacy America, Winter 2007)

## **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 & Tuesday 2-3:30

Mommy and Me: Thursday 11-12, starting in September, 2007.

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.

## **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, Robertson, Venice, Washington Irving, Watts, and Wilmington.