



Los Angeles Public Library Adult Literacy Services

Volunteer Services Office - (213) 228-7540 - volserv@lapl.org

LOOK AT US!

Winter 2009
Edited by Ruth Gooley

IT'S A MATCH

JUDY'S STORY

By tutor Judy Meyers

I have always been a volunteer. I've tutored kids, worked in a library and for 10 years I spent every Saturday morning volunteering in a soup kitchen. Each experience has been enriching but teaching Kim how to read has been the most rewarding experience ever! Big kudo's to Lisa Hsia from Echo Park Library for matching us up.

When I first started working with Kim, she labored over each word she read. She mixed up her b's with d's, w's with m's, etc. My only training was the workshop we all attended. I thought how can I teach someone to read with just a one day training, "Everyone learns differently" we were told. So, I tried lots of different things and lo and behold it's working. I am amazed how quickly Kim has improved.

In less than 6 months, Kim has become a reader. I truly think I lucked out. I think I met Kim when she was really ready to read. I think the results have been incredible because of Kim. She is extremely capable and willing to do lots and lots of homework. The results have been incredible. I also lucked out because this has been a gift to me. It's made me feel like I can actually make a real difference in someone's life. Since we began, Kim has applied and gotten accepted to college. I am planning to stick around to give her any help she needs to get through it, hopefully she'll let me.♦

KIM'S STORY

By learner Kim Henderson

I'm a volunteer at the Los Angeles Dream Center, a non-profit organization dedicated to help meet the physical and spiritual needs of inner city community members. I've lived at the Dream Center for almost 3 years now. I came to the Dream

continued on p. 2



Judy and Kim

Creative Corner

*Learners Write Stories,
Poems and Essays*

My First Day as President

By Sae Yun Lee

I haven't ever worked as a president before. First of all, I will have to find out what working as president means. I'm

continued on p. 3

Kim's Story continued from p. 1

Center because I was living a fast lifestyle that would have eventually been my destruction. I needed to change my behaviors and make a fresh start. One of the things that was clearly holding me back was my learning disabilities. I had always found creative ways to hide my disabilities. In school, I was perceived as not trying hard enough or just wanting to clown around. I have Dyslexia and ADHD, so not being able to sit still and focus, coupled with the reading problems made school torturous.

I learned about the LAPL literacy program from one of my mentors at the Dream Center, Ida. She had been looking into different things to help me function better with my dyslexia. I was nervous about being transparent about my weaknesses, but agreed that we should try to find something that would work. I was skeptical that anything would really make a difference. After all, I had attended and cheated my way through private schools with good teachers.

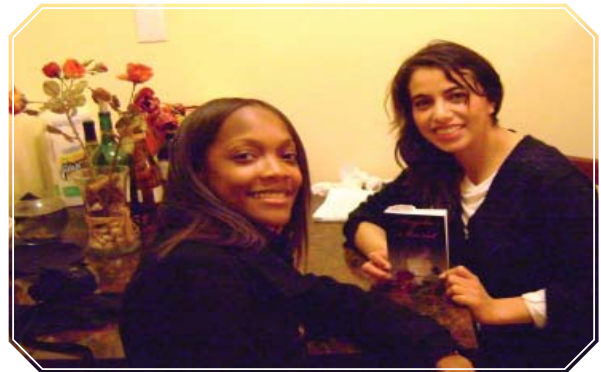
I enrolled in the literacy program and was assigned a tutor. On my first day, I met Judy my tutor. I liked her right away. The coordinator had done a great job matching the two of us. Judy created an environment that put me at ease and comfortable to be honest about what I didn't understand. There was a lot of foundational grammar, spelling and punctuation that I had to learn. Judy made me look up things in the dictionary. She made me correct my letters when I reversed them. She made me write the alphabet. She pushed me, constantly telling me how great I was doing, yet challenging me that I still had to work hard. She never once made me feel stupid or that I couldn't do my assignments. Her

humor helped me be open to actually learn because she made it fun. I was never bored with our sessions. Soon I found myself looking forward to tutoring. I am amazed that I actually enjoy reading and learning. I never thought I was smart enough before.

As a result of the help I've received, I have applied and been accepted to college. I still have some challenges in front of me and I'll have to work hard, but I know I can. This program has empowered me to believe I can have a better life through education. I am grateful. •

This Is My Story *By Susana C. Jaramillo*

One day my husband suggested we go to the public library, which is not far from where we live; to get an application to get a tutor. We went together and I filled out the application. A few weeks later I met my tutor, Ebony Utley. The second time we met, she asked me what were some of my goals. I told her that one of them was to write a book in English. She wrote it down with some of my other goals. Then we started with a grammar book, and learning new vocabulary words with flash cards. Almost a year later, I reminded her that I really wanted to try to write a book. She agreed and for more than a year we worked together. I thank God, Ebony Utley, Rueben Serrano, my original coordinator, Peggy Blow the current coordinator, and the Los Angeles Adult Literacy Program. I have achieved one of my goals. I am about to publish my book titled *Angela's Secret*. I really want to thank everyone who made it possible. Thank you. •



*Tutor Ebony Utley on left
Learner Susana on right*

Creative Corner

continued from p. 1

My First Day As President continued from p. 1

sure it will be hard for me. It's a really good job, I think, because I won't have to worry about money. Secondly, I will increase the greenery and trees in the streets. I will put more trees in more parks. After that, I'll start a studying and skills class for many hopeful people. Once I do that, I'll study every day and I'll be a great president. •



Sae Yun Lee

The Seasons

By Olivia Tress

I am from Cordoba, Veracruz (Mexico). My city has four seasons. Winter is cold and sometimes rainy. Spring is very hot and sunny. Summer is so rainy and windy. In the fall it is cold, rainy and windy. This is my favorite season because we make hot chocolate, "bunuelos," "churros," "tamales" and "atole."

I like this season because my family also spends more time together and we are happy. •

By Easter Medina

My name is Esther Medina. I'm from Guadalajara Mexico. Guadalajara has four seasons. The winter is windy, spring is very hot. Summer is rainy and the fall is cold. My favorite season is spring, because the flowers are pretty, the animals are happy, the children can go outside and play. My family buys ice cream, ice water and fresh fruits. We also go swimming to the beach. In the beach we enjoy very delicious sea foods such as shrimps, fish, crawfish, crab, octopus, and ceviche with cold drinks like coconut water. The spring season is unforgettable in Guadalajara Mexico. •

Thanksgiving



Benjamin Sanchez

By Benjamin Sanchez

This year I will celebrate Thanksgiving Day with my friends in East Los Angeles. I will eat turkey, pumpkin pie, salad, and potatoes. However, I don't like turkey.

Before, I was living in Phoenix, Arizona. They celebrated Thanksgiving Day with too much food and all my family.

After Thanksgiving, maybe next Friday, I will go to Las Vegas, Nevada; I need a vacation.

Thanksgiving Day means spending time with friends and family or traveling. Whatever it is, I'm grateful. •

continued on p. 8

Tutors Write Too

Tutoring *by John Doggett*

After I retired from full time work and decided to look into volunteer opportunities, I noticed Adult Literacy on the Los Angeles Public Library's web page and signed up. My first student was Michael Napoles who wanted to pass an examination that would allow him to get a better job. He was in his mid-twenties and had never completed high school. He was assigned to me for tutoring in reading and writing plus mathematics, since those were the areas in which he needed to improve most in order to pass either the ASVAB or GED. Michael worked long hours at his current job as a security guard and had only one day a week off for tutoring. Plus he had a wife and two small children so he did not have a lot of free time. We started meeting at Venice Library in July of 2007. He travels about 1 hour each way to our meetings and we meet for about two hours, splitting the time between literacy and math. Michael started with Challenger Book 1 and he is now making his way through Challenger Book 4. Michael is one of the most upbeat and dedicated people I have met. He knows he needs to become better educated in order to reach his goals of a better job and he works very hard to improve, in spite of the limited amount of time he has available. When Michael's one day a week off changed from Wednesday to Tuesday, we had a problem coordinating times to meet since Michael needed to start the lesson around 10 am in order to get home in time to do other necessary tasks and the Library did not open until noon. We then started meeting in a city park in the fresh air and sunshine. We have been very lucky with the weather since it was not too hot this past summer and so far the weather has been dry and not too cold this winter.



At each of my sessions with Michael, I made notes in a small spiral notebook and Michael noticed what I was doing. One day he brought me a new spiral notebook and said it was a present for me. When I told him I was not sure I needed it since I already had one, he said I would need it for my other students. I asked him what other students he had in mind and he said he was sure I would have other students in the future. This got me to thinking that maybe I did have time for another student and resulted in my coordinator, Penny Mickelbury, assigning me another student who hap-



pened to have just signed up with Penny and lived in my immediate area. I met my second student, Xuqi Chen, who had a good education based on studies outside the US and worked at UCLA in medical research. She needed to read and write English better in order to do her job better and knew about the Library's Adult Literacy program. Penny suggested she start in Challenger Book 6. After Xuqi and I met, we agreed to meet twice a week and started lessons. At our second lesson she said she was thrilled with

the tutoring program and had told her husband about it and he had met with Penny but was having a problem finding a tutor in the area. Xuqi wondered if I could help by meeting with her only once a week and meet with her husband the other lesson. I told Xuqi that this would slow down her own rate of progress and she said that was alright because she wanted her husband to participate. That is how I got my third student,

continued on p. 11



My Family's Camping Story *By Ju Tsai Lee*

My husband Gen and I, with our dog Benny, went camping for four days-three nights November 20, 2008. The destination was Chino City's Prado Regional Park. When we arrived at the park, we saw this park was a pretty big park with a man-made lake inside. Some ducks and birds were swimming on the lake. This lake was stocked with fishes by the Park so people are able to fish. People could go boating on the lake, too. This park has been maintained with many trees and well trimmed grasses. The whole area includes a children's playground, picnic areas, a horse riding path around the park, and the campsite. It was a beautiful park.



Ju Tsai, Gen and Benny

When we arrived at the campsite, we saw two large groups of milk cows about 200 feet away. The farm was beside this park. I took some pictures of them because I thought it was interesting. We felt that everything was good. Later we heard a lot of gun fire sounds that were from the public shooting field nearby. After a while, it became very noisy. In the evening, there were loud speaker announcements that came from another area. Those sounds came from a jail beside the farm. It added some more noise. Then the coyotes were howling from the distance. They joined the noisy groups, too. We felt this environment was very different from other campgrounds where we had camped before.

After dinner, we sat on the chairs for a chat. Suddenly, the air changed into a horrible smell which was from the cows. We decided to get into our tent to avoid the smell, but it could not help at all. We went to bed and covered ourselves with sleeping bags, but it could not help still. I took a hand towel and folded it into four layers then covered my nose, but the smell was too strong so it could not help either. Sometime later, another noisy sound came from outside our tent. Gen went to check and he found four raccoons were walking around outside our tent. He asked me to get up to see those little creatures, but I said, "I don't want to get up, I can't stand that awful smell. I will never come back here again." Because it was so cold after dark and the smell was awful and outside was so noisy. In that moment, I didn't care about them anymore, no matter how cute they were.

The next day, we found that our tablecloth had some small animal footprints on it. Those little creatures made some mess to our cookware, too. But they didn't steal anything from us, because we did some protection job. In the daytime, the smell was gone. Luckily, the following days were getting better in the evening, because the wind was not always blowing in our direction. Besides, we were getting used to it more. Actually, we had a good time there. We enjoyed BBQ, we enjoyed walking around the park, and we had pleasant times from visiting some places in this area.

Afterwards, this camping experience which we got from the awful smell and the noisy sounds made more deep memories for us. Since we started to camp last year in August, we have got so many different experiences. Every time, something happened unexpectedly and it made our camping trips more fun. •

Dear Susan,

My student is forever forgetting his books. He says he did his homework, but he didn't bring it with him. Sometimes he says he doesn't have time to do any homework. How can I get him be more responsible?

Frustrated Tutor

Dear Frustrated,

Your student may be having difficulties with executive function, which refers to "a set of mental processes that all have to do with managing oneself and one's resources in order to achieve a goal. It is an umbrella term for the neurologically-based skills involving mental control and self-regulation." National Center for Learning Disabilities

Executive function affects our ability to

- • Make plans.
- • Keep track of time.
- • Keep track of more than one thing at once.
- • Meaningfully include past knowledge in discussions.
- • Engage in group dynamics.
- • Evaluate ideas.
- • Reflect on our work.
- • Change our minds and make mid-course corrections while thinking, reading, and writing.
- • Finish work on time.
- • Ask for help.
- • Wait to speak until we're called on.
- • Remember which materials we need on hand at the tutoring session.

At work or school, the person might:

- • Have difficulty planning a project.
- • Have trouble comprehending how much time a project will take to complete.

continued on p. 7

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, March 14, 2009, Venice-Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch, 10 am-5 pm.

Tuesday & Thursday, April 21 & 23, 2009, Will & Ariel Durant Branch, 1-4:30 pm.

Saturday, May 16, 2009, Platt Branch, 10 am-5 pm.

Saturday, June 13, 2009, Baldwin Hills Branch, 10 am-5 pm.

Saturday, July 11, 2009, Echo Park Branch, 10 am-5 pm.

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

Mid-Valley Regional Branch:

Conversation Class:

Wednesday 3:30-5

Thursday 12:30-2



Dear Susan continued from p. 6

- • Struggle to tell or write a story in an organized, sequential manner.
- • Have difficulty with memorization and retrieving information from memory.
- • Have trouble getting started on tasks or generating ideas independently.
- • Have difficulty retaining information while doing something with it, like remembering a phone number while dialing.

Some effective strategies we can use or suggest can use with a student who has problems with executive function include the following general strategies:

- • Take step-by-step approaches to work; rely on visual organizational aids.
- • Use tools like time organizers, computers or watches with alarms.
- • Prepare visual schedules and review them several times a day.
- • Ask for written directions with oral instructions whenever possible.
- • Plan and structure transition times and shifts in activities.



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Managing time:

- • Create checklists and "to do" lists, estimating how long tasks will take. Include 'bring homework folder, book, paper and pen to library tutoring session.'
- • Break long assignments into chunks and assign time frames for completing each chunk.
- • Take a break when student loses focus.
- • Use visual calendars to keep track of long term assignments, due dates, chores, and activities.
- • Use management software such as the Franklin Day Planner, Palm Pilot, or BlackBerry or other "smart" phone.
- • Write the due date on top of each assignment.



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Managing space and materials:

- • Minimize clutter.
- • Consider having separate work areas with complete sets of supplies for different activities.
- • Schedule a weekly time to clean and organize the workspace.

Managing work:

- • Make a checklist example, a student's out pencil and paper; read directions; etc.
- • Listen to tutor's suggestions for organization and follow-through.



for getting through assignments. For checklist could include such items as get put name on paper; put due date on paper;

Creative Corner
continued from p. 3

By Carlos Zapata

I have many things to be thankful for. First of all, I have my family. I live with my parents, two of my sisters and their children, and my son. For Thanksgiving Day the rest of the family gets together at my parent's home. Secondly, I'm in good health. I can go running, skateboarding, bicycling and swimming anytime I'm free. Thirdly, I'm happy I have a job. My job has provided for me and my family to pay the rent and send my son to private school. In all, I'm very grateful for my family and friends, my health and my job. •

continued on p. 10

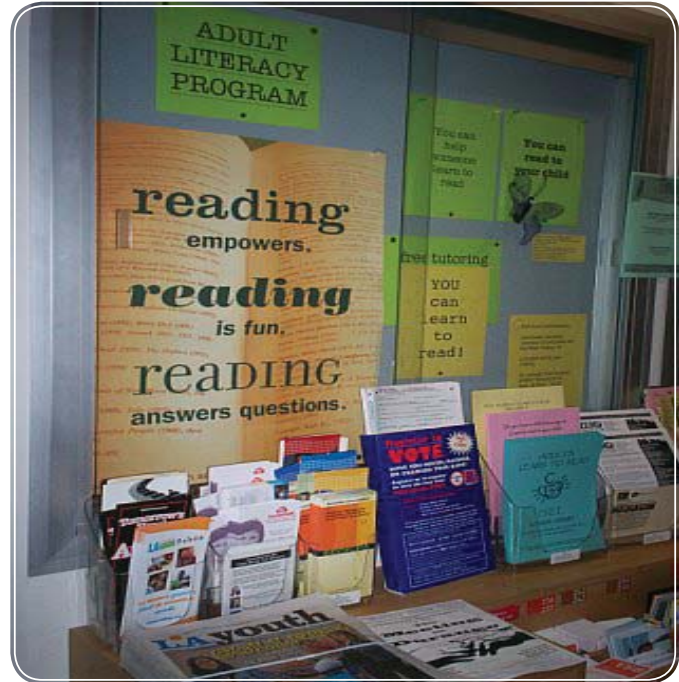


Photo of Adult Literacy book display at the Canoga Park Branch

More Hints from Susan: Learning Disabilities

LD OnLine.org is the world's leading web site on learning disabilities and ADHD.

- The main LDOnline homepage is available at www.ldonline.org/
- For definitions of learning disabilities, etc., check the page called Learning Disabilities: An Overview. Read as much or as little as you like. At www.ldonline.org/article/5613
- To receive the latest reading news and information sign up for LDOnline newsletters and announcements. At www.ldonline.org/ldnewsletters
- This is a terrific article with lots of links on strategies for teaching reading comprehension, especially to English language learners (non-native speakers of English) www.adlit.org/strategies/23356

Serving more than 220,000 parents, teachers, and other professionals each month, LD OnLine is a national educational service of WETA-TV, the PBS station in Washington, D.C. WETA also offers two other comprehensive educational sites: ReadingRockets.org and ColorinColorado.org.•

CONGRATULATIONS

Graduates of the Tutor Training Workshop

October 2008 at Echo Park

Melanie Coxson
April Day
Angela Dixon
Lisa Dixon
Carolina Duncker
Ina Fiorita
Margo Fletcher
Kate Frank
LaTonya Hall
Esther Holguin
Hilary Horne
Jennifer Kim
Bridget Klappert
Tram Le
Liliana Montalvo
Marsha Niles
Carey Okrand
Julio Oviedo
Vivian Perez
Barbara Rappaport
Jean Rhee
Doreen Scott
Judy Shelton
Kimberly Sizemore
Lauren Skinner
Luca Struble
Kim Vu
Evelyn Wang
Jason L. West

November 2008 at Junipero Serra

Dennis Acuna
Manny Barrios
Lezlie Bermudez
Denise Bickerstaff
Joe Blankenship
Ariel Climer
Kathy Edwards
Allison Garwood
Delbert Ghostbear
Glendora Hawkins
Elsa Herrera
Stan Johnson
Erez Ofer
Belinda Pierce
George Snyder
Vera Taliaferro

December 2008 at Pio Pico Koreatown

Judith Arellana
Yashira Baggett
Peggy Blow
Rebecca Calinsky
Tracy Casadio
Kwang Sup Chin
Laura Ciodaru
Anne Clarke
Leslie Cline
Traevon Dillard
David B. Franklin
Gerry Furth-Sides
Richard Galvan
Suzan Hernandez
Lindsey Jacobs
Christopher Karwowski
Rachel Mandell
Garrett Norlin
Laurie Pannone
Kyle Petlock
Lynette Reed
Marsha Pasarow Schiff
Niaz Shoushtaripour
Eric Teplitz
Anne Thacker
Laura Wang
Chelsea Windlinger

For the schedule of
future Tutor Train-
ing Workshops see
page 6.

January 2009 at Pacoima

Leon Anderson Jr.
Krysten Cunningham
Jenny Kim
Mike Milley
Lauren Schneider
Lee Young

Philip Anderson
Sari Currier
Linda Kuramoto
Jocy Mills
Susan "Susie" Tae

Alexandra Arad
Jan Green
Molly MacDonald
Rick Nelsen
Virginia Weinberg

Robin Berger
Dulce Kelley
Mary Alice Mesa
Cheryl Nelson
Rose White

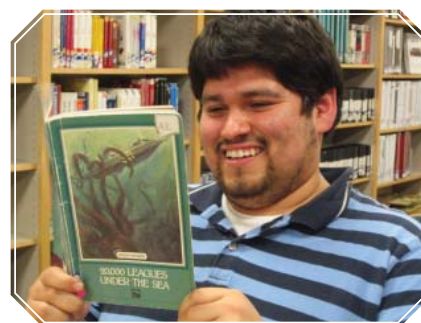


Creative Corner

continued from p. 7

Book Review: *Into the Future and Under the Sea* by Joshua Gonzalez

When I first started the literacy program my tutor, Naka, heard I liked science fiction. I enjoyed watching shows like Star Trek. When I started to check out books he recommended the books of two of the earliest science fiction writers, H.G Wells and Jules Verne. I asked him which books they had written and his response was “20,000 Leagues Under The Sea” by Verne and “The Time Machine” by Wells. I was familiar with the titles, in fact, I had seen the film versions which I enjoyed very much.



Joshua Gonzalez

Verne is proclaimed as the father of science fiction, so I first read “20,000 Leagues Under The Sea.” The book is about a professor and his companions getting thrown overboard and rescued by the *Nautalis*, a submarine. Nemo is the mysterious captain of the submarine. His portrayal in the book was much cooler than in the film I had seen.

The second book I read was “The Time Machine” and it is about a nameless inventor, who travels to the future. In the future, he is met by the Eloi and the Morlocks. He befriends the Eloi, who are childlike creatures who have worry-free lives. The inventor gets stuck in time because his machine is stolen by the evil Morlocks. They are underneath the city where the Eloi live. The inventor discovers that the Morlocks are raising the Eloi like cattle. The two groups are the results of the working class and the leisure class. Over time the working class, who toiled in the dark factories and mines, became the Morlocks. The Eloi paid a high price for their life of luxury. In the end, the inventor gets his time machine back and continues to travel through time.

I enjoyed reading both of these books very much. It was fun to imagine what it would be like underneath the sea or how the future will be. I now know where modern science fiction got its start. •



Se-Jong King

Journal Entry by Sun Kyoung We

If I could meet somebody it would be Se-Jong King. Se-Jong King invented the Korean alphabet with his academic peers. We did not have our own language in the past, we just used Chinese characters. He thought that is was not good because the Chinese did not belong to our country. The alphabet did not show that we were Korean. He did his best to invent some beautiful alphabet for us but it was not easy to do. Many days he failed but he did not give up.

I think creating a new language is not easy. It is definitely difficult. If I were in his shoes, I would give up easily. I wouldn't care about the alphabet that we used but he really thought it was important.

Finally, we got our beautiful, fantastic and unique alphabet. We are and always will be proud of him forever. If he had not created the Korean alphabet, only Chinese characters would have been used by Koreans. If I could go back to the past, I would like to thank him. I would make a holiday for him to remember what he had done if I were president of Korea. •

Tutors Write Too

continued from p. 4

Kewei Gong, who like Xuqi was well educated outside the US and worked at UCLA in medical research. Kewei wanted to be able to practice medicine here and needed to pass a clinical skills examination, read, and write English needed Challenger 6. After a few weeks, an exam coming up in a few I could meet with him twice a giving up her lessons for a few if she really wanted to. For the



a week with Kewei to help him with his exam, which meant going over medical material that probably resulted in me learning more medicine than Kewei learned English. After the seven weeks, Xuqi resumed her lessons with me. I now realize that I am not the tutor for each of the individuals, but have become tutor for the family, in which they trade off with each other as the demands of life change. •

which meant his ability to speak, to improve. Kewei also started in Xuqi told me that Kewei had months and she wondered if week, even if that meant her weeks. I said we could do that next seven weeks I met twice

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or visit www.lapl.org/literacy



If you are a
tutor or student and wish to write
something for the newsletter, please contact
your coordinator or email Ruth Gooley at
rgooley@lapl.org.





LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY
Adult Literacy Center Locations



Central Library Singleton Adult Literacy Center
630 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, CA 90071
(213) 228-7037 / FAX (213) 228-7138

Contacts: Jackie Browne, jbrowne@lapl.org; Jim Kennington, jkenning@lapl.org;
Beverly Pichardo, bpichard@lapl.org

Baldwin Hills Branch
2906 S. La Brea Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90016
(213) 623-4078 x14690
Contact: Carolyn Francis
cfrancis@lapl.org

Junipero Serra Branch
4607 S. Main St
Los Angeles, CA 90037
(213) 623-4078 x10790
Contact: Amy Hanrahan
ahanraha@lapl.org

Robertson Branch
1719 S. Robertson Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90035
(213) 623-4078 x14290
Contact: Penny Mickelbury
pmickelb@lapl.org

Benjamin Franklin Branch
2200 E. First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90033
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Contact: Alicia Chavarin
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Lincoln Heights Branch
2530 Workman St.
Los Angeles, CA 90031
(323) 226-1696
Contact: Carolyn Barelli
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Robert Louis Stevenson Branch
803 Spence St.
Los Angeles, CA 90023
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Contact: Alicia Chavarin
achavari@lapl.org

Cahuenga Branch
4591 Santa Monica Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
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Mid-Valley Regional Branch
16244 Nordhoff St.
North Hills, CA 91343
(818) 895-3663
Contact: Mary Anne Arensdorf
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501 S. Venice Blvd.
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Contact: Penny Mickelbury
pmickelb@lapl.org

Echo Park Branch
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Contact: Peggy Blow
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Pacoima Branch
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Pacoima, CA 91331
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Contact: Holly Schoch
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Washington Irving Branch
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Contact: Beverly Pichardo
bpichard@lapl.org

Exposition Park - Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch
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Contact: June Brandon
jbrandon@lapl.org

Panorama City Branch
14345 Roscoe Blvd.
Panorama City, CA 91402
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Contact: Holly Schoch
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Watts - Alma Reaves Woods Branch
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Contact: Carolyn Francis
cfrancis@lapl.org

Jefferson Branch
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Los Angeles, CA 90018
(213) 623-4078 x11790
Contact: June Brandon
jbrandon@lapl.org

Pio Pico – Koreatown Branch
694 S. Oxford Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90005
(213) 623-4078 x10390
Contact: Stacey Uykim pang
suykimpa@lapl.org

Wilmington Branch
1300 N. Avalon Blvd.
Wilmington, CA 90744
(213) 623-4078 x11090
Contact: Peggy Blow
pblow@lapl.org

Platt Branch
23600 Victory Blvd.
Woodland Hills, CA 91367
(213) 623-4078 x16590
Contact: Susan Casmier
scasmier@lapl.org