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Office Hours

Monday and Wednesday

8:30 am-8:00 pm

Tuesday and Thursday

8:30 am-5:00 pm

Friday

8:30 am-1:00 pm

Closed for holidays

July 5 and September 6

Literacy Network teaches reading, writing and speaking skills to Dane County adults and families so they can achieve financial independence, good health and greater involvement in community life.

Upcoming Events

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RUN/WALK: OCT 3.....p.6

View from the Fourth Row



*by Manuela Trejo
and Terri Connelly Cronk*

The Overture Center occasionally provides ticket vouchers for a variety of performances that we pass on to learners and volunteers as a “thank you” for their hard work. The vouchers also provide our learners an opportunity to experience a part of American culture that they haven’t been able to experience on their own due to financial, language, cultural or other barriers. Here is the story of one pair’s journey together.

The Learner’s Story by Manuela

Literacy Network gives opportunities for all Spanish speakers to learn and speak English. Personally I am appreciative of what this organization does. I am very happy with my tutor, Terri, because I have learned more English. Now I can read better and I have also

learned many verbs in past, present, and future tenses. Terri and I have done many things. Sometimes we do things that are fun and sometimes we do things that are difficult for me but Terri is very understanding with me. I never want to change to another tutor because Terri and I enjoy our time together. Since I have been practicing with Terri I can speak English when it’s necessary. For example, if there is a mistake in my bill at the store I can talk with someone about it.

Sometimes we do special things. For me last month was very fun because we went to the Overture Center to see a dance concert and it was magnificent! We also went to eat together to celebrate our first year together and it was very fun. I hope to continue studying English because it’s very important for everybody.

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Literacy Network Board and Staff

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A Community Literacy Success Story



Brisa studies spelling with her Community Literacy tutor

*By Amy Kempf and
Brisa Tapia Claudia*

Our Community Literacy program is a fun and personalized way to learn English. Volunteer tutors and English Language Learners meet at the same time and place each week to work one-on-one on lesson plans that are made with each individual students' goals and needs in mind. Many of the students in Community Literacy are working towards specific goals like improving their English to get a better job or promotion.

Brisa Tapia Claudia is one of our Community Literacy students in our Saturday morning program. For part of Brisa's job, she enters new client information, including addresses, into a computer. Brisa and her tutor have been working on spelling and phonics to help her spell Wisconsin cities and counties. (Which can be quite difficult with cities like Oconomowoc or Eau Claire!) Her supervisor at work has noticed Brisa's improved accuracy in data entry due to her improved spelling.

Her story, in her own words:

"Hello. My name is Brisa Tapia Claudia and I am from Mexico City. I have a 2 1/2 year old son named Reece and I have been working for an insurance company for 7 years. I have been studying at Literacy Network for about three months, taking the Community Literacy classes. I like to come here because everybody is friendly, but the most important thing is that I am learning a lot. In Community Literacy, I have been working on spelling patterns in English and I am getting really good at knowing how to spell words! One of my old friends who I had not seen for a while also told me that he immediately noticed that my English has improved so much since the last time he talked to me. My goal is to go to MATC and that is why I want to learn to write, read, and speak correctly. Thanks to my tutor, I am reaching that goal. Thanks to her, I can write this letter."

We are so proud of your progress, Brisa! We hope your continued work at Community Literacy can help you reach your goals!

View from the Fourth Row *Continued from page 1*

The Tutor's Story by Terri

It's hard to remember when Manuela and I weren't utterly comfortable with each other. Or when we couldn't converse in English together at all. Though I tutor Manuela, it is clear that as Manuela learns, she teaches me. On the most impersonal level, our "work" together has underscored the inconsistencies and the confounding unpredictability of the English language. We have persevered using invented stories and dialogues, games and mini dramas, discussions on grammar and current events, and experiences with literature. I have watched Manuela's proficiency and confidence grow. She can more easily advocate for herself in English, from requesting a review of a bill she believes is mistaken to setting up appointments.

I have attempted to give Manuela tools, practice, exposure, and support but it is Manuela who deserves the credit for what she has achieved. She works tirelessly, propelled by a sense of how much learning English matters, on so many levels. Her determination and courage don't surprise me - without a doubt she has negotiated much more difficult challenges.

Our night in our fourth row seats at the Overture Center was the first time Manuela had ever been inside the familiar Madison landmark in the ten years she has lived in Madison. The dance performance was magical and memorable but didn't compare with the thrill of watching Manuela take it all in. This was a night that reminded me how relatively effortlessly some of us access such opportunities and all too easily take for granted much of what

enriches our lives. This experience of seeing the world through Manuela's eyes and through her cultural filter has inspired me, reinforcing the sense that learning takes place at unexpected moments and well beyond the "lesson at hand." The process of learning is a shared one that can bring people together with greater understanding and compassion.

Editor's Note: Manuela started at Literacy Network in November 2008 at a beginner level with "very limited writing abilities" according to her initial skills assessment. According to Terri, while writing this article, "...we wrote separately; I helped Manuela only when she didn't know how to say something and with spelling and some punctuation. The rest of it is all hers." What a long distance she has come on her journey!

New Student Club: Students are Teachers!

by Amy Kempf

A new group has been meeting at Literacy Network this spring. This group is different from our other programs and classes: instead of students learning from teachers, the teachers are learning from the students.

The group is called Student Club and our goal is to understand the wants and needs of our students. During each meeting, we enjoy a snack and talk about how classes and tutoring are working for our students. It is a great way for us to hear about the wonderful accomplishments our students have made with their new English ability and get ideas for improving our programs. It is also an opportunity for students in different programs to get to know each other and share their experiences.

Students have already shared some ideas for improving our programs. For example, adding a conversation group to our programming would help our

students practice English in a social setting. Offering more group classes would allow students to attend the class that is most appropriate for their ability level instead of just the class when they are available. Students also mentioned

"It is great way for us to hear about the wonderful accomplishments our students have made with their new English ability and get ideas for improving our programs."

that more direct help with their pronunciation would help them be better understood by English speakers.

In addition to our discussions, we invite a guest speaker to each meeting. The guest speaker talks to the club about resources and free programs in

the community. Our first guest speaker talked to us about the Urban League. Their programs help people find jobs in the community. Our second guest speaker talked about programs to find jobs, transportation, and housing through the YWCA. At the end of our meeting, the students decide who they would like to talk to us at the next meeting.

We would love for more students to join us at our next Student Club meeting on Tuesday, June 29th at 6:00 pm here at Literacy Network. Our club meets right before group classes, so come early to class and enjoy Student Club!



Learning Lab Opens Doors to Opportunity



Literacy Network learner Norma Delgado and lab volunteers James Lloyd and Kelley Burd-Huss.

by Brian Anderson

On June 7, Literacy Network opened a new mobile learning lab made possible by grants from IBM, the Downtown Madison Rotary Foundation, and the Altrusa Foundation. Twelve laptop computers are ready to serve learners, teachers and tutors with software to teach English as a second language, reading, writing, job-seeking and basic computer skills. With the addition of the Internet, the laptops bring gigabytes of information to the fingertips, ears and eyes of learners.

The lab has grown with the help of volunteers like James Lloyd, who has contributed technical and analytical skills to help with the setup and administration of the lab. James volunteers his time and expertise outside of his job at Promega with the support of his supervisor, Rick Salatino, a Literacy Network board member. For James, “it’s a really satisfying experience. The way you use computers here is really sophisticated. It feels like I’m contributing to a worthwhile mission.”

Another contributor is Kelley Burd-Huss, a recent Americorps member. Kelley’s voice popped with enthusiasm when she talked about her work. “Everything is pretty much put together

and ready to go. People who have previewed Lexia SOS and Rosetta Stone are thrilled with it.” Lexia software guides basic literacy learners through reading and writing lessons. Rosetta Stone focuses on teaching language in an immersive environment. Kelly continued, “Tutors and learners are very excited about SOS. Learners can access interactive software from home if they have a computer with the Internet, and tutors can access lesson plans and worksheets to help them plan their lessons.”

“Some students have computer experience, but others will be learning for the very first time. How it will be used will depend on the wants and needs of individual students.”

Kelley has researched several helpful websites, including Simple English Wikipedia— simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page, an internet encyclopedia that gives you the basic information in a very accessible manner. LiveMocha.com lets you learn language and get reviewed by native speakers. It’s like Facebook for language learn-

ers. GFCLearnFree.org helps build life skills such as how to balance a check-book, fill out a job application or read microwave instructions.

We compile a list of learning resources at www.delicious.com/literacy_network.

The lab will be used in group classes like Gregg Williard’s “English for Jobs”, where students will learn about filling out applications, job searching and basic computer skills like mousing and word-processing. Learners and tutors in the Community Literacy program will also be able to use the lab. “Some students have computer experience, but others will be learning for the very first time,” said Student Services Director Amy Kempf. “How it will be used will depend on the wants and needs of individual students.”

Individual learners and tutors will have access to the learning lab during open hours, Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 3:00 – 6:00. Additional hours will be added as use increases. Please come down and check it out. Tutors and teachers who have questions can email Brian Anderson at brian@litnetwork.org.

Literacy Network now on Facebook

Join our group on Facebook for links to articles, events, photos, and the most up-to-date information on programs and events. Social media provides a great way for us to increase public awareness, so join and invite your friends to our group. The more support we build, the more successful our organization can become. Do you prefer to use Twitter or Linked In instead? Literacy Network now has accounts on those sites as well. Find all the links at www.litnetwork.org.

Volunteering to Build Your Skills

by Lynn Pawelski

There are many ways to support Literacy Network's mission of helping adults and families achieve financial independence, good health and greater involvement in community life.

Interested in Volunteering?

You're welcome to attend any of the upcoming Volunteer Information Sessions that are offered several times a month. To find upcoming dates and to register, please visit www.tinyurl.com/litnetvolunteer. Volunteers are tutors (no prior experience required), office assistants, grant writers, event coordinators, IT consultants, graphic designers, journalists, librarians, child care assistants, data entry clerks, and more! If you have talents that you want to use or skills you'd like to develop, come learn how you can support adult literacy as a skilled volunteer!

Want to be become a literacy tutor or expand on your current training?

We are always looking for English as a Second Language and Basic Literacy (reading and writing) tutors to work one-on-one with adult learners. Tutors attend an 8-10 hour initial training after attending a general volunteer session and volunteer for a minimum of 6 months helping one learner reach their literacy goals.

Continuing tutor education is available

After initial training, we offer a variety of ongoing training to help tutors refine their skills and connect with one another. Upcoming in-service training topics include "Effective Strategies for Literacy Level Learners", "Supplementing Side by Side", "Cultural Literacy", "Beyond Worksheets: Creating Lesson Plans that Work", and "Tomaytoes and Tomahtoos: Techniques for Teaching Pronunciation". For a full list of upcoming tutor trainings and continuing tutor education visit www.tinyurl.com/litnetcalendar. To register, please email lynn@litnetwork.org or call 244-3911.



Board member and UW-Madison faculty Andrea Poulos (right) presents an in-service training for tutors with staff member Jen Sell (left).

Welcome New Board Members

By Wendy Wink, Vice President
Literacy Network Board of Directors

We would like to extend a warm welcome to five new Literacy Network Board members: Pedro Albitero, Christine Beatty, Evelyn Cruz, Mike Jones and Andrea Poulos. Each person brings a deep passion for literacy, education and volunteerism and represents diverse aspects and stakeholders within the Literacy Network. Their backgrounds are:

Pedro Albitero is an Employment/Training Specialist and Migrant Outreach Representative with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Pedro has served on nonprofit boards and is the founder of Comité Festival Mexicano. Pedro has been a tutor and mentor with Centro Hispano and is currently a member of the Dane County Equal Opportunity Commission.

Christine Beatty is the Executive Director of the Madison Senior Center. Trained in education, Christine has worked with older adults since 1977. Christine is the past chairperson of the National Institute of Senior Centers and has received national honors for her work with older adults. She is also a Literacy Network tutor, working with a woman who is learning English for better employment opportunities.

Evelyn Cruz is a Bilingual Policy Analyst and State Minority Advocate with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Evelyn is a volunteer English tutor at her church, serving as an interpreter and ESL instructor as needed.

Michael Jones is a Senior Program Coordinator at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Michael has background and experience in health care finance and administration. He has served as an English and mathematics tutor and is also committed to and working on workplace fitness.

Andrea Poulos is a Faculty Associate at the UW-Madison Department of English, ESL Program. As a Literacy Network volunteer, Andi has shared her extensive experience by presenting to Literacy Network volunteers and tutors on ESL teaching and lead staff discussion on assessment, assisting with educational materials, and volunteering at our annual run/walk.

With their diverse and broad experiences, each new board member brings commitment, energy and a deep passion for literacy in our community. Again, welcome to the Literacy Network Board!



Run/Walk 2010 Set for Sunday, October 3rd

The 19th Annual Literacy Network Run/Walk is set for 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 3, in Madison.

The event begins at the intersection of State and Gorham Streets. Participants receive a popular long-sleeve T-shirt for their participation, and can earn additional prizes by recruiting friends and family to pledge.

The event was begun in 1992 by Canterbury Booksellers & Inn founders Harvey and Trudy Barash. “It was a way to highlight literacy efforts in our community while also publicizing the bookstore,” says Trudy Barash. “Now it goes on as our legacy to the community.”

One of Madison’s great fall traditions, the Run/Walk attracts more than 1,000 people annually. The event provides funds to support local literacy programming.

“Over the years, this event has meant that thousands of learners have reached their goals, such as completing a job application, supporting their children’s education and better understanding health information.” explains Literacy Network Executive Director Jeff Burkhart. “We look forward to expanding this great event to more people this year.”

Special thanks to all of the wonderful volunteers who help make this event happen year after year. If you’d like to get involved with the planning of the event, please give us a call at 244-3911.



Jeff Burkhart accepts Health Literacy Award for the Literacy Network at the 8th Annual Celebration of Literacy sponsored by Wisconsin Literacy

Literacy Network Wins First Health Literacy Award

On April 27, Literacy Network of Dane County received the first “Outstanding Achievement in Health Literacy” award from First Lady Jessica Doyle at the eighth annual Celebration of Literacy. Wisconsin Literacy sponsored the annual event at Monona Terrace in Madison, WI.

The award recognizes the innovative partnership that has resulted in positive health outcomes for many residents of Dane County over the past year. As a result of the program, Myriam has cut her cholesterol in half by improving her diet. Manuela made her own doctor’s appointment and asked a pharmacist questions about a cold medicine. Juan Carlos found out how to access low-cost health insurance at Access

Community Health Centers after being laid off and losing his job. He learned about this option from our guest speaker.

The collaborative program is hosted by St. Mary’s Hospital who offered space, staff and financial support for the program. Other partners of the program include GHC, the Latino Health Council, Access Community Health Centers, and the UW School of Pharmacy. The program teaches students basic English skills that will help them connect with the health care system, find and access affordable health care, and ask questions and get the answers they need about their health and the health care they receive. This unique program provides learners with practical, hands-on experience in a health care facility.

Partying With a Purpose

by Caroline Benforado

When I hear the word fundraising, I see fixed goals, hard sell, pleading, and a special emphasis on large contributions. The Literacy Network is launching a campaign that challenges that stereotype.

This new model is simple, unassuming and, well, fun! It consists of a series of small get-togethers focused on some enjoyable activity. The host chooses the activity, something that he or she would enjoy doing, and invites friends, neighbors or colleagues. The guest list can be as large or as small as the host wants. The host might provide casual food, or might ask the guests to bring something. The host is in charge of raising money, but unlike other fundraising events, the host sets their own fundraising goals. All parties will share three goals: to have fun, to raise money for Literacy Network, and to raise awareness of the opportunities that we provide to learners, organizations, and volunteers.

We are using the term "Party in a Box" to let hosts know that everything has

been thought out, from the invitations to the follow-up phone script to the thank-you notes. Hosts are welcome to use any of these materials or just do their own thing. We will provide information such as brochures, a portfolio of students' work, testimonials, and a small gift item to share with guests at the event. It will also be possible to invite a speaker to give a very brief talk.

Materials are currently in development and we are looking for party hosts. Parties will take place in September to celebrate "International Literacy Day" on September 8th.

"Parties With a Purpose" provide a fun way for Literacy Network volunteers and friends to raise money and awareness about Literacy Network. This event model empowers volunteers to become fundraisers, turning their single contribution into many. If you, or someone you know, might enjoy hosting an informal get-together, contact Lynn Pawelski at 244-3911 or lynn@litnetwork.org, or me, Caroline Benforado, at 212-0574.



July 14th International Potluck Picnic Will Celebrate Learners and Volunteers

Learners, Volunteers, Donors, Partners and Friends of Literacy Network are all welcome to join us at **Tenney Park shelter Wednesday, July 14th 5:30-7:30**

Please bring your family and a special food dish to share. We will provide drinks, dishes, entertainment and games for everyone, including the kids. We will have plenty of prizes for kids and kids-at-heart. There will also be time to recognize the hard work well done over the past year by all of our amazing learners and volunteers.

If you are planning to attend, please let us know by calling 244-3911 or emailing lynn@litnetwork.org.



Busking for Books

On April 17, nearly 120 volunteer musicians and ambassadors helped us raise more than \$1 per minute, per corner by "Busking for Books." Twenty-seven corners of music on State Street for over 60 minutes brought in \$1,782.60 for Literacy Network and gathered a lot of publicity for our work! Thanks to everyone who helped to make it happen. Please take a look at our website for links to video and photos from the weekend. www.litnetwork.org

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Creating Connection to Better Opportunities



By Jeff Burkhart
Executive Director

"I want to go to college. That's my goal, that's why I come here," said Dwayne at a meeting with our staff earlier this year. "I don't want to keep telling myself, if only I would have done this...I'm in it to win it." We

matched Dwayne with personal tutor Jim Pettersen last year and they meet a couple of times a week. "This program is awesome," said Dwayne, smiling. "They find someone to fit you. Here, you get someone who is compatible."

Dwayne has made vast improvements in his reading skills. He's imagining a lot more for himself these days. He plans to get his GED. He hopes to attend college.

For adults like Dwayne, getting to college means work on reading and writing skills. It means encouragement, confidence and supportive services through personalized instruction and educational support. We provide that support to more than a thousand adults each year struggling

to connect to better employment opportunities.

Many adults with low basic skills struggle everyday to support themselves and their families. We are working with staff at Madison College to ensure that those with low basic skills are able to build skills for a changing economy and are prepared for the future. We're also building partnerships to help adults connect with learning opportunities. Working with our partners at the technical college system, and community organizations such as Omega School, Centro Hispano and Urban League, we are designing programs to help learners like Dwayne get into better jobs and training programs that will offer a bright future. Thanks for your support in moving us forward.