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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

### Literacy Network Run/Walk:

Sunday, October 14, 10:30 a.m.

Sign up at [litnetwork.org](http://litnetwork.org)

### 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.

## David Breyer, All-Star Tutor



Tutor David Breyer and citizenship learner Thelma Anguiano, at our award ceremony. David has volunteered more than 1,250 hours in ten years with Literacy Network.

By Nathaniel Liedl  
Volunteer Writer

David Breyer is a Literacy Network all-star tutor—and he has a perfect 9-0 record.

Breyer has helped students from all over the world earn their United States citizenship, including nine students this year—but he's far from finished. "It feels wonderful," said Breyer. "I've told them, 'Please call me when you've passed,' and they do, and they're so happy. It's an accomplishment for them, and it makes me feel good that I've been able to help them reach a milestone in their lives."

Before retiring, David worked in sales for WMTV. Instead of relaxing on a beach in Florida, he is making a difference in the lives of others. "I wanted to teach at one time but never did," said Breyer. "And I wanted to see if I could be of any help to people who were trying to learn English, because it is a hard language to learn. I felt I could contribute, or at least be of some assistance to people, and I was never going to find out whether that was true until I tried."

He's tried, and he's succeeded.

Through Literacy Network, David also assists in English as a Second Language classes at Madison College. Over the last decade, Breyer has tutored about a dozen students. He's still close with many of them, including Shindoek Jin, from South Korea, who is a mathematics professor at the University of Wisconsin. David was even in Jin's wedding.

Through all of his experiences with diverse learners, David's found that "there's not much difference between us insofar as everyone's wants and needs." While many learners are college educated, some recently arrived in the U.S. and are seeking basic English to help them in everyday life. According to David, "Learners all have a determination to achieve, and I find it very rewarding when they finally learn whatever it is that they're looking to improve on. When they reach that goal, they light up and want to give you a high five."

Here's to David getting more high-fives for his all-star performance.

## Literacy Network Board and Staff

*President:* J. Michael True  
*Vice President:* Maureen Miner  
*Treasurer:* Meghan Vrotros  
*Secretary:* Christine Beatty  
*Officers:* Rich Birrenkott, Renee Boyce, Beatriz Cantelmo, Kerry Hill, Dipesh Navsaria, Rick Salatino

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*Community Literacy Interns:* Robert Nienhuis Flores, Kasey King, Doug Lechner, Caitlin Mackesey, Judy Moore, Lauren Primuth

*Newsletter Contributors:* Juan Alvarez, Chuck Haacker, Nathaniel Liedl, Matt Miller



Another successful English for Health class ended this summer with a mock clinic in partnership with St. Mary's Hospital. (Photo by Chuck Haacker)

## President's Corner

*By J. Michael True  
Board President*

Since joining the Board of Directors of Literacy Network in May 2011, I have had the pleasure of getting to know the other Board members, Executive Director Jeff Burkhart, the staff, and some volunteers and learners. I can say unequivocally that this fine group of individuals is pouring their hearts and souls into Literacy Network and its mission. Our impact is not only local, but also national. The organization is in great hands and is growing.

This year has been productive. Our Reading Between the Wines event was held in March at Edgewood College. This event was inspiring and moving. Several Literacy Network learners read their written pieces of work that night, which required tremendous courage.

At our Annual Potluck Picnic in June, learners, staff, volunteers, and Board members got to know each other better while enjoying a great meal. We have made great strides in health literacy that have been recognized nationally. Other organizations want to replicate what we have accomplished. We are setting the standard and leading the way in health literacy.

We released our Annual Report, which is beautifully assembled, telling our story in stunning visual graphics. Visit our website at [www.litnetwork.org](http://www.litnetwork.org) to read it. We successfully met a \$12,000 matching challenge for our College Transition Project in two weeks, raising more than \$14,000! Your continued service and dedication makes a big difference! Together with your support, we have accomplished so much this year. We're not done yet! Please sign up for our upcoming Run/Walk or volunteer to help with the event. With your help, we can make this one of Literacy Network's best years. I look forward to seeing you on the course. Until next time, happy reading!

## Inocencia Ocotl finds her dreams through literacy

By Rick Salatino

Volunteer Tutor and Board Member

In 1999, Inocencia Ocotl moved from Mexico to the United States to, in her words, “find my dream.” Her dream was to find a better job and a better life. Living in poverty with just the basic resources and no steady job, Inocencia viewed the move to the United States as a vital opportunity that would never exist for her in Mexico. On arriving in the US, she immediately began learning to speak English by watching American TV shows and practicing with her roommates. She worked as a bagger in a local food store and was happy to have the job, but she knew that improved English literacy was necessary for job promotion and greater opportunity. For this reason, she enrolled in a Literacy Network ESL class in 2006. Since then, Inocencia has been a dedicated learner in the Community Literacy Program, taking classes and practicing on her own to improve her English skills to achieve her goal of a

better life. We asked her about her experience with Literacy Network.

Inocencia told us that learning English at Literacy Network has helped her “do everything at work, at [her] children’s schools, at the doctor’s office, at banks, at libraries... everywhere.” At first, her work-related goal was to be promoted from grocery-bagger to cashier. Since she started taking classes at Literacy Network, her English has improved, and she met that goal. First she was promoted, and then she was able to get another job with better pay and more responsibility. Now at work, she explains, “I can speak more English to talk with my customers.”

The Literacy Network was a good option for Inocencia, because the variety of classes offered fit her individual needs and schedule. “I found classes on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, in the morning and evening.” The day-care was also very important, because she had young children and felt safe leaving them with people she knew.

After years of experience, she has great advice for both English-language learners and tutors. For people who would like to learn English, she says, “I would tell a new student to call the Literacy Network right now and ask about classes.” She would also want learners to know that if they practice and regularly come to class, their English will improve, and they will come closer to their goals. For tutors, she suggests they be patient with learners and give them time to formulate thoughts and put them into words. Being patient is a first step toward building learner confidence.

For now, Inocencia plans to keep taking classes and practicing to improve her English speaking, reading, and writing skills. She says, “I want to get better at everything.” She is interested in learning how to use computers and the Internet. “This will help me at my job, and I can help my kids with their homework.”



Volunteer Tutor Rick Salatino and Learner Inocencia Ocotl. Inocencia says her work with Literacy Network helps her “at work, at [her] children’s schools, at the doctor’s office, at banks, at libraries... everywhere.”

### ***Fall Spanish classes a popular option***

Literacy Network’s fall Spanish classes have just begun, with full rosters. The program has proven to be a flexible and supportive option for adults working on their Spanish language skills. We offer beginning and intermediate classes at the Catholic Multicultural Center. Programs will begin again in January 2013.

*“The class is convenient, set up for people who are working and appeals to adult learning styles of ‘I need to know this’ or ‘I always wanted to know that.’ It is manageable and stimulating.”*

*- Past Class Participant*

# English for Health helps a mother support her family

By Matt Miller  
Health Writer

Originally from Mexico City, Bertha Rodriguez came to the United States hoping to find better job opportunities and a better life. While she found employment as a package worker shortly after her arrival, the transition between countries was difficult for her on many levels. “I did not know anything about the language,” Bertha said, “It was very hard to learn.” Bertha came to the U.S. with three daughters and a son, and the language barrier caused her difficulty enrolling her children in school. She had to communicate chiefly through hand signals when working with school administrators. “I would confuse the words and feel sad and frustrated,” Bertha said.

In addition to finding education for her children, Bertha was also concerned with creating a healthy life for her family: “I wanted to help my daughters and their babies. Before, I did not know about health labels, healthy food, calories, and vitamins.” Because Bertha had no prior exposure to the US healthcare system, she felt she needed help to understand it. After noticing the Literacy Network while driving past the organization’s building one day, she looked into its programs and decided to sign up for the English for Health class at the GHC Hatchery Hill Clinic.

Through the English for Health classes, Bertha has become more confident in asking questions and expressing her concerns to healthcare providers. Part of this confidence is due to her improved understanding of fundamental health concepts, like body mass index, blood pressure, and body temperature. The classes also taught her how to connect on a personal level with healthcare providers. During her experience in the English for Health 2 class, she enjoyed an individual health



**Adult learner Bertha Rodriguez: “The teachers were very good at explaining everything, and the other students are very nice. We help each other.” (Photo by Chuck Haacker)**

consultation with a University of Wisconsin medical student. Through her exposure to this personalized care, she learned that healthcare providers are very eager and sensitive in responding to her healthcare concerns. “The teachers were very good at explaining everything, and the other students are nice. We help each other,” Bertha said. She explained that her newfound self-assurance carries over into her conversations at the doctor’s office, the pharmacy, and the grocery store.

The English for Health classes have done much more for Bertha than just familiarizing her with the US healthcare system. She has adopted a much healthier diet, and she knows new recipes that are more nutritious for her family. In addition, she has learned to become more physically active: “I do more exercise, and I take care of my condition,” Bertha said. She can also better monitor the health of her children by knowing which questions to ask and by monitoring their symptoms.

For now, Bertha provides for herself through sewing, which is one of her biggest passions. However, Literacy Network has helped her on the way to her ultimate goal, which is to become a language interpreter. She is currently going to school to get her General Diploma and plans on returning to the Literacy Network next semester.



**Like us on Facebook by 5:00 pm on October 13 and enter our drawing for one of two \$25 gift cards from Orange Tree Imports!**

**<http://www.facebook.com/LiteracyNetwork>**

## International Literacy Day honors volunteers

On Saturday, September 8, Literacy Network celebrated International Literacy Day by honoring ten volunteers for their service. Each has dedicated more than 750 hours of service to adult learners!

**David Breyer** has worked for more than ten years with Literacy Network to support our programming. Read more about David in this issue's cover story. David has a total of more than 1,250 volunteer hours!

**Tony Voss** has been tutoring for more than seven years with Literacy Network. He has served as a Community Literacy tutor and a personal tutor. Tony is a very reliable tutor and has served more than 1,150 hours!

**Mary Weaver** has worked with the same learner since 2006 and has reported hours to us nearly every month during that time. Mary has accumulated more than 1,080 hours of tutoring in almost six years!

**Michael Gessler** is one of our power office volunteers. He is always there when we need help with processing or entering data, thanking donors, and working on any other special projects in the office. In addition, Michael has served as a tutor. Michael embodies the spirit of volunteerism by doing work that is necessary but not glamorous. He has logged nearly 1,100 hours since 2007.

**Kathy Granquist** has been a volunteer tutor with us since 2002, working with five different learners. In that time, she has logged nearly a thousand volunteer hours.

**Marilyn Neiman** is a regular fixture at Literacy Network. A former teacher, she has been tutoring James since 2007. They work on reading, writing, and computers usually two times a week here at Literacy Network. James said, "Marilyn is very good, and we get along very well. She finds a lot of interesting things for me to read. She

lets me do what I want to do." They've logged more than 850 hours of tutoring together.

**Donna Stapf** has tutored eight different learners since 2005 in both English as a Second Language and Adult Basic Education. She has dedicated more than 780 hours to her learners in the last seven years! Just this week, she took on a new learner as a brand new citizenship tutor. Her previous learner hopes to apply for citizenship this year.

**Kathy DeMets** has been volunteering at Literacy Network for more than 16 years! She is our kind and caring volunteer book-keeper, who is here weekly to support the payment of bills and depositing money. Kathy is instrumental in coordinating volunteers for the Run/Walk registration. She also takes great care of all of the plants! Kathy has served more than 750 hours with us!

**Rick Salatino** is one of the most dedicated and hard-working Literacy Net-

work volunteers. Rick has been a tutor in our community literacy program since 2004. "Tutoring is the most real thing I do all week," said Rick. Rick also joined our board in 2009 and has been active in Strategic Planning development, as well as supporting the marketing efforts for our Run/Walk. Rick has served more than 750 hours with us!

**Nathaniel Godfrey** serves as a personal tutor and was a Community Literacy intern for three semesters with us. Nate has had a major impact in the last three years on the lives of many tutors and learners. We appreciate Nate's incredible dedication to supporting our programs. In just three years, Nate has logged more than 750 hours!

International Literacy Day kicks off Literacy Network's fall tutor drive each year. Please call 608-244-3911 if you are interested in learning more about how to change a life through literacy!



**Volunteers, learners and staff attended the International Literacy Day Awards Celebration on September 8.**

## Literacy Network Run/Walk set for October 14

The 21st Annual Literacy Network Run/Walk is set for Sunday, October 14, at 10:30 a.m. The event is sponsored in collaboration with the UW School of Education. It will start on State Street near A Room of One's Own Bookstore, at 315 W. Gorham, and will continue through the UW Campus. Participants can choose to do the 5K Walk, 5K Run or 10K Run.

Registration information is available online at [www.litnetwork.org](http://www.litnetwork.org). The largest school team wins \$1,000 worth of books for their school library from the University Bookstore to help promote education in the schools.

Funds support Literacy Network and its efforts to help more than 1,000 adult learners reach their goals. People are encouraged to support this event by taking part in the Run/Walk, donating, and/or by becoming a volunteer. All participants are invited to join us afterwards for food, music and fun.

Registration information:

\$20 for students

\$28 for team members

\$30 for individuals (through Oct. 3)

Harvey Barash started the event as the Canterbury Run/Walk for Literacy. Harvey's wife, Trudy, owned and operated the Canterbury Bookstore. Harvey continues to be involved in planning the event and has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the organization. The event increases awareness of the need for literacy services in our community and has become one of the biggest literacy fundraisers in the state.

Learn more about Literacy Network and the event at: [www.litnetwork.org](http://www.litnetwork.org).

**Event sponsors:** American Family Insurance, Demco, Thyse Printing Service, The Cap Times, UW Health, Hausmann-Johnson Insurance, IMS, Findorff, Tingalls Dzyn, Group Health Cooperative, The University Bookstore,



**The Literacy Network Run/Walk is one of Madison's great fall traditions. Join us by registering at [www.litnetwork.org](http://www.litnetwork.org)**

*Meriter-Physicians Plus, University of Wisconsin School of Education, Murphy Desmond, EZ Office Products, CUNA Mutual Group, The Payroll Company, Webcrafters, The Willy Street Co-op and A Room of One's Own Bookstore.*



**Twenty volunteers from the Rosenberry and Toqueville societies participated in the United Way Days of Caring at Literacy Network on August 21. The volunteers tutored parents in reading to their children and learned about our family literacy programs. United Way of Dane County plans to raise \$17.5 million from the community this year. Part of this funding supports Literacy Network's programs. Please generously support the United Way campaign! (Photos by Chuck Haacker)**

# Immigrant English Learners Give Back to Community

By Jen Sell

Group Instruction Director

Adult immigrants learning English through Literacy Network connect with Madison non-profits seeking volunteers. Students serve the community, gain experience, make friends, and improve their English by helping out at a local food pantry.

Literacy Network's English for Work class focuses on service learning opportunities. In partnership with Latino Academy of Workforce Development, students practice verbal and written English to use in the real world. The class researches volunteer opportunities listed on United Way's [volunteeryourtime.org](http://volunteeryourtime.org) website, invite guest speakers from area non-profits to visit class and describe their agencies, arrange field trips, and actively volunteer at sites including the River Food Pantry and Community Support Network on Madison's north side.

On Tuesday mornings, for example, Juan Alvarez has joined instructor Jen Sell at River Food Pantry. Nervous at first, he gained confidence weighing and carrying customers' bags and assisting them in both English and Spanish as needed. He made friendships with other volunteers, gained exposure to an important community service, developed skills

he can add to his resume, and improved his English.

Most importantly, says Juan, "I feel good about helping the people."

This effort to integrate adult immigrant learners into our community will branch out in coming months, as students learn about volunteer opportunities working with adults with developmental disabilities at Community Support Network, cleaning up the environment with Friends of Cherokee Marsh, helping make the lives of senior citizens easier through the North/Eastside Senior Coalition, and much more.

## My experience at River Food Pantry

By Juan Alvarez

Literacy Network Learner

I helped people at a food pantry. The name is River Food Pantry. It is located at 2201 Darwin Road near the airport.

I went to volunteer on Tuesdays from 10:30 to 12:00. Then volunteers ate lunch together. I weighed bags of food. I helped people choose items. I stocked food on shelves. I helped for the expe-



**Juan Alvarez: "I wanted to help people and learn about the community."**

rience and to practice my English. I wanted to help people and learn about the community. I feel good about helping the people. I am going to continue helping.

*Note: Juan is a student in Literacy Network's English for Work and Life class at Vera Court Community Center, in partnership with the Latino Academy for Workforce Development. Juan continues to volunteer weekly at River Food Pantry, over three months after his first experience there.*

## Literacy Network Legacy Society helps provide for the future

By Linda Murray,

Development Director

Have you ever wondered how mature nonprofits meet community needs? Planned giving is one way to build services, and it allows donors to designate a future gift for a charitable organization.

A bequest in a will is a popular planned gift, but there are several other options. Planned giving benefits both the giver and the receiver through sound fiscal planning. It's a way of bringing the present into the future.

There are several planned gift options available to you as part of the Literacy Network Legacy Society:

- Life insurance policy beneficiary designation
- Retirement plan beneficiary designation
- Bequest –provision in a will or revocable trust
- Life income gift (charitable gift annuity, pooled income fund, charitable remainder trust or charitable lead trust)

- Life estate gift (remainder interest in real property)

To become a member of the Legacy Society, simply give me a call at 608-244-3911. I will provide sample bequest language for inclusion in your will or trust that meets your philanthropic and financial goals. Optional benefits of membership include listing your name on the Literacy Network Legacy Society Honor Roll, which will be published in connection with special events and annual publications. Often, this will spur other people to consider a planned gift, too. If you prefer to remain anonymous, we are happy to honor your wishes.

Members of the Legacy Society share a strong common bond of generosity and visionary leadership, nourishing Literacy Network's continued success.

For more information regarding the Legacy Society, please contact me at (608) 244-3911 or by email at [linda@litnetwork.org](mailto:linda@litnetwork.org).

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## Director's Notes

*By Jeff Burkhart*  
*Executive Director*



Four years ago this month, I started working at Literacy Network. In that time, I've had the honor of working with hundreds of excellent volunteers, staff members, and many community agencies throughout Madison. It is a great honor to work with such an amazing group of people to help adults gain the essential literacy skills needed to move forward in their lives.

Literacy is essential for eradicating poverty, achieving gender

equality, and advancing society. We all need literacy skills for life and further learning. Literate parents are more likely to be active partners in their children's education. Literate adults take advantage of continuing educational opportunities, and are more likely to live healthy lives.

In the last four years, I have seen the success we have had in opening up opportunities for our learners. Our volunteers have helped hundreds of learners successfully achieve their citizenship. Thanks to the great work of our staff and volunteers, there are many examples of how we change lives every day. Take for instance the mother of three who wanted to learn English to better communicate with her child's teachers. Think about the improved access to health

care for hundreds of adult learners through our English for Health program. Consider the woman who started her alteration business with help from her tutor. Every day, I am inspired by the dedication and hard-work of volunteers and staff. Seeing their determination and perseverance motivates me to do a better job.

I came to the field of adult literacy as a volunteer myself many years ago. I saw the struggles that my learner experienced, and I wanted to do something more to help address those challenges.

I am happy to see that together, we are making progress toward our goals. I am proud of our excellent staff of trained professionals and volunteers who continue reaching towards our goals. Thanks for all you do to move us forward!