

LITERACY MATTERS

NOVEMBER 2016

Literacy Matters is a recurring publication of Literacy Nassau, Inc.



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PREVIEWING THE TUTOR CONFERENCE

(submitted by Alison Orme)

We are so excited for Literacy Nassau's Second Annual Tutor Conference, being held this month on Saturday, November 19th at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock. This year's conference will be overflowing with guest presenters, brand new workshops, a host of vendors, delicious food, raffles, and more!

At our inaugural conference last year, nearly 100 tutors joined us to hear our keynote speaker, Jorge Montalvo who is the Deputy Secretary of State for Economic Opportunity and Director with the New York State Office for New Americans. Montalvo shared with attendees his own story of being a first generation American and the struggles his parents faced - and how that ultimately led him towards a career in government and public service. He also shed light on why Governor Cuomo felt convicted to develop the NYS Office for New Americans, and his family's personal immigration story as well. It was a great opportunity to gain a "macro" perspective on the work we do at Literacy Nassau, which many tutors were grateful for, since it is very easy to feel isolated when you meet with one student for only two hours each week.

This year's conference promises to offer

more of these "macro" opportunities, with not one but two fabulous keynote speakers joining us: Assemblywoman Michaelle Solages (from the Elmont/Valley Stream district), who is the first person of Haitian descent to be elected into the NYS Assembly, and Irv Miljoner, a lifelong public servant of the U.S. Department of Labor who has spent his career battling the injustice that occurs when employers choose to exploit their workers. Each of our speakers will share their unique connection to Literacy Nassau, and how the work of our tutors truly changes the lives, goals, and abilities of our student body of over 800 adults on Long Island.

This year, we continue to leverage our collective in-house talent and expertise along with our professional affiliations in order to deliver even more workshops to attendees - fifteen in total. These workshops are geared toward meeting the professional development needs of our volunteers in an informative and engaging format. This year, we have secured several "train the trainer" workshops that address the more practical aspects of assimilating to United States culture. These include: Hofstra University's Starting/Growing Your Own Business, a primer on the U.S. Citizenship process and interview presented by an immigration officer from USCIS, Health Literacy, and Eating Better (*cont'd. on p. 2*)

THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

Julie started nursery school this fall - and to be honest, it hasn't been the easiest transition for her. She cries when I drop her off, but at pick-up time, we're informed that she had a great day. Chris and I were talking about this recently (because it's gut wrenching for me to leave her there crying every day) and he brought up a great point: Julie needs to know that we are always going to come back for her. She needs to feel secure in our love for her, so she can be brave enough to go out into the world, develop relationships with her teachers, and make new friends.

The same thing applies to our tutor-student relationships. If you are the teacher of an SGI class, for example, you might have 5 students who are capable of using the English language regularly, but who are scared to do so - so instead, at home and in their cultural communities, they prefer to use their native language. Sometimes, all these students need is a little push. Remind them that we all make mistakes. Remind them to use their "power tools" (questions like, "Can you please repeat that?" or "Can you speak more slowly?") Most importantly, remind them that you are here to help them and that you are proud of them. A little bit of support goes a long way.

Karen



Julie (our youngest daughter) needs to know that we want her to spread her wings and fly, but also that we will always be here to catch her.

PREVIEWING THE TUTOR CONFERENCE (CONT'D.)

on a Budget. Our expanded workshop offerings will also include options for tutors working with native speakers on reading: Building Reading Comprehension for Next Chapter Book Club facilitators delivered by Kim Nau, Introduction to Learning Disabilities presented by Umama Pasha, and Working with Pre-Literate Students, presented by Rebecca Figueras. Our most popular workshop from last year, Stepping into the Shoes of a Language Learner, is back this year and we have added Play It by Ear, a fun, engaging workshop that will show tutors how to turn old board games into fun, interactive instructional lessons.

Below is a reminder of the workshop schedule. Please remember that space is limited to the first 100 tutors who respond!

Session I: 9:45 - 10:45	Session II: 11:00 - 12:00	Session III: 1:15 - 2:15
Takin' It to the Streets Sara Izquierdo, Junior Literacy Specialist	Working with the Pronunciator App Andrea Snyder, Nassau Library System Outreach Services	Eating Better on a Budget Emily Aldorasi, Cornell Cooperative Extension
Building Reading Comprehension Kim Nau, Program Director	Stepping Into the Shoes of a Language Learner Cindy Cabrera, Literacy Specialist	U.S. Citizenship Shyconia Burden, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Svcs
Re-Orientation to Literacy Nassau Alison Orme, Director of Volunteers	Starting from the Basics Rebecca Figueras, Junior Literacy Specialist	Introduction to Learning Disabilities Umama Pasha, Program Director
Health Literacy Candice Cantore, Junior Literacy Specialist	Starting/Growing Your Own Business April Jones, Hofstra University	The Cell-Ed Experience Chris Bisonette, Freeport Memorial Library
Acquiring Language: What Your Student Wants You to Know Digna Johnson, Lead ESL Teacher	Play It by Ear Ocaria DiMango, Program Director	What to Expect in Advanced ESL Digna Johnson/Cindy Cabrera, ESL Teachers

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: TOMMY BRULL FOUNDATION

We recently received notice that Literacy Nassau is being awarded a grant of \$2,250 from the Tommy Brull Foundation. This grant will support the launch of one new Next Chapter Book Club site for the 2017 year.

The Tommy Brull Foundation's mission is to raise funds to benefit a wide variety of people with physical, mental and emotional disabilities in our community. The Foundation's vision parallels some of Tommy Brull's personal values, and particularly captures his caring and empathetic nature. The Brull family of Rockville Centre lost their brother Tommy to an accident 17 years ago, and the work of the Foundation keeps his spirit alive.

To date the Foundation has made sizeable charitable donations to both organizations and individual causes that meet the stated objective of the Foundation. It is the hope of the Brull family that the foundation will continue to grow over the years to come and assist many disabled people in improving the day to day quality of their lives.

We are extremely grateful for this gift and new partnership!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy birthday to all of our tutors born in November! They are:

Susan Anton	Lorraine Bak	Ruth Bigman
Steven Carbone	Kathleen Dendy	Diane Dubno
Diane Dwyer	Avi Feinstein	Lita Friedman
Sandra Heiman	Audrey Hores	Charles Jencius
Joni Jones	Joanne Kassanove	Susan Kimmel
Jean Lavelle	Kathy Mahony	Christine Malenda
Deirdre McElhatton	Ceilann Neber	Mary Ann Neber
Carolyn Quenon	Teresa Rienzie	Helen Schmidt
Peter Schwarz	Adarsh Singla	Diane Ugelow
Van Vasiliades	Helen Westerman	Maryanne Pitman

A DAY OF BRIDGE

(submitted by Umama Pasha)

On September 23rd, Literacy Nassau hosted it's annual Day of Bridge sponsored by the John and Janet Kornreich Foundation at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Shelter Rock in Manhasset, N.Y. It was another successful year, with over 100 people in attendance determined to win the grand prize, a \$100 gift card to Bobby Flay's Bar Americain and two tickets to see "Fiddler on the Roof" on Broadway.

The day started with a continental breakfast courtesy of Panera Bread. Aaron Silverstein from the Bridge School of Long Island returned for a third year to lead the game. Three hours of game play was followed by catered lunch from Ben's Deli. At the end of the day, a live raffle drawing was done by Executive Director, Karen Micciche. Prizes included an overnight stay in Cape Cod, a Fitbit, and a Dooney & Burke tote bag! Men's and ladies swag bags, including products from Men's Wearhouse, Estee Lauder, and more, were given to all participants.

Special thanks goes out to John and Janet Kornreich for their tremendous support and for making this terrific event possible.



Above left: UUCSR's Social Hall was packed with bridge enthusiasts. Above right: Players decide which raffles to try for.

TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: MARYANNE PITMAN

(submitted by Alison Orme)

This month, we spoke with Maryanne Williams-Pitman about her experience working with her student Marilda. Maryanne decided to start volunteering with Literacy Nassau a few years after she retired. At the time, her husband was still working and her son was finishing up graduate school. She saw an article about our organization and thought how limiting life would be if she was unable to read or understand English. Here is what she had to say about her tutoring experience.

"I first started working with Marilda in March 2014. She is fifty-five years old and has been in the U.S. for about twelve to fourteen years. During that time, she was a housekeeper, which, as you can imagine is very isolating work. She associated primarily with other Brazilian people so she did not have much opportunity to speak English, but she was really eager to learn.

Our lessons have focused on just about everything. This past summer, we became very up-to-date on the Zika virus and the Olympics being held in Rio de Janeiro. I was a nurse before I retired and she is from Brazil so we were both interested in keeping current. We studied world maps from Doctors without Borders and mapped the disease's progress. We also researched the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and what information they had available. It was such a joy to teach her about online research on a subject that we were both interested in.

Throughout the time that I have spent with Marilda, I have learned that gains are made in small steps. Each time we would meet, we would learn from each other. I would learn about her life, her family, her culture and how she faced the hardships that came her way. She told me these things in an effort to help me to understand her. I also learned about her patience and about how she set and achieved goals for herself.

My experience with Marilda has been beautiful and fulfilling and has enriched my life. It gave me the opportunity to sit alongside someone else and gain perspective on her life. Immigrant people are misunderstood. My grandmother was an immigrant to the United States in 1898 from Ireland. Things have not changed much. They are always juggling jobs- sometimes three or four at a time. I have a renewed respect for people who come to this country and try to make a life for themselves. I see in Marilda how much courage, determination and hard work it takes to come to another country. I so admire her strength and fierce determination to improve her language skills and gain citizenship.

Pictured:
Maryanne's
student,
Marilda.



WHAT'S BLACK AND WHITE AND READ ALL OVER?

(submitted by Kim Nau)

The newspaper is an easily accessible resource that can be used to motivate your English language learners. Current events can be great conversation starters as well as an effective tool to assess reading comprehension skills.

Sometimes newspapers can be intimidating to students because they are text-heavy and have high level vocabulary, so you may want to choose an article that is brief. You can first have them skim the article and highlight any words that are challenging. Discuss the definitions together, then have the student read the article aloud to you (to practice their speaking skills) and ask them comprehension questions when they finish. If they are struggling, you can even just start off by focusing on the article headlines and discussing what they mean. The headlines often give the main idea of what the article is about. Students can use the photographs to assist them with comprehension as well. To check for understanding, you can ask questions related to the 5 W's when discussing a news event or news story. What happened? Who was involved? Why did it happen? Where did it happen? When did it

it happen?

Don't limit yourself with just the newspaper. You can utilize news radio, television news, and news sources online. A simple homework assignment can be to watch a news program and write a summary of the most important news story. Another homework opportunity would be to listen to the AM radio station 1010 (the same news stories are repeated every 10 minutes) and have students write three important headlines that they heard. Then, discuss the events in your following tutoring session. In light of the upcoming presidential election, you can also have your student watch a debate on television and give him/her the opportunity to be a "reporter" by writing a mock newspaper article summarizing the debate and the key arguments of each candidate.

You can visit the website, www.breakingnewsenglish.com, to read a variety of news articles that are divided into seven levels to accommodate all learners. They provide free lessons related to current events that address a variety of language skills: reading comprehension, listening, dictation, writing, and vocabulary.

Teaching our students the value of reading the newspaper helps to build strong reading habits that last a lifetime.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to all of our newest tutors! They are as follows:

Frank Annese
Susan Astre
Lillian Baum
Evelyn Chugerman
Judy Rattner DiBari
Margaret Dudley
Alison Kohler
Martha Kovel
Steven Reale
Rena Riback
Martha Salzburg
Mary Jane Tufano
Brian Turchin
Sheila Wexler

October Hours Due Nov. 1st

Please be sure to send in your instructional hours MONTHLY! All hours should be reported to Literacy Nassau by the 1st day of the following month. You can report your hours at www.literacynassau.org/hours.



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Ongoing Learning

In partnership with *Cornell Cooperative Extension*, we are proud to present **free nutritional literacy workshops**.

These workshops are a great way for students to practice listening and speaking as they learn how to make healthier eating choices.

Track: **Rethink Your Drink/Plate**

Location: Freeport

Date: Nov. 22nd, 10-12 pm

Track: **Nutritional Workshop**

Location: Hicksville

Date: Dec. 8th, 4-6 pm

Advance registration is required.

Call (516) 867-3580 x21 to register.
Workshop is available to both tutors and students!



Volunteer Opportunities

Small Group Instruction for Beginners (SGIB) tutors needed

for the following areas:

Uniondale Library: 10-12 pm

Hillside Library: 10-12 pm

Hicksville Location: 10-12 pm

Farmingdale Library: 6-8 pm

Classes meet 2 hours a week for 8-10 weeks. Lesson plans will be provided. Teaching certification helpful, but not required!

For more information, please contact Umama Pasha at (516) 867-3580 x17 or at upasha@literacynassau.org.