



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

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Allyson Grossman, Teacher
Lisa Palmieri, Teacher
Susan Santoro Esq., Oceanville Masonry (ret.)

CHANGING TIMES

(by Karen Micciche, Executive Director)

Spring is a time for growth and change, and this spring, especially, we're feeling it here at Literacy Nassau. Many changes are afoot, starting with our Board leadership.

To be fair, the Board of Directors that saw our organization through COVID-19 are some of the most dedicated, generous supporters Literacy Nassau has ever seen. Many of them were kind enough to stay on and serve for way longer than they expected, as we were unable to recruit in 2020 and 2021. In fact, we didn't really begin recruiting again until about 2023, and now the composition of the Board is so rich that they finally felt comfortable stepping down.

Iris Grover was one of the first people I ever met when I joined LN as the Executive Director 15 years ago. The first thing I decided to do was take a Tutor Training Workshop. Back then, these workshops were 18 hours long, held in 3-hour increments in libraries around Nassau. I took mine at the Lynbrook Library and was so impressed that the people delivering the workshops were volunteers with the organization. Iris, a retired reading teacher, was engaging,



knowledgeable, and supportive of the fact that I was in a leadership role but had literally everything to learn. When I learned she was also up for a position on our Board of Directors, I was thrilled.

Iris began her first Board term in May, 2010, and stayed on for 6 years, as per the by-laws. She served in the Executive Cabinet as Board Secretary and supported the organization in many ways. Her family and friends would come to our (un)Scrabble gala every year. She'd conduct In-Service Trainings and other tutor engagement events. She donated funds to help us build our new center. She was lovely to be around, and we often had lunch together at Rachel's, a restaurant in Freeport, to catch up on work and family stuff.

Iris took a year off in 2016 and rejoined the Board after the hiatus year, eager to return and continue helping us grow our programs and mission. She remained steadfast in her willingness to lend a hand in any endeavor necessary, and at the end of 2024, she resigned. She will be dearly missed, but will always remain a friend to our organization.

Irv Miljoner has served with Literacy Nassau since 1996, when he was part of the Advisory Board. As a dedicated employee of the US Department of Labor, Irv was happy to lend his expertise in employment

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FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

I have a fun bit of news: my debut novel, *The Book Proposal*, was published in Brazil the day after Valentine's Day! I can't wait to get my hands on a copy of the Portuguese version of it. But a very interesting thing has happened: I've received all these messages on social media from readers there, and because I don't speak Portuguese, I'm at a loss for how to respond. Like many of our adult students I find myself resorting to using Google translate (which often botches the context of what I'm trying to say). It's super frustrating! It makes me even more grateful to you - our tutors - because I'm seeing and feeling first hand what it's like to struggle with language.

Thank you for all that you do!

Karen



The Book Proposal
published in Brazil in
Portuguese.

TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: TRISH

(by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

We are happy to welcome Trish as a new tutor to Literacy Nassau. She was so eager to begin supporting the adult population, that she volunteered for two different programs. Trish began teaching an ESL class in January and was quick to build a community of learners who support one another. Trish has also volunteered as a Next Chapter Book Club facilitator and will soon begin sharing her love of reading with a small group of adults with developmental disabilities as well.

I've held many positions in my life. I've been a Wall Street executive, a stay at home mom, a teacher and a civil servant. Besides staying home with my children for a number of years, teaching is for sure my passion. Working with adults is particularly rewarding because I can empathize with each adult student's desire to improve themselves and assimilate. These adults are juggling family life and work schedules to be at class.

I am fortunate as a first time tutor to have only four students. My students are from Russia, Mexico, Columbia and El Salvador. My students have been here for as long as nine years to as recent as one year.



Following the program's curriculum is supplemented with close reading, grammar, word games, and role playing. A recent review of learned vocabulary was practiced with a game of Bingo and candy conversation hearts as bingo markers!

One of my students was married last week. All of us got to share in that joy and planning. The bride and another student have become good friends and they spend time together outside of class! Each student is a delight! Their commitment and drive to learn the English language is inspiring! I truly enjoy spending time with these amazing and fun ladies!



Basic Literacy Volunteers Needed

We are looking for patient tutors to help other adult members of our community with their English Language skills.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Comfortable working with beginning reader/adults with learning disabilities
2. Basic technology skills (email & attendance sheets)
3. Able to travel to local libraries
4. Able to meet consistently every week.

Fill out our online registration form on our website:
www.literacynassau.org
or scan the QR code



More information: ☎ 516-867-3580 🌐 literacynassau.org



Warm Birthday Wishes To Our Tutors Celebrating In March!

Tahara Anderson – Frank Annese – Alissa Belize
Marilyn Benson – Joan Borruso – Kristen Brennan
Stephanie Budhan – Donna Cattano – Harvey Caust – Alisa
Clark Linda Diamond – Nancy Doyle – Eleanor Feingold
Alan Freeman – Susan Gallagher – Mary Greenfield
Linda Hanson – Carol Horvat – Margaret Kemp
Craig Kennedy – Robert Lanzisera – MaryLou Laurie
Maureen Lonergan – Mindy Mangot – Cynthia Marquez
Nicholas Meadows – Harri Meyers – Deborah Monteko
Carol Morris – Justine Mulvihill – Aruna Paingankar
Anne Picone – Lauren Quinn – Janice Raven – Jennifer Reedy
Avis Sanassie – Charlene Serenita – Sophia Shapiro
Staci Seigel – Patricia Simmons – Mary Smith
Vickie V.Y. Stanco – Gladys Stuart – Sara Beth Torns
Peter Walsh – Christian Wrigley – Carolyn Zaremba



Warm Birthday Wishes To Our Tutors Celebrating In April!

Kami-Leigh Agard – Mary Alibrandi – Aleksandra Aminova
Zeba Ansari – Marty Baicker – Nancy Benchimol
Nancy Bob – Judy Caputo – Adrienne Carlton – Robin Carucci
Jennifer Cestaro – Kathleen Coleman – Eileen D'Antonio
Margaret Dudley – Lisa Evans – Wendy Fast
Anita Faulding – Madalyn Fernbach – Barbara Fritz
Jennifer Gabriele – Lana Glass – Mary Greco – Kelsey Greene
Michele Haber – Florence Harff – Michael Hauser
Kathleen Jeacoma – Kristen Johnson – Dolores Joseph
Keon Karimababy – Audrey Korman – Carmelinda Kurtzberg
Jean Lesser – Carol Markman – Susan Mazur – India McClain
Antonia Obara – Carol Padovani – Josephine Palazzolo
Jean Pascale – Maureen Peraza – Amy Perlmutter
Terese Pizza – Jane Quinton – Susan Rosenberg
Stephen Salyk – Carol Schrafel – Vasu Shah – Ann Silverberg
Margaret Tigue – Debbie Uckele – Virginia Walsh
Fran Weiss – Joan Whiteside – Jessica Zamora

CHANGING TIMES (CONTINUED)

law to our organization. By the time I arrived in 2010, I was looking to add new skill sets to the Board of Directors, and Irv seemed like a perfect fit. As a non-profit that works to help adults reach education and employment goals, whose target population often bears the brunt of scams and labor exploitation, Irv was a great addition to our team. When we got our Office for New Americans grant, Irv presented to our classes about labor rights. He served as our chief (un)Scrabble judge for many years, and was a committed part of our Board of Directors, orchestrating the revitalization of our Advisory Board, lending support to Recognition Night and other events, and even delivering a keynote address to our tutors at our 2016 Tutor Conference.



Just like Iris, Irv took a brief hiatus after his 6-year term ended, and when he returned in 2018, we were about to open a brand new facility. Sadly, Irv's son David passed away in November of 2016. Irv worked to create and promote a legacy fund in David's name which still exists today. The David Miljoner Legacy Fund supports Literacy Nassau initiatives which generally benefit recent immigrants and other disadvantaged populations, including Adult Literacy Education, English Language Learning, and Citizenship Preparation. There is information about the fund on our website.

Irv stayed with us long past his own retirement from the labor department in 2019 in an effort to continue to generate interest in and support for Literacy Nassau. Unfortunately, COVID created a shift in the way we deliver programs and community services, and many of our initiatives withered and needed to be rebuilt. As a result, we will hopefully be rebuilding his beloved Advisory Council in the coming months. Irv stepped down at the end of 2024 as well, and will also be missed dearly.

Iris and Irv have their fingerprints all over Literacy Nassau. Their leadership, friendship and work ethic are unsurpassed.

As we look to the future, I'm thrilled, to welcome three new Board members to our organization. I expect that they will help us develop and grow as an organization. Below please find a bio for each of them.

Welcome

ALLYSON GROSSMAN

Allyson Grossman is a lifelong learner and lover of education who grew up on Long Island. She is currently an elementary school teacher in Jericho, NY. She received a Bachelors of Science from the University of Maryland-College Park, a Masters of Science in Special Education from CUNY Queens College and an Advanced Certificate in School Building Leadership and Educational Technology from NYIT. During the summer, Ally can be found as the Girls Head Counselor at Camp Chen-A-Wanda, where she has spent summers since she started as a camper in 1997. She enjoys travel and is an avid theater and music lover! Ally is so excited to be a part of a team that supports literacy and growth for children and adults alike on Long Island!



Welcome

LISA PALMIERI

I am Lisa Palmieri, and I have had the privilege of being a reading teacher for 29 years, and counting, at the Jericho School District. Every day, I wake up with a sense of gratitude, knowing that I have the opportunity to engage in work that I truly love. I am excited about the prospect in the near future of expanding my expertise through Orton-Gillingham associate level training, and in a more distant future, to eventually teach incarcerated people how to read. I am looking forward to being a helpful member of the Literacy Nassau Board. I believe that literacy is a vital skill, and the gateway to empower individuals.



Welcome

DANIELA GALLINA

I have been a Special Education teacher for the Department of Education for the last 17 years. I attended Molloy College in Rockville Centre where I earned a Bachelor's of Science in Psychology/Early Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in Special Education.

Throughout my years at PS 21, I have taught numerous grade levels, both in the inclusion and self-contained classroom. Having the opportunity to teach different grade levels has allowed me to apply the skills needed to aid students educationally, emotionally, and socially. Recently, I became an Academic Intervention Specialist to help at-risk students who are not performing on grade level. I have been trained in S.P.I.R.E, Sounds Sensible, and for the last two years I have been attending sessions in ABA Therapy.

When I am not teaching, I am a proud mom to two beautiful and kind daughters. Sofia is a 7th grade student at Wantagh Middle School and Ariana is a 4th grader at Wantagh Elementary School. My husband Joe is an elementary school educator for the last 20 years in the Rockville Centre school district. Recently we started a non-profit flag football organization focusing on girls' sports with an emphasis on flag football.

I am honored to be a part of Literacy Nassau and eager to begin this new journey to help all learners!






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possible by donating to us directly on
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Nassau will receive \$1 for each reusable
bag sold at:
702 Hicksville Road in Massapequa**

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