



# LITERACY MATTERS

## MARCH 2023



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

### What You'll Find in this Issue:

A Success Story .....	2
Happy Birthday .....	2
Tutor Spotlight .....	3
March is Reading Month .....	3
Donations .....	4

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### OUR OG FELLOW IN TRAINING (FIT) JOURNEY

*(submitted by Kate Quijano, Program Director)*

Karen and I are currently studying to become Fellows of the Orton-Gillingham Academy. This is a three year process which will allow us to train others in the OG approach. We have been offering a training program for teachers to become certified at the associate level for the past several years. We have partnered with a Fellow who comes in to provide training for us and to supervise trainees tutoring their practicum students in our donation-based tutoring program.

As Karen and I have moved through our own training process, from associate to certified to FITs, we have taken on more responsibility for training and mentoring. This year, we are planning our own trainings for both our associate trainee cohort and our certified trainee cohort. We have recently researched and presented trainings on the following topics: The Legal Landscape: Educational Law, Morphology, Vocabulary Instruction in the OG Lesson Plan, Formal Academic Testing, Syllable Division, and

Error Correction.

As part of the associate and certified trainee's practicum, they have to videotape themselves teaching their student and submit it to a supervisor to observe their work and provide feedback to help them grow as an OG practitioner. As FITs, this year, Karen and I will complete seven observations for each trainee, while our supervising Fellow will oversee our work and complete three observations for each trainee herself. What this means for us is that we each receive about 1-2 videos per week. We watch the trainee in action, provide written feedback, give suggestions, model teaching strategies, provide resources, and meet with trainees as needed to follow up.

This has been a very interesting learning experience. I enjoy the opportunity to actually see what is going on in each of our tutors' lessons and getting to know their  
*(continued on next page)*

### THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

If there's one thing that running this organization has taught me, it's that learning is not a one-size-fits-all kind of situation. Case in point: I was able to teach my daughter Haley how to read with about 2 years of intensive OG therapy several times a week. My younger daughter, Julie, however, has been a much tougher nut to crack. Where Haley loved the idea of reading, Julie loves screens (TV, iPad, etc.), and because she goes to a media free school, she doesn't get to have TV or movies the way most kids do. I think she views reading as the opposite of screens: it's hard, it involves her brain in so many ways (not just for decoding, but for visualizing and comprehension, too), and it's boring. At least, that's how it feels to her.

I promised myself that this year would be the year I teach Julie how to read once and for all. I'm a FIT with the OGA; what kind of blasphemy would it be if my own kid couldn't read by the 4th grade?

So, I came up with a plan. Julie's had OG remediation with me before, so she's familiar with rules for decoding and spelling; she just doesn't apply them. Over the February break, I'll be filming an OG training series starring Julie. She's been charged with teaching other children how to read through a video series of lessons she'll deliver on the screen. Once we're done filming, she'll be allowed to watch them whenever she wants. My hope is that by allowing her to "star" in these videos and then by giving her on-demand access to them, she will actually teach *herself* how to apply reading and spelling rules.

We'll see how it goes! I'll keep you all posted.

*Karen* 😊



Haley (top) and Julie (bottom) both have dyslexia but despite having similar challenges, the journey to remediation is totally different for each of them.



## A STUDENT SUCCESS STORY

*(submitted by Jeffrey Miller, tutor)*

There is such joy in sharing a real success story like the one of Raquel Martinez. Almost six years ago, she registered for an English class with Literacy Nassau. At that time her English fluency was a very low Level One. She could not have a conversation in English. Several years later, in the program, she was having English conversations lasting one or two hours at a time.

Seven years ago, splitting from her husband, Raquel and her son moved into an apartment in Hicksville with a mattress, one air mattress, one TV set, and some clothes. She is now the President of Golden Snacks and has two financial partners.

This picture is the first display of a new company, Golden Snacks, at a major Long Island supermarket. This year, Golden Snacks, the official corn chip of the New York Mets, and an official snack of the New York Yankees (Fritos is the official corn chip) will be selling its products at Citifield and Yankee Stadium. Golden Snacks is produced at a factory in South Carolina, has warehouses in Miami and New Jersey, a team of trucks and a sales force.



Raquel always had the drive, but a comfortable knowledge of English was necessary to be successful in her career and her life. I am so proud of her.

## FELLOWS IN TRAINING (CONTINUED FROM COVER)

students better. Karen and I still each have 2-3 students on our own case loads each school year and we are able to offer suggestions and resources to our trainees based on our experiences with our own students.

We are also starting to recruit new trainees and new donation-based students for the 2023-2024 school year. We are accepting applications now. Within the next couple months, Karen will interview candidates who are interested in taking our associate level training, while I will interview families and provide screening/assessment to choose students who will be a good fit to work with our trainees. Once this process is complete, Karen and I will meet and work to match each trainee to an appropriate student for the upcoming school year. We take into account personality, interests, and prior experience, as well as schedule availability. We will send out acceptance letters by the end of June so that everyone knows they are confirmed and can set aside the required time for the next school year.

If you know anyone who is interested in training with us to become an associate level OG practitioner, please check our website for requirements and to receive an application:

[www.literacynassau.org/become-an-og-tutor](http://www.literacynassau.org/become-an-og-tutor)

If you know any students who are in need of reading support who would like to work with an OG trainee in our donation-based program (a commitment to 100 sessions over the course of the school year which comes out to three days per week), please visit our website for more information:

[www.literacynassau.org/orton-gillingham](http://www.literacynassau.org/orton-gillingham)

or email me at [KQuijano@literacynassau.org](mailto:KQuijano@literacynassau.org)



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Thank you to CCE-NC for all the information on nutrition and food you provided our students. They always enjoy these workshops. For more info, visit [www.http://ccesuffolk.org/communitynutrition-health](http://ccesuffolk.org/communitynutrition-health).



### Warm Birthday Wishes to our Tutors!

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

## TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: VIRGINIA

*(submitted by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)*

### **1. How did you get involved with Literacy Nassau?**

It's a family tradition! My aunt and sister tutored before I did.

### **2. Describe some of your most rewarding experiences.**

There are too many to list because almost every class is a rewarding experience. I love when my students encourage each other, often with applause and laughter. I love when students are willing to do something outside their comfort zone. For example, students will join me in an impromptu dance to practice giving and taking instructions.

### **3. What are some challenges you have faced while tutoring and how did you overcome them?**

The biggest challenge for me is to tutor a group in which students have vastly different needs and comfort levels with English. One response to the challenge is to encourage students to explain grammar and vocabulary to one another. A great idea for the first class is to team students up to introduce one another to the class. Then everyone can help their partners, AND it can be easier to talk about someone other than yourself. I'm still looking for tips, so please feel free to share!

### **4. What keeps you motivated to continue tutoring adults?**

I've been fortunate to have wonderful, creative students who are willing to learn through play. For example, in a recent class students pulled four chairs together to create an imaginary car. Then we took turns driving around town, following silly directions from each other.

I have many happy memories of students sharing their gifts and their hopes from outside the classroom, too. For example, a talented painter invited the class to visit her art exhibit in a



library, and we had the chance to see her lovely paintings displayed in public. In another class, all of the students happened to come from the same country, and one of them was a well-known violinist in that country. At her classmates' request and with library permission, she agreed to perform a concert for us all after the last class of the session. Members of the public heard about the informal concert and slipped into the classroom as the music began. Years later, the beauty of that memory still brings tears to my eyes.

Tutoring offers the opportunity to meet incredible human beings. I deeply admire my students. I think that English language learners are courageous by definition! English is crazy, and yet they persist. And in this crazy new language, students cheer one another on through experiences like taking the driving test, recovering from illness, and looking for work. I'm grateful for the whispered confidences, too, including news about babies and medical situations and visits home. It's an honor to share my students' journeys, even in this small way.

### **5. What would you advise a new tutor just starting out?**

Your students are waiting for you with hope and perhaps a little bit of anxiety, too. Welcome them to class with a smile. Make sure that everyone knows where the restroom is located. And if your class is 3 hours long, be sure to take a break whether the students request it or not! (People are sometimes reluctant to ask.)

Check the Teachers' Guide for ideas to supplement the textbook. And sometime during the session, no matter the students' level, dump a bag of coins onto the table! If everyone is comfortable with American coinage, you can pick them up again. But people are usually grateful for the chance to practice with coins.

### **6. What are some of your interests outside of tutoring?**

I love reading and playing board games. I also like storytelling games like Dungeons & Dragons. I enjoy learning the ukulele and how to crochet. I especially like to do all of these things under the oak trees at Bethpage State Park!

## MARCH IS NATIONAL READING MONTH: LET'S CELEBRATE

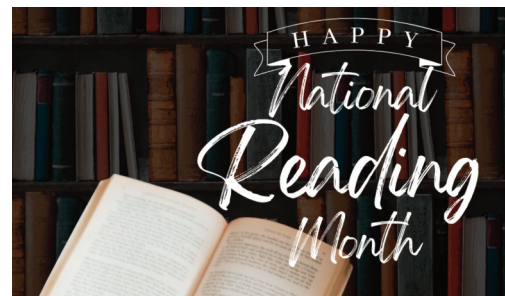
*(submitted by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)*

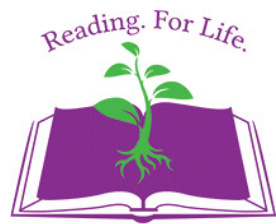
The National Education Association celebrates Read Across America on March 2nd every year. It was launched in 1998 and is the nation's largest celebration of reading. While it was originally connected to the birthday of Dr. Seuss and celebrations included mostly activities related to his books, the NEA has now moved toward celebrating all types of literature. They are currently focused on increasing access to diverse books and ensuring that students see themselves reflected in the books they read and have the opportunity to be exposed to characters that are different from them. For more information, you can visit [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org).

How can you celebrate reading with your students? Here are some ideas:

- Take a tour of your library; help your students locate books of interest to them and at an appropriate level for their current reading ability.
- Assist your students in filling out an application for a library card.
- Search for books in English and in their native language.
- Introduce students to audio books.
- Create a class list of recommended books.
- Read and discuss articles from ESL Library or [www.newsela.com](http://www.newsela.com).
- Have students read a book outside of class and prepare a short review to recommend the book to the class.
- Model how to visit the library's website. They can download free ebooks. They can also view books at other libraries and request for them to be sent to their home library for them to pick up.
- Choose a book to read as a class. Read and discuss a chapter each day you meet.

We would love to hear what you did with your class. Feel free to send us an email with a photo of your class celebration and a quick description of what you did.





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(516) 867-3580

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