

LITERACY MATTERS

NOVEMBER 2022



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

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THE GURU KRUPA FOUNDATION: A DEEPER LOOK

(submitted by Karen Micciche)

I have had the distinct pleasure of working with the Guru Krupa Foundation since 2012, when they responded to an article in Newsday featuring Literacy Nassau's work training tutors. Since then, they have funded our work with citizenship, an internship and externship program, several capital projects, and most recently, our Saturday Immersion Program for Kids.

Since it is the season of giving thanks, I thought you might be interested to learn more about this foundation that was built on the idea of gratitude and giving back.

GKF was started by its founder, Mukund Padmanabhan, based on the idea that if you are lucky enough to have resources, it is one's duty to use them to bring light to others. With that in mind, the foundation's philosophy is derived from the value system of Hinduism, and is comprised of the following tenets:

1. Help those who are less fortunate.
2. Support causes related to the acquisition of knowledge (both materialistic and non-materialistic).
3. Preserve the heritage and knowledge that has already been acquired.

This translates into a programmatic focus that is four-fold. GKF supports

programs in the areas of Social Welfare, Higher Education, the Environment, and Spirituality, Arts, and Culture.

The work that GKF does with us falls under the Social Welfare umbrella, and goes hand in hand with a number of other local organizations who work in the realm of literacy, specifically First Book, Behind the Book, St. Nick's Alliance, and Read to a Child. But this only scratches the surface. Mr. Padmanabhan, through GKF, has funded dozens of projects, both in the U.S. and abroad in India, impacting thousands of children and families. He himself is from India, having lived there for about 20 years and completing his undergraduate degree there before coming to America to study at UCLA for his graduate work. He has been affected by the extreme poverty in India, especially poverty that impacts children. With a doctorate in electrical engineering, Mr. Padmanabhan believes strongly in the power of education, which is why so much of what he funds works to help advance children and adults through the power of education. GKF is a pinnacle of hope for so many people in the world around us, and by fostering a sense of gratitude, they inspire others to do the same. Beautiful (and countless!) success stories can be found on their website at www.guru-krupa.org.

THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

This month, we pause and think about all that we are grateful for. Typically, you'd hear me go on about family, friends, health, and all of the usual things people list. This year is a little different - this year, I'm grateful for my journey as an author.

My debut novel, *THE BOOK PROPOSAL*, which comes out on May 16, 2023, has stirred in me a passion that I never could have imagined! I am wildly excited for readers to get their hands on the story of Gracie, a struggling romance writer who sends a drunken e-mail to an old high school flame and gets a surprising response. It's a hysterical story and has brought me more joy over the past 2 years than any other hobby I've ever had.

To be so passionate about something that you're driven to turn it into a lifestyle is pure magic. I can only hope that my children are inspired by it, too! I'm hoping this moment in my history teaches them that you can do or be whatever you wish, as long as you are willing to put in the work. For this, I am truly grateful.

Karen 😊



KJ MICCICHE
 My book is available for pre-order on Amazon! Let me know if you order one and I'll arrange to sign it for you!

WE ARE THANKFUL!

Karen:

In addition to a rich network of family and friends, I am particularly grateful for my writing life this year. Can't wait to see my debut novel in stores this coming May!

Kate:

I am thankful for the continued health and wellbeing of my family and more opportunities to see everyone in-person this year. I am also thankful that I completed my OG Certified-level training this year and have the opportunity to begin studying as a Fellow-in-Training.

Melissa:

As always, this year I am thankful for the health and happiness of my family and friends. I am thankful for my work at Literacy Nassau, my amazing colleagues and brilliant students! Lastly, I am thankful for being able to continue my Orton-Gillingham journey this year as a Certified-level trainee.

Anne-Marie:

Most importantly, I am always thankful for the health and happiness of my family and friends. I am always grateful for the positive people in my life.

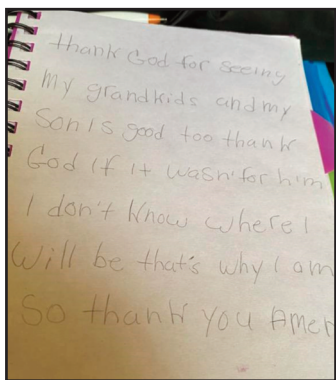
Rena:

Never thought it was going to happen...I am very thankful for our new house! It will be nice to celebrate the holiday with family and friends in our new home. Wishing everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Izabella:

I am very thankful for my new job! I love meeting new students and getting to learn new things about them! I can't wait to watch them all grow.

Basic Literacy Tutor Mara shared what her student Maria was thankful for. When they first met she could not write her name, nor was whatever she wrote legible. Maria is grateful



for not only learning to read, but to also express herself in writing. We wanted to make sure we included a photo of her writing sample transcribed below:

"Thank God for seeing my grandkids and my son is good too. Thank God if it wasn't for him I don't know where I would be. That's why I am so thankful. Amen."



Kaitlyn:

I am thankful to Literacy Nassau for offering me the opportunity to pursue my Orton-Gillingham certification and to implement what I learned with students of all ages. It has been very rewarding working with students and seeing them progress. There is nothing better than seeing students apply what they were taught! I am also thankful for my family and friends for their help and support. It truly has been a great year!

Jessica:

The end of 2022 has left me thankful for many things in my life. I am grateful for my family and their continued support throughout my ups and downs. I am also thankful for the renewed ability to intimately gather with friends and family again, especially during this holiday season.

Cristina:

As 2022 comes to a close I am thankful this year for my family and for my new job at Literacy Nassau. I am thankful to be back in the workforce and to be a part of this community of helpers I have joined. I am also incredibly thankful for my friends and family and their continued health and happiness.

Basic Literacy Student Taseta Whitter:

I am very thankful and really appreciate what Literacy Nassau does for me. Sometimes I can now read signs. I am grateful for the staff of Literacy Nassau and for my tutor Bob Lanzisera.



Warm Birthday Wishes to our Tutors!

Susan Anton – Lorraine Bak – Patricia Ballard
 Nupur Banerjee – Gail Bauer – Gail Carlin – Erica Davis
 Kathleen Dendy – Diane Dwyer – Stefanie Edwards
 Janice Haber-Horn – Sandra Heiman – Dennis Horan
 Charles Jencius – Joni Jones – Joanne Kassnove
 Susan Kimmel – Madia Lamontagne – Jean Lavelle
 Sue Levy – Angela Luo – Kathy Mahony
 Karen McDonough – Deirdre McElhatton
 Mary Ann Neber Kevin O'Keefe – Teresa Rienzie
 Martha Salzberg – Helen Schmidt – Adarsh Singla
 Diane Ugelow – Maryanne Williams-Pitman
 Cathy Zwilling



WELCOME CRISTINA MORALES

(submitted by Kate Quijano)

We recently added a new part-time staff member to our team. Cristina is joining us as a Program Assistant. In this role, she will be handling our Next Chapter Book Club (NCBC) program including training tutors, creating and overseeing the groups and recruitment of students. She will also be assisting with ELL registrations, post-testing, and case management. She is currently working to plan some employment related workshops that are a required component of our grant. You may contact her at cmorales@literacynassau.org.

"I am so excited to join the Literacy Nassau team. While I never saw myself in the education field in any manner, I am grateful for this new challenge. I am filled with hope and determination to help as many people as I can. This organization's dedication to helping the immigrant community is remarkable."



NEXT CHAPTER BOOK CLUB VISITS

(submitted by Cristina Morales)

As the newest member of the Literacy Nassau team I am so excited to revitalize the Next Chapter Book Club program for our organization. Due to the pandemic, many groups had challenges meeting but as this year comes to an end with 2023 on the horizon we are hoping to expand to more communities across Long Island.

During the month of October, I was able to visit a couple of the clubs and meet some of our amazing members and facilitators. The 1st group I met was at Epic Long Island with Martha & Mary using all of their skills as teachers to lead the group in the story of *Marley & Me* by John Grogan. I was also able to meet with Jacquie and her group from the Hub in Freeport who traveled to the Williston Park Library. This group was a little newer and was using their meeting time to vote on a book to read.

It was an amazing experience to visit these groups (see photos below). I am grateful to be part of an organization that really believes in expanding minds through reading. I'm so excited to help in any way I can.



LEARNING ABOUT CULTURE

Our ELL classes teach more than just English. Our tutors also help students navigate a new culture and get to know more about our country. Students are able to compare their experiences in their home country with other students' countries and with the U.S. One of our level 3 students practiced her English writing skills while telling us about an early experience she had after coming to the United States.

(Written by Marjorie's Level 3 student Xiaojun (Choi) Cui)

In 2011, in order for my son to get the best education, I decided to move to America although we did not know anybody. When my son was attending St. Anthony's High School in his second year, I came to the United States to visit him. I lived in a hotel which was nearby my son's host family in Bethpage. My husband and I took breakfast in the employee lounge on the morning of the first day I was there. That was very embarrassing for us, as we thought we were eating in the restaurant of the hotel. In China, all of the hotels have a restaurant. Nobody brings food back to their rooms in the hotel to eat. Every meal is very important for all Chinese people. We should be sitting at a table and drinking something like china tea, milk, or congee etc. Sometimes we might be eating dumplings or noodles, that is very common and that is the Chinese routine. At the time I didn't know that not all American hotels have a restaurant. I kept thinking that the restaurant must be somewhere in the hotel, and that I just couldn't find it. My husband and I carried our breakfast down the halls of the hotel, then went upstairs and went downstairs, but all of the doors were closed.

Finally on the first floor, we found one door that was open, we were so excited that we finally found the restaurant. It looked like a very small one; just two tables, some muffins, cookies, coffee pods, milk and fruit on the rack or on the shelves, we thought it was the restaurant we had been looking for so we sat down at one of the small tables and began to eat. Soon, someone came in and spoke to us but we weren't sure what they were saying. We didn't know what would happen, so we decided to just relax and finally eat our breakfast. Awhile later another person came in to speak to us, but we didn't understand so we just continued to eat our breakfast. On our second day, my son came to the hotel and we told him all about our breakfast. He told us that we must have eaten in the employee lounge and not the restaurant. Now we understand that we ate breakfast at the wrong place. We had taken breakfast at the employee lounge of a hotel ten years ago.






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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT :)



HAPPY THANKSGIVING

May your Thanksgiving be filled with love and gratitude!

The office will be closed from 11/24 - 11/26.
Enjoy the holiday!



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