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LITERACY
NASSAU

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

What You'll Find in this Issue:

Dyslexia Awareness Month.....	2
BL Tutor Spotlight	2
Birthday Wishes	3
Resource Corner	3
Thank you, MSC!	4

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THE IMPORTANCE OF CASE MANAGEMENT

(by Karen Micciche, Executive Director)

During COVID, the New York State Education Department - Office of Adult Education Programs and Policy (NYSED-AEPP) recruited and onboarded a whole new leadership team. Led by Director Fiormelissa Johnson, who herself was once an adult education student, the department seems refreshed and renewed, fully dedicated to ensuring that all adult education programs across the state produce the best outcomes possible.

In light of that, one major change that you will see in our ALE programs will be in the realm of case management. I was selected to be a Case Management trainer for all of the adult education programs on Long Island, and in September, I received NYSED training to learn what would be required of me in that role. The changes they've made come directly from federal mandates which are based on best practices around the country.

The notion of "case management" can be tricky, because we often think of social work. But as far as our programs go, case management refers to goals and outcomes for our adult learners based on barriers to learning that we discover during intake. The role of the case manager is to connect the student to resources in the community that can help them achieve their goals. So, for instance, if a barrier to learning for a student is hunger, we are expected to connect that student to a food bank. We are not expected to *take* the

student to the food bank; our job is just to make sure the connection is made, and that the student knows where that resource is located and how to make use of it. This should help eliminate that barrier to learning for that student.

There are many barriers to learning that our adult students experience, ranging from financial needs to transportation issues, health issues, childcare and more. In order for us to be able to help effectively, we will need to develop a packet of community resource agency information that we have readily available at intake. We will also be required to follow up with our students to make sure they were able to make contact when resources were identified.

I am very excited about the role I'll be playing as a trainer for the State Education Department. I get a first look at changes made by the state, which will enable Literacy Nassau to remain in compliance at all times. Also, it's so interesting to see the priorities of the US Department of Education and watch them play out at a local level. It's like micro vs. macro economics. We are creating solutions at the micro level to solve a macro issue: that adult students have significant barriers to education that make it difficult for them to become sufficiently trained to enter our workforce in meaningful jobs. I look forward to implementing these solutions in the months to come.

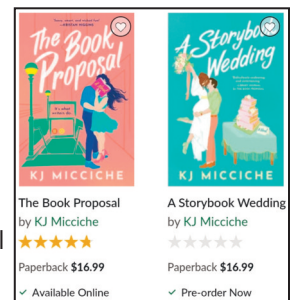
FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone!

Happy October! September went by in a blur! First it was all about back to school, then we settled back into our regular routine, and then it was over. Time is just flying by.

One of the most memorable parts of my summer was going on my book tour. It was amazing meeting readers in different cities and towns, discussing publishing, the writing process, and more, and of course signing books. Sure enough, just when I feel like I can breathe a little, it's time to start promoting my second book! *A Storybook Wedding* is already available for pre-order on Barnes and Noble, Amazon, or wherever you buy books. I took this screenshot on my phone the other day because it was just so cool to see both of my books side by side like that on the B&N website.

Remind your adult students that dreams can come true at any age. If they don't believe you, just tell them to look at me.



Karen 😊

OCTOBER IS DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH

(submitted by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

October is Dyslexia Awareness Month. Dyslexia is an unexpected difficulty in reading and writing that doesn't match the student's potential. The word dyslexia comes from Greek and means "difficulty with words." It is a difficulty with using and processing linguistic and symbolic code (understanding the relationship between letters and sounds).

Literacy Nassau works every day to support students with dyslexia and other language based learning disabilities both at our tutoring center for children and with adult learners in various libraries throughout Nassau County as part of our Basic Literacy Program. Orton-Gillingham is known as the gold standard in working with students with dyslexia. It uses a structured, multisensory approach and meets each student exactly where they are. All of our children's OG tutors have received their certification (or are training to receive certification) from the Orton-Gillingham Academy (OGA). All of our adult Basic Literacy tutors have had training from Literacy Nassau regarding adult learners with disabilities and utilize the curriculum *The ABCs of OG*. We are so proud of the work our students and tutors have been doing.

As part of our celebration for this month, we have some prizes for our children! After each tutoring session, OG students can spin the wheel to determine what prize they will receive. A spin after every lesson means that students will get up to three prizes a week depending on how many sessions they have each week. That's a lot of celebrating!

We would also like to recognize our Basic Literacy tutors and the work they do teaching adults to read. You can find out more about some of them in our tutor spotlight articles. We are in need of more Basic Literacy tutors, so if you or someone you know are interested in volunteering to teach reading to small groups of adult learners and you have a love for phonics and early literacy skills (sounding out, blending, decodable texts), please visit our website for more information on how to volunteer.



If you are interested in learning more about dyslexia or resources to support students with dyslexia, please visit some of these sites:

Orton Gillingham Academy: www.ortonacademy.org

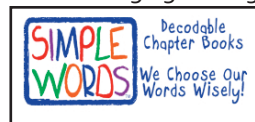
International Dyslexia Association: www.dyslexiaida.org

Decodable texts (books that are decodable based on the skills they have already learned and which do not include advanced skills that they have not been taught yet nor concepts that would encourage guessing):

Simple Words Books by C. Knebel www.simplewordsbooks.com

Dog on a Log series www.dogonalogbooks.com

High Noon Books-Sound Out Chapter Books www.highnoonbooks.com



BASIC LITERACY TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: JONATHAN

(submitted by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

Jonathan has been tutoring with us since 2003. He is always eager to help his students improve their reading and writing skills and make strides toward achieving both their short and long term goals. Here is more about Jonathan.



1. How did you get involved with Literacy Nassau?

I remember seeing a television commercial for "Literacy Volunteers of America" back in the early 2000s, and that interested me to learn more about the program. Eventually, I found time to take the course for becoming a tutor in fall of 2002.

2. Describe some of your most rewarding experiences as a tutor.

Whenever a pupil shows improvement, however slight, it is very rewarding. One recent win was working with my current pupil, whose goal is to earn his driver's license. We read, reread, and worked on practice tests for the reading component of the exam. (And yes, he passed.)

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

I faced the biggest challenges when I was starting out. The sessions with my first pupil were kind of awkward and difficult, and we met for only about a month. In some cases, I've also had pupils who got easily discouraged, and trying to keep them from giving up was challenging.

4. What keeps you motivated to continue working with adult learners?

The ability to read and write is something that I believe most people take for granted. Adults who, for whatever reason, have had problems with these abilities deserve attention and respect. If what I do can make even a small difference, then I'd say that is my motivation.

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

Don't expect big changes all at once. Small, incremental steps have more importance and make more impact than you might think. Also, be flexible: If one method of teaching something does not work, adapt to another. Have patience—not only with your pupil but with yourself as well.

6. What are some of your interests outside of tutoring.

It should come as no surprise that I enjoy reading. Additionally, I occasionally work with several theater companies on Long Island. Also, I enjoy dining out, classic movies, and trips to Manhattan.

BASIC LITERACY TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: JANET

(submitted by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

Janet has been a great addition to the team. She helps her student to gain more confidence in her ability as a reader and writer. She has also supported her attempts to join the workforce.

1. How did you get involved with Literacy Nassau?

I knew that I wanted to do some volunteering utilizing my teaching skills, after retiring from my fifth grade teaching job in Levittown. I remember seeing an article in Newsday about Literacy Nassau and thought it would be a good fit. I contacted them, attended the orientation and then volunteered to be a tutor.

2. Describe some of your most rewarding experiences as a tutor.

I have been with Literacy Nassau as a tutor for six years. I worked with my first student for two years helping her improve her English as well as her reading. I have been working with my current student for four years to help her improve her reading and writing. I also assisted her in finding a job. I guided her with filling out an online application and was delighted that she had gained the confidence to go on her first job interview. She was very excited when she got the job. She has now completed two years at this job and has learned many new skills. It is very rewarding to see these students make progress and gain confidence in themselves.

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

When COVID arrived, my current student wanted to continue with her lessons. I was not very technologically oriented, but I learned how to work remotely on Zoom. We are still working remotely because it has worked out so well. I make sure she has copies of all of the materials she needs. I taught her cursive writing remotely which was quite an accomplishment for both of us.

4. What keeps you motivated to continue working with adult learners?

It is a privilege to work with adult learners. Their enthusiasm for learning is very motivating and seeing their progress is very rewarding. I have watched their vocabulary expand and have had many interesting conversations based on the books we are reading.

5. What would you advise a new tutor just starting out with us?

I would advise a new tutor to realize that each student is different, and it takes time to figure out what works. Be patient with yourself. Try different methods and use different materials. Progress happens slowly.

6. What are some of your interests outside of Literacy Nassau?

Besides being a tutor for Literacy Nassau, I tutor math, and have been teaching in a religious school for over forty years. I love to line dance and have been dancing for twenty-five years. It is very mentally challenging. I started taking flute lessons five years ago and hope to join a community band in the near future. I love going to the theater, taking long walks, traveling, and visiting with friends and family. I visit my older son and two grandchildren, ages eight and eleven, in New Hampshire as often as possible, and spend time with my younger son, who lives in a group home nearby. Of course, I love to read a good book.



Warm Birthday Wishes to our Tutors!

Mary-Joan Albiston – Eileen Ambach - Catherine Antioco
Patricia Boilerman – Angella Broderick – Judy Casella
Helen Chang – Pini Churgin – Ann Cullen – Joanne DePaula
Alanna Devine – Joshua Diamond – Sheryll Dorf
Judy Douenias – David Evans – Rhonnie Fischman
Darleen Fleming – Cindy Florman – Alison Frankel
Lori Freeman – Rosemary Fuchs – Robert Genovese
Marsha Herman – Linda Ivans – Sarah Jairam – Carol Keating
Jeff Konzet – Maya Leibfreid – Laura Longo – Ada Marcus
Maura Martinez – Judy McClusky – Karen Moore
Louise Nachshen – Antoinette Nardo – Maureen O'Connor
Rebecca (Vicky) Popiolek – Gwynn Riordan – Gene Sanders
Olga Scileppi – Philip Scotto – Scott Shelofsky
Barbara Simonds – Andrea Snyder – Irma Souveroff
Diane Tully – Eileen Weissman – Donna White
Richard Wieder – Megan Williams – Thomas A. Williams

RESOURCE CORNER

(submitted by Izabella Katz, Program Manager)

Dave's ESL Cafe is an invaluable resource for both English learners and teachers. The website of-



f-ers an abundance of resources such as lesson plans, worksheets for educators along with grammar lessons, vocabulary exercises, and quizzes for English learners. The site is easy to navigate as everything is organized into sections.

Under the Resource tab there are a variety of options to help explore English. There are grammar lessons, idioms, lesson plans, phrasal verbs, slang, and quizzes for practice. The Grammar lessons have links to different topics of interest such as adjectives, homonyms, prepositions, etc. The lesson plan section has the option for teachers to pick fun topics as a way to teach their students! Idioms, phrasal verbs and slang are sections that provide a definition.

You can also find a section of ESL cafe called Dave's Blog where he writes about his experiences teaching English abroad. Whether you're an educator or on your English learning journey this website has something valuable to offer. To learn more about this site visit:

www.eslcafe.com



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We make literacy services accessible to disadvantaged populations of all ages by providing donation-based language-building programs. You may continue to make this possible by donating to us directly on our website at www.literacynassau.org/donate or scan the QR code.

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THANK YOU



Your generous grant will help train more Orton-Gillingham tutors who will provide reading support to children.

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