

Vision LITERACY

Partners Creating Opportunities

Tutor and Volunteer Newsletter

August 2008

MEET FRIENDS OF VISION LITERACY:



**Yvette Briddell,
Board Member and
Former Learner**

How did you become involved with Vision Literacy? When I was in my early 20's I was watching

channel 9 and a commercial come on about Vision Literacy and people learning how to read and write. Three days later I realized I needed to do this to help myself. I wanted to have more confidence and knowledge in what I read.

Why is being literate important? Emotional freedom – being illiterate you are closed in a box and you can't get out. When you are literate you know that you can do what you want and do it. You are opening the key and you see a world you never saw before. You understand things; you know you can do things. It's a beautiful thing when you reach that point.

Why are you interested in being on the board? As a Learner - I'm happy with what I've accomplished; I have self esteem and have grown so much. When I first began – I wanted to come and get what I needed. Now, I know I want to give back. Being on the Board helps me do that. It's the first thing that I've ever promoted in my life that actually works. I want to make sure we stay on track of what the learners want, that they are growing and that they achieve their goals.

What recent success have you seen with Vision Literacy? I went to the 2008 Adult Learner Leadership Institute graduation and was inspired to hear all the graduates stories.

What is your next goal: I'm to get a business or child psychology degree. College is very different. I have taken community college classes while working full time I have completed two years of basic classes.

Find out more about Yvette go to
www.visionliteracy.org/newsletter.html#volunteer

Vision Literacy is a service of the Santa Clara County Library

SMALL GROUP TUTORING SPOTLIGHT: At the Toll House Hotel

Vision Literacy moves towards facilitating small groups – we reported in June that seven tutors are part of the Toll House Hotel Project. Now they are in their second session of working in small groups with hotel employees from their housekeeping and food service departments. This project is a win-win for everyone involved, from the employees and management to Vision Literacy and our tutors..

The WINS:

- The employees, with their various levels of English, are getting more direct attention. They are improving their confidence in talking with the guests, and thinking about where they want to grow within the company.
- Management at the Toll House is experiencing more positive comment cards that guest requests have been taken care of faster. The staff is able to field the guests' requests, thus serving the guests better and more quickly. Management has also seen a huge boost in confidence in staff and that they have been able to talk better with other staff.
- Tutors feel rewarded and are excited about seeing the growth of the hotel staff members during the twice weekly lessons, the tutors are able to help the students improve their use of common words and phrases. The tutors have experienced team building with each other and gained experience leading small groups. The passion of the tutors has been wonderful. **To see how we are tutoring the small groups call the office at 408-262-1349.**

Oscar Vazquez, a Food Server in the Restaurant Three Degrees, wants to be the person who trains other food servers within the Larkspur Company. About the training, Oscar said, "I thought I did not have a challenge in speaking English, until I started the class and I realized that I could have challenges in the future to grow my career with the hotel. I became aware that to move up within the company I need to improve my writing and pronunciation."

For the full story go to:
www.visionliteracy.org/newsletter.html#volunteer



Tutors: Please submit monthly progress reports, by mail or online at www.visionliteracy.org. 408-262-1349

Due date: Sep. 3rd. Thanks!

Tutor Tip - FOR ADULTS GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

This month's tip comes from an excerpt by Jennifer Wolf, About.com www.singleparents.about.com/od/homelife/a/back_to_school.htm



Making the decision to go back to school will affect your whole family. You can make the transition easier by reviewing these tips:

Set Realistic Goals

What do you hope to accomplish by going back to school? Select clear and specific goals - such as "To finish that high school education, secure a better-paying job and getting a driver's license." Then, with those goals in mind, realize there are other things that, are not going to get done during the time that you're in school. This might mean that your house won't be perfectly clean, or that the bathroom isn't going to get painted, and that's okay.

Be Organized

Your choice of how you use time is going to be very important, especially if you will be working full time and taking care of your kids while you take classes. One of the best things that you can do for yourself is prepare in advance. Do this by getting yourself into a regular routine so that each family member knows his or her responsibilities. In addition, if you don't use a calendar to keep track of your family's busy schedule, begin doing that and teach your whole family how to use the calendar as well, so that they can plan their own activities around your classroom and work schedule.

MONTHLY LEARNER MEETINGS

One of our learners, who graduated from the Henry Huffman Institute, has taken a leadership role in facilitation of our learner meetings. The goal is to "meet with learners as a team to help each other succeed." The group has met three times so far.

Seven learners participated in discussions about their country of origin, the United States, Taiwan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, El Salvador and Myanmar. Using library books and pictures from home, they described events depicted to the group. Each learner's experience is unique and the willingness to share their culture gave others the opportunity to learn about a country as well as the individual.

The group also plays Hangman. Words from the earlier activities were used and they all engaged in a lively display of spelling. Learners suggested ideas for future meetings and were interested in meeting monthly. The next session will be Saturday, October 18 10am-12noon at the Milpitas Library.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION

COMPUTER KEYBOARDS - LAPTOP COMPUTERS

Newsletter printing donated by GreenCareerCentral.com

THANK YOU to all Tutors!
We appreciate your help in turning in your monthly progress reports on time!
We've received 97% of learner-tutor pair reports representing 2,427 instructional hours!

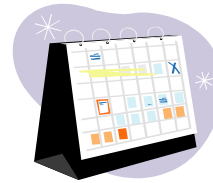


Did you know you've increased our overall instruction hours with learners? And we've increased our services through our work with Community Learning Center and Festival of Books.

Marilyn Scheslinger - thanks for your wonderful years of service, after 14 years of tutoring for Vision Literacy!

Louise Shields, South County Associate Manager received the Eliot School Volunteer of the Year Award!

Thanks to Chuck Reed, SJ Mayor and his sister Sandy Reed, President of Friends of Vision Literacy who celebrated their birthdays on August 15th at the Martin Luther King Library honoring Literacy. Their birthday event produced a supply of new children's books for our Vision Literacy families.



BOOK MARK THE DATE!

ORIENTATION COMING UP - TELL A FRIEND

Vision Literacy offers orientation sessions in October.. Tell friends or colleagues who would like to share the gift of reading – as a tutor, volunteer or donor – please invite them to call the Vision Literacy office at 408-262-1349 to register. Please note: orientation may be rescheduled due to low enrollment.

Morgan Hill Library, 660 West Main Ave.

Wed., Oct. 1 - 6:30-7:30pm

Gilroy Office, 42 Martin St.

Tue., Oct. 7 - 6:30-7:30pm

Gilroy Office, 42 Martin St.

Sat., Oct. 11 10:30-11:30am

WRITER TO WRITER AWARDS CEREMONY LUNCH

Martin Luther King Public Library, San Jose
Sat., Nov. 15 12noon-2pm **NOTE : NEW DATE**

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT - Save the Date!

Toll House Hotel, 140 S. Santa Cruz Ave., Los Gatos
Sat., Oct.18 10am-12 noon
To RSVP call 408-262-1349 or email info@visionliteracy.org

**If you have a question, comment or submission for the newsletter, please contact 408-262-1349 or info@visionliteracy.org.
Next deadline for submissions: Sep. 3rd.**