

Vision LITERACY

Partners Creating Opportunities

Vision Literacy Tutor and Volunteer Newsletter February 2007

MID-YEAR REPORT HIGHLIGHTS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The facts prove it: Vision Literacy learners are changing their lives through learning. A mid-year report recently compiled for California Library Literacy Services provides the most recent data on the goals our students are meeting thanks to their own hard work and the dedication of Vision Literacy tutors. Since last July, 217 learners have met the following 72 personal goals:

- Read a newspaper/magazine (11 students)
- Write a letter (10)
- Read a book (9)
- Write creatively (8)
- Write and send email (4)
- Learn the alphabet (3)
- Search the internet (3)
- Speak in front of a group (2)
- Read a menu (2)
- Read a book on recovery (2)
- Read for pleasure (2)
- Read a bus schedule (2)
- Fill out a job application (2)
- Pass the GED (1)
- Create a resume (1)
- Interview for a job (1)
- Get a new job/promotion (1)
- Become a citizen (1)
- Read Easy Voter Guide (1)
- Vote (1)
- Get a library card (1)
- Do research at the library (1)
- Participate in a school activity with child (1)
- Communicate with school/teachers (1)
- Read email (1)

I feel that I have made a lot of progress in a short time in this program. Now I am able to read a short book without getting frustrated.

Linda Casillas, learner

Congratulations to all of the learners, and thank you to the tutors and volunteers who have helped make these dreams become reality.

VISION LITERACY FORGES PARTNERSHIP WITH SAN JOSE STATE PROGRAM

Students from San Jose State University's Center for Service Learning recently began working as tutors for Vision Literacy's ESL programs at the Mexican American Community Service Agency (MACSA) in San Jose. The placement was facilitated by Rachel DiFranco, a Public Allies apprentice at Vision Literacy.

The students, who are enrolled in the upper division sociology course *Community Action and Service*, are under the supervision of DiFranco and Vision Literacy employee Nellie Vargas. They

will work with learners to review the alphabet and basic vocabulary, and to develop English conversation skills. In addition, they will meet weekly with DiFranco to connect their academic course readings with their hands-on experiences at MACSA.

SOUTH COUNTY ORIENTATIONS

Vision Literacy will be offering three more orientation events in March, this time for potential south county

volunteers. If you know of individuals with an interest in literacy, please invite them to call 262-1349 to register for one of the following sessions:

Gilroy Office, 42 Martin St.
Sat., Mar. 10, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Morgan Hill Public Library, 17575 Peak Ave.
Wed., Mar. 14, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Gilroy Office, 42 Martin St.
Mon., Mar. 19, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Tutors: Please remember to send in your monthly progress reports by mail. Due date: March 3. Thanks!

**MEET THE VISION LITERACY STAFF:
PAT LAWSON-NORTH, PROGRAM MANAGER**



**Number of years with
Vision Literacy**

Six – all as program manager.

Best day on the job

Obtaining space in the Sobrato Center for Nonprofits, which gives Vision Literacy a suite of offices for only \$1 per month.

Worst day on the job

Getting notification

from ProLiteracy three years ago that Vision Literacy wasn't on track for meeting the benchmarks to keep a three-year grant. The silver lining from the experience was watching the team pull together to make improvements and meet the goals.

The part of her job that surprises others

How much of her time is spent maintaining funding. People think that the county provides all our money, but a huge amount of our funds comes from California Library Literacy Services, the City of Mountain View, three separate grants from First 5, the Inmate Welfare Fund from the Department of Corrections, and private donations.

Books on her reading shelf

I Woz, by Vision Literacy board member Steve Wozniak.

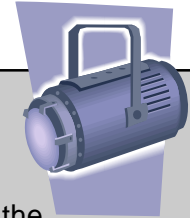
TUTOR TIP

This month's tip comes from the Florida Literacy Coalition:

To build your learner's self confidence, remember that

- Nothing succeeds like success.
- Keep physical evidence of progress (e.g., sight word cards, number of titles read).
- Praise sincerely.
- Believe in your learner.
- Make what you do achievable.
- Work from what the learner knows.
- Threats and fears decrease the ability to learn.

STUDENT



RELEASE THE INNER ME

By Rodney Anderson

When you get into an institute like the reading program, it helps you to see your dreams more clearly. It's like a support cause you're around people just like you. You have teachers that really care and they want you to be successful, and they don't look at you as someone with a handicap like most of society does.

At the Henry Huffman Institute I was around other people like me who had difficulties in reading. The teacher got you to try new things, like stand in front of the class and give speeches, which made me very scared. We did it four or five times so I would get more comfortable. I talk more to my customers. I feel more comfortable talking to people I really don't know. I really needed it. It really helped my business. It's amazing. I never thought the class would be like that. It was something I'll never forget.

It has helped me to read more. I read a whole book I never read before. I feel more confident about reading, not as nervous as I used to be. I used to think of reading as a punishment. I used to have trauma when someone asked me to read. Now I don't think that way any more. Before, I never tried because my father told me I was stupid. As a kid you believe what your parents tell you. My father couldn't understand why I would get F's and D's and I would get beat.

I look back and say, wow, I made it this far.

Rodney Anderson is a learner in Mountain View. He originally submitted this essay to the California Literacy Student Writing Contest last August.

SPOTLIGHT

If you or your students have a question, comment or submission for the newsletter, please contact Kristin Seitz, editor, at 408.262.1349 or kseitz@visionliteracy.org. Next deadline for submissions: Mar. 13, 2007.