

Reading. For Life.



LITERACY N A S S A U

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

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LEADING BY EXAMPLE

(by Karen Micciche, Executive Director)

I first met Susan Santoro 13 years ago, when I was conducting a Tutor Training Workshop at the Uniondale Library. She was interested in learning how to help someone learn to read and write. I was pregnant with my first child. We had an immediate kinship, and because her student's last name started with A, I was responsible for being her Case Manager at the time.



I watched Susan grow as a volunteer and as a tutor, shepherding her student through the US Citizenship exam and helping her reach other personal goals. She was happy to show up, to learn more, and was always eager to help in any way she could.

That's the signature of Susan Santoro: helping others.

It wasn't long before I realized that Susan would be a lovely fit for Literacy Nassau's Board of Directors, and when I asked her to consider joining, she was happy to. She became a Board member in 2015, and since then she's risen through the ranks, with her most recent role being Board President.

In the time I've known her, I've learned a lot from Susan. Most importantly, she never fails to remind me to put family above everything else. Don't waste the hugs, the dinners, don't take the school

performances or student showcases for granted. Even when it feels overwhelming to be a mom, show up and be grateful, because each day is a gift. She's also taught me that when others are in need, it's important to share what you can. Whether it's an extra set of hands, a stack of children's books, bricks to build a front patio (yes, - her company donated the masonry supplies for our beautiful entryway) or even just an ear, one of the best things we can do in this life is be kind to one another. I never witnessed a more resounding kindness than that of Susan trekking off to Poland to help Ukrainian refugees - specifically children - in the summer of 2022.

She's also taught me a lot about grace. Life isn't fair sometimes, but we always get to choose the way we react to our circumstances. Approaching each new challenge with gratitude is probably the highest form of grace one can have. While it is a challenge for me to watch Susan move on from her position as our President, the gratitude I have for all that she's done and all that she's taught me will stay with me forever.

I am a better person for having known Susan Santoro over the past 13 years. Now, as she prepares to host her final board meeting as President this June, I look forward to the adventures that lie ahead for her. While she'll always support LN, something tells me there are bigger things out there calling her name - and knowing Susan as I do, she'll be more than happy to roll up her sleeves and say, "How can I help?"

FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone!

Summer's here! This is my favorite time of year. I think that, moving forward, my summers will be marked with the release of a new book. I can't tell you how thrilled this makes me, as being an author is a dream come true for me. This summer's new release is called **A Storybook Wedding**, and it goes on sale May 14th! To celebrate, I'm heading out on a book tour again! This time, I'm going to Maine, Delaware, Connecticut, Chicago, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Denver, Virginia and more. I'll be doing events with other authors I admire (like Lucy Score and Kristan Higgins), and some solo stuff too. It's a whirlwind, but I love it! I can't wait to share tales of all my travels with you upon my return. I hope you have exciting things planned this summer, too!



Karen ☺

FINAL ASSOCIATE LEVEL OG TRAINING OF THE YEAR

(submitted by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

Our OG trainees met for their last training day of the school year. This completed their 60 hours of coursework required for associate level certification. The last day included a two hour final covering all of the concepts studied this year. Trainees split up into individual tutoring rooms so everyone had a quiet spot to focus on completing their exam. Then we spent some time reviewing the exam and answering any lingering questions they had. After a break, our two certified level OG trainees, Melissa and Stacey presented to the group about a more advanced skill.



Stacey taught the group about the 1-1-1 doubling rule for spelling. (When a base word has one syllable, one short vowel, followed by one consonant, you double the final consonant before adding a vowel suffix: run + ing = runⁿing; run + s = runs.) She gave them step by step examples of how to teach this spelling rule and showed samples of checklists she has used with her students.



Melissa taught the group about the e-drop rule for spelling. (When a base word ends in silent e, drop the silent e before adding a vowel suffix: bake + ing = baking; bake + s = bakes.) She focused on multisensory strategies using color-coding and sliding word parts together on index cards to show the e dropping off the word.)



Karen, who has taught this entire year's associate level training as the final piece of her training to become an OGA Fellow, finished off the day giving the trainees information about the next steps in their process of applying to the Orton-Gillingham Academy, the code of ethics, and continuing education to maintain their certification. She also offered them an opportunity to reflect on their learning this year, share goals for the future, and to complete a course evaluation.

It was a great ending to this year's training. We look forward to seeing the trainees assemble their lessons for the application and make their final submission to the Orton-Gillingham Academy!

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION VISIT

(submitted by Izabella Katz, Program Manager)

On March 5th we had the pleasure to sit down and have a meeting to review our ALE (the grant that funds our adult ELL program) data. Karen, Kate and Izzy got to meet with Kathy Houghton from Literacy New York and Diane Schrader from New York State Ed. while Rosemary Matt joined via call. The conversation centered around us hitting our goals for the current fiscal year while also getting to review our passing report card from the previous fiscal year of 2023. We passed! We talked about our process of case management and how we connect with our ESL students. We got to discuss our new plans for the upcoming fiscal year 2025 starting this July and on how we plan to revamp our ESL program to fit the needs of our English students and the expectations from State Ed. Our plans are to create an in depth intake process that helps our students to better understand our classes at Literacy Nassau and create a genuine rapport with each student. Through a more in depth intake we hope to create an inviting and safe environment to build a community of students who are persistent in their path to learning English.

We will be focusing on serving beginner ESL students and will have them stay in the same class for the entire school year so that they have an opportunity to build a deeper relationship with their tutors and other students. The material will gradually increase in difficulty throughout the year rather than having students switch classes mid year as we have done in the past. For our current higher level students, we are working to provide them with resources to continue their learning with other organizations that offer higher level services. Our goal has

always been for our students to complete our program and then go on to further their education.

Literacy Nassau's mission has always been to serve the most needy students and those who would not be well-served elsewhere. Our renewed focus on offering beginner only classes will allow our tutors to do more networking and to refine their teaching more since we will all be teaching beginner students and will have the opportunity to share best practices and improve the services we offer to our students.

Resources:

We will not be offering summer ELL classes this year. For students who would like to continue studying over the summer, here are some suggestions of other summer ESL programs.

Nassau Boces ESL summer 2024 Classes

nassauboces.org (516) 622-5623

ESL morning Registration June 18th 9am-1pm

Levittown Adult Learning Center

3100 Hempstead Turnpike Building D

ESL evening Registration June 18th 5:30pm-9:30pm

We Speak NYC-Learn English!

<https://wespeaknyc.cityofnewyork.us/>

We have a community resource guide and a list of organizations that provide English classes that we have shared with many of the students. If you need additional copies please don't hesitate to email us or call the office and we will be happy to distribute additional copies.

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR TUTORS

(submitted by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

As we come to the end of another school year, I'd like to look back on all the wonderful programs we have offered this year and thank all of our volunteers for their tireless work with our students. You truly change the lives of adult students every day. Here are some reflections from our volunteers:

2024 END OF YEAR REFLECTION

"As a newcomer, I was surprised at how much a community is formed with the students. Literacy Nassau is way more than learning to read. It's about being part of something bigger than you; a place that is an oasis in a tough world." (Janet: level 3 ELL tutor)

"As I reflect on this past year, the one feeling I cannot deny is how grateful I am for what I have been given. We all have issues in life that tend to cloud our perspective, however, when dealing with challenges it is important to recognize the problems of others. Participating in this program has helped me recognize that there are many people in need, and that its only by reaching out to help them that we truly recognize our own fortunes. This past session I split my energies between a level 1 class and a level 4 class. Indeed, the students had needs and wants as diverse as their backgrounds. With ages ranging from 20 to 75 and countries on 4 continents, it was as eclectic as can be. Initially each person is a name on a spreadsheet, but as the classes go on they start as acquaintances and then become friends as we learn more about their home lives and customs. It is in these intimate details that we see hardships, countries that are war torn such as Haiti, families separated due to visa issues, even persons exiled from their home countries awaiting asylum. As a long-time tutor, I have worked with many students from many countries, each one coming here for different reasons. Each has a specific need and an individualized level of ability that requires assessment and a planned approach. Therein lies the challenge and therein lies the reward. It has been a pleasure working with Kate, Anne-Marie, Christina and Izzy and I do so enjoy interacting with the other tutors. As the old saying goes "It's only the giving that makes us who we are" and truly helps us recognize our own good fortune."

(Bob P.: level 1, 3 & 4 ELL tutor)

"It's difficult to believe how quickly this school year went by! There was quite a turnover of students from the fall to the winter session. It was also challenging to teach from January to June without a spring break! Although the ESL 3 class at the Lakeview Library dwindled down to four students, I was pleased with their progress and dedication. We got to know each other quite well and shared a unique relationship. Their improvement and comfort level in English has provided satisfaction to them as well as to myself!" (Fran: level 3 tutor)



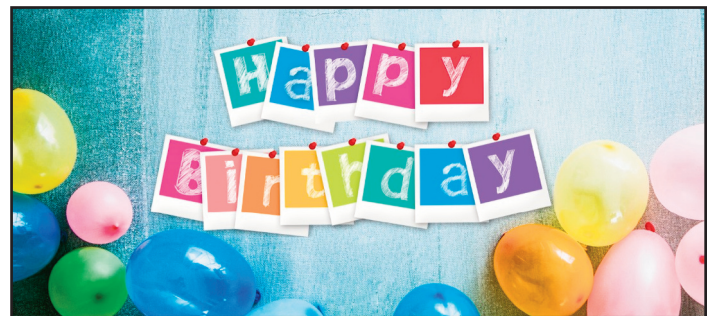
"At first I thought it would be overwhelming, since there was no break between the winter and spring semesters. I need not have worried, as everything has run smoothly, and our class has been seamless. One student did not return, but other than that, our cohort remained intact. I appreciate the great relationships I see developing in the class, students maintaining contact outside of class, which is useful. I also appreciate the support of fellow tutors....like Linda, Matthew, and Keith, who substituted for my class during my absence. I have enjoyed having a group of motivated students in attendance every week, thanks to the larger register. In my opinion, that's better than having just one or two. Also, we have had Merin join us as a co-tutor, which has been an added bonus. It has been a great semester!"

(Pam: level 2 ELL tutor)

"Our level 4 students were a terrific group of people. We read a few historical fiction books together and they learned and asked great questions about the American Revolution and the Civil War. They learned about important people during those time periods and gained an appreciation for American history. Our group loved growing their vocabulary, being exposed to and using idioms appropriately. What a great year!!"

(Arlynne & Luke: level 4 co-tutors)

Our BL and NCBC programs will continue as usual over the summer. Look for more reflections from them next month. We will not be offering any ELL classes this summer as we take some time to restructure our program in order to meet the requirements from the NYS Education Department. We will get more information out to everyone as it becomes available and we thank everyone for their support as we work to improve our program to best meet the needs of our students.



Warm Birthday Wishes to our tutors celebrating in June!

Adolph (Al) Anglade – Janet Bazuro – Teresa Benedetto
Mel Breshin – Harriet Cabelly – Janet Caraisco-Alloggiamento
Marilyn Clarke – Kathleen Cleary – Marla Cohan – Lisa Collins
Alexander Cruz Reyes – Carol Davan – Denise Dressler
Beth Dyckman – Cheryl Egher – Michele Fielding
Carol Fletcher – Sheila Frank – Edward Garfinkel
Daniel Goldschmidt – Vicki Goldstein – Coleen Graziose
Robert Greenberg – John Guerin – Margaret Heller
Denise Hibbert – Maureen Hogan – Jennifer Hopper
Valerie Ignatowitz – Stanley Karolewicz – Kathleen Kelty
Muriel Leonard – Carolyn Meditz – Brianna Meurer
Edward Paley – Alison Picarella – Cindy Podell
Celeste Pomerantz – Patricia Ryan – Emmanuella Sainvilus
Maxine Schmerlzler – Robert Silver – Kathryn St. Juste
Carolyn Stone – Lauren Thomas – Monique Thomas
Matilda Tobin – Sandra Villatoro – Eileen Watts



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DONATE 



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Literacy Nassau's OG Summer Intensive Program

Very Limited Spots! 

JULY 8 - AUGUST 1
MONDAY - THURSDAY
9:15am - 12:00noon
FOR STUDENTS ENTERING GRADES 1-6

Building literacy skills for students with dyslexia, or other language-based learning disabilities.

\$1,950 (cash/check)
\$1,990 (credit)

To hold your place a \$200 deposit (check/cash) is required with your application.

For more information email kquijano@literacynassau.org (516) 867-3580



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