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**LITERACY**  
N A S S A U

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

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## THE FELLOW APPLICATION PROCESS

(by Karen Micciche, Executive Director)

When John and Janet Kornreich announced their gift of \$1 million to Literacy Nassau in May of 2016, I knew I



had my work cut out for me. I'd given myself eight years to create a sustainable plan for LN to change the landscape on Long Island for children with dyslexia. I knew Orton-Gillingham was the answer, and that I would have to become a Fellow of the Orton Gillingham Academy in order to train and certify teachers as dyslexia therapists, thereby empowering them to bring these specialized techniques into classrooms and homes across Long Island. At the time, however, it was an abstract goal. That is, I couldn't exactly envision what it would look like to go through the process of actually becoming a Fellow.

Looking back, I was so naïve.

In 2016, we lived in a pre-pandemic world. My children were 4 and 3 years old. I didn't even have a Master's degree. I was about to take on this mammoth undertaking, and I assumed that all of my staff members and colleagues would see it through with me. I didn't create a whole lot of space in my plan for anything to go wrong, for anything to shift or move or change. I just figured, hey, this is a great thing we're going to do, and charged off into the night, chasing a dream fueled by not much more than optimism.

Eight years later, though, that dream is coming true.

I spent the bulk of this past year working diligently on my Fellow application. It is the culmination of eight years of training, practicum, and countless hours of extremely hard work. In the summer of 2023, I created an entire Associate-level curriculum for Literacy Nassau, enabling all of our future training cohorts to have the best guidance and hands-on learning experience I could possibly develop for them. I have learned how to mentor and coach teachers, how to deliver all of the information they need without overwhelm-

them, and most importantly, how to create an experience of success for not only the students we serve, but the teachers we train as well.

I submitted my Fellow application to the Academy on June 10, 2024. The application consisted of many parts, which I'll outline for you below:

1) The student profile and lesson trio: Like all of the other levels of certification, the Fellow application begins with this crucial component. The applicant chooses a practicum student to write about (anonymously, of course) after a significant amount of work with him/her. The Academy expects that at the Fellow level, the chosen student will be a child with comorbidities impacting their dyslexia, and the applicant must prove to the Academy that he/she can formulate an argument for dyslexia therapy for a child who meets this advanced criteria. Additionally, the applicant must submit a series of three actual lessons conducted with this child, with the middle one being annotated. Each lesson must include detailed student work. The purpose of the trio is to demonstrate that the applicant is capable of creating lessons strategically, showcasing all of the tenets of Orton-Gillingham methodology.

2) Next, the applicant has to submit a teaching video. This was a cumbersome task for me, as I filmed the first 30-hours of my Associate level training and then had to comb through the 30 hours of video to find what I felt was my best hour of work. The application committee essentially wants to have the feeling of being a fly on the wall of the applicant's training. One must also submit all training material, handouts, PowerPoints, etc. for that hour of training. Also, the applicant must write a review of his/her own training video, explaining its strengths and weaknesses.

3) The third component of the Fellow application is the syllabus. The applicant is expected to craft a syllabus that aligns with the Academy's standards (which were just updated in May 2023). Each standard must be addressed, and each activity for each day of the 60-hour training must be

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## SATURDAY ENGLISH IMMERSION PROGRAM

(submitted by Rebecca SanGiovanni, Saturday Program Coordinator)

Thank You!



Our Saturday English Immersion Program has come to an end for the school year! This program aimed to enhance the reading, writing, and speaking skills of participating students and proved to be as successful as it was fun! The students participated in fun activities such as bingo, charades, partner reading, Playdoh creations and more! It was a great experience watching students move out of their comfort zone to connect with other students from different cultural backgrounds who are experiencing the same transitions as they are themselves. Over the months, the children not only made significant strides in their English language proficiency. The supportive environment fostered camaraderie among the students, making the learning process both enjoyable and effective.

A huge thank you to the Guru Krupa Foundation for providing this positive experience to the students who participate in our Saturday Program. It wouldn't be possible without your support. Each session was designed to be engaging, diagnostic, and prescriptive. Lessons always included interactive activities, allowing students to practice and improve their language skills in a fun and rigorous setting. By the end of the program, noticeable improvements were observed in the students' ability to read, write, and speak effectively and confidently. Watching the confidence grow among the shy students who now come in bursting with excitement to talk about their previous week experience was extraordinary. Students walked away with lasting friendships and memories along with academic improvement.



### Warm Birthday Wishes to our tutors celebrating in July!

Denise Abraham – Barbara Alster – Janet Baram  
George Bleckman – Eric Bonge – Shelly Brennan – Joanne Brun  
Sid Burgreen – David Caines – Janis Caravello  
Deborah Cavaliere-Arden – Carol Ann Ceraldi – Andrew Corsi  
Erin Daly – Aisha Deljanin – Helene Doleyres – Susan Fitzgerald  
Ed Friedman – Gloria Glick – Brian Grady – Audrey Green  
George Kane – Elise Knauer – Carmen Lloyd – Linda Lombardi  
Patricia Magalee – Helene Marcus – Christine Martin  
Mimi Mazzarella – Roseann Michelson – Phyllis Modiano  
Camille Mowatt – Lynn Newman – Nancy Reedy  
Mary Jane Regan – Patricia Regan – Susan Risberg – Kevin Ryan  
Dianne Saccone – Richard Sanders – Jane Schwartz  
Susan (Peedee) Shaw – Cynthia Spiletic – Laurie Wilen  
Susan Woodward – Anne Zajac – Nathalie Zephirin

### Warm Birthday Wishes to our tutors celebrating in August!

Amina Ahmed – Alison Auerbach – Eleanor Blackman  
Elinor Brown – Michael Chiappardi – Miriam Cobian  
Andrew Cohen – Stephanie Coons – Maryann Deveau  
Eileen Eder – Judy Elfenbein – Barbara Entes  
Jerry Fitzgerald – Marcie Granick – Anita Greenman  
Maureen Gunderson – Patricia Hanlon – Luke Heaton  
Harriet Klein – Amy Langer – Debbie Levine – Robin Lillyreed  
Angela Milora – Jazmin Mooney – Mike Moran  
Linda Napoli – Janet O'Keefe – Amita Patel – Victoria Perrone  
Nancy Reibling – Patricia Rossi  
Esther Salorio – Ann Scavetta – Claudia Stern  
Elizabeth Tilton – Reed Toscano – Eleanor Turino  
Suzanne Valls – Glenda Vieites – Bridget Ward

## THE FELLOW APPLICATION PROCESS (CONTINUED)

delineated and explained. In addition, a course evaluation must be included.

4) The next component of the Fellow application is a series of comprehensive charts which identify and delineate what trainings, tutoring, and practicum work the Fellow-in-Training has completed since becoming Certified by the Academy.

5) Finally, the submission includes a personal statement, explaining who you are, what you do, and why you wish to become a Fellow of the Academy.

I'll find out in October whether or not my application was accepted by the Academy. The good news is, if it is deferred for any reason, I can go back and resubmit the component of the application that did not pass. But... I have a good feeling about it. The submission was thorough, well thought out, and took me about a year to write. I had it peer reviewed and I edited it with a fine tooth comb. If I'm being entirely honest, I think it may be the best thing I've ever done in my professional career with Literacy Nassau. That says a lot, because I'm immensely proud of the work I've done over the past 14 years.

I can't wait to see what the future holds for LN – but I can already tell that it will be brighter and more exciting than I ever could have imagined eight years ago. I am confident that by the time I retire, this work will be my legacy. All thanks to John and Janet Kornreich, who believed in my dreams and trusted me to see them through to fruition. They'll never know how grateful I am for their faith in me.

As I look to the future, I'm beyond proud. I'm ecstatic. The next phase of our organization's work is about to begin, and I can't wait.



Photos from Recognition Night in 2016, when we were given the greatest gift in our organization's history, courtesy of John and Janet Kornreich.



# Our Tutor Reflections



'This past year felt very rewarding to me as my pupil achieved his goal of passing the reading test to get his driver's license. His determination was inspiring, and I feel grateful to have contributed to his success.'  
(Jonathan: BL tutor)

'I'm happy to report that my "students" (actually more like friends) have enthusiastically engaged with the OG Skills Workbook and Phonetic Reader. They work hard at learning and are making progress.' (George: BL tutor)

'It's unbelievable how fast time goes. This session turned out better than expected. I had my reservations about the new location and the "musical classrooms" in January and February. These students have shared some very personal experiences. It was awesome to witness the rapport built between the Columbian, Haitian, and Korean cultures represented. Each student felt comfortable explaining current events and what is happening in their homelands. I was impressed with their critical thinking skills and their ability to question the status quo. It's refreshing to hear different perspectives while they are trying to live the "American dream." (Staci: level 3 ELL tutor)

'My take on this past year of tutoring is that, as always, it has been a fulfilling experience, but also a humbling one. My students are making slow but steady progress. And it's been a bit of a challenge working with several learning-disabled students. Two of my students who don't have a learning disability shared their experiences with not having the opportunity to attend school in their home country, which at this point they are determined to overcome.'  
(Bob G.: BL tutor)

'I recently began tutoring and am so grateful for the chance to make a difference in a student's life. To quote Max Lucado's book "Where'd My Giggle Go", "It had left for awhile; It had gone far away. I told it, I miss you. What popped in my head was a cure for no-giggle. The next thing you know, I felt something wiggle. From deep, deep within, I started to giggle". And that's my hope for all those students learning to read. That deep, deep within, something will stir and that they will begin to get excited about reading and all the things it can do for you.'  
(Maryann: BL tutor)

Three hours is a long time to remain attentive if you've worked all day and are hungry for dinner, as is generally true for my students, so I'm always looking for ways to sustain their interest. This term, I'm having great success using song as a teaching tool. Each week I introduce the class to an American song with great music and lyrics. Between sessions, I email students the lyrics and a YouTube link to a performance. We spend the first 30 minutes of class reviewing the song's vocabulary (generally 25 to 50 words), reading aloud the lyrics, listening to/watching the performance, and discussing the subject matter. Songs that we've studied together include This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land (Woody Guthrie), Let's Do It, Let's Fall in Love (Cole Porter/Ella Fitzgerald), September Song (Kurt Weill/Maxwell Anderson/Frank Sinatra), and Cheek to Cheek (Irving Berlin/Louis Armstrong & Ella Fitzgerald). Besides using song, I vary the pace with weekly readings from the New York Times. Both "Tiny Love Stories" (in the Sunday Style section) and "Metropolitan Diary" (in the Saturday Metro section) are a rich source of new words and interesting interpersonal situations. (Marcia Mayer: level 1/2 ELL tutor)



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## Literacy Nassau's **OG Summer Intensive Program**

Our students are excited to be here for another OG summer. They are achieving their reading goals while having fun!

The program runs from July 8th-August 1st.



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