

# READ WRITES

For You and About You

November 2010

## Learners Profile: As Long As It Takes

Learners come to READ/OC seeking help with reading and writing for a variety of reasons. Some are challenged with long-term goals and others just need help with a short-term goal that will help them move along on their own. Still others seek help with an immediate need, and the feeling of success or accomplishment inspires them to pursue other goals that they previously thought were “too big.”

George came to READ/OC seeking help to pass the test to get his driver’s license, which with the help of his tutor he accomplished fairly quickly. Energized by his success, he then wanted help with a job application in order to successfully become employed. Once he got a job, his tutor helped him with immediate reading and writing needs necessary to perform well on new workplace skills. As more doors opened for George, he set goals to get a promotion and to vote. George continues to work with his tutor on life skills that help him to successfully reach goals and improve his life.

Christina sought help from READ/OC primarily to improve her English skills after 1½ years in the United States. She had been a dentist in Argentina and hoped one day to continue that profession in California. But she had more immediate needs to help her young children with reading and homework, communicate to her child’s teacher, and better understand her new community.

Christina began with READ/OC as an ESL student and quickly progressed with her English skills to be considered a “core” learner. With her sights still on dentistry, she had interim goals of applying for and passing the test for US citizenship, registering to vote and voting for president, and then getting a job. With persistence, Christina accomplished each of those goals, and after 5 years of help from a READ/OC tutor, has moved on to take college courses necessary to ultimately accomplish that long-term goal of being a dentist in California.

These are just two examples of adults who come to READ/OC seeking help with reading and learning challenges. For some adult learners, the steps to reach their goal are few and may take months. Still for others, the journey to a dream can feel overwhelming, and while one success may open a door of “possible,” the achievement of many more steps may take much longer, requiring persistence and encouragement.



## Learner Persistence

The concept of learner persistence suggests that adults have many forces working for and against their efforts to improve and gain new skills necessary to accomplish their goals, and that these forces, positive or negative, are outside the control of the learner.

Over recent years, there have been several studies on adult learner persistence from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) and other organizations. These studies identify adult learner issues, provide information on what supports and hinders learner persistence, and suggest different strategies that may help adult learners to persist in efforts to achieve their goals.

In order to be successful, we must do more than just remove barriers to learning; adult learners also need support to help them persist. Below is a brief overview of four resources that can be helpful to tutors, learners and others who support the learners' efforts to improve their skills and become "lifelong learners."

### **Goal Orientation**

One of the most often mentioned support components is goal orientation. Focus on *specific* goals as a reason for continued learning effort. Consider the benefit of reaching the goal along with the "cost" of participation and effort. *Defining, understanding and focusing on goals help adult learners persist.*

### **Personal Relationships**

The most frequently mentioned support from adult learners is the support of family, friends, co-workers and bosses, church, support groups and mentors. *"Helping students identify the people in their lives who can support their persistence and suggesting they ask for that support may help persistence."* (Source NCSALL Adult Student Persistence Study, 1999 and NCSALL Study Circle Guide: Adult Student Persistence, May 2006)

### **Tutors and Other Learners**

READ/Orange County offers ongoing support to tutors with their efforts to help their adult learners. This support includes Quarterly Tutor Meetings and special topical workshops, the Southern California Library Literacy Network (SCLLN) Conference, additional tutor training workshops and ongoing mentoring by the READ staff.

Beyond the weekly tutoring sessions, *learners can receive encouragement, support and reinforcement of their learning efforts and goals from other adult learners.* READ/Orange County regularly provides this support for learners at the Learner Meetings, special workshops and adult learner institutes on various topics and skills, and the annual SCLLN conference.

Many libraries and community centers also offer free workshops on computer skills, job skills and other helpful topics which can benefit adult learners and provide short-term successes.

### **Self-Efficacy—"within myself, wanting to accomplish it, willingness to try"**

Students said their own determination and self-efficacy (believing they can achieve their goals) was important to persistence. (*Source NCSALL Adult Student Persistence Study, 1999 and NCSALL Study Circle Guide: Adult Student Persistence, May 2006*)

Help learners maintain that determination by continuously working with them to set and see progress toward goals, and consider any forces that may affect their participation or progress. As a "learning team", break big goals into smaller goals and steps, offer consistent encouragement, and work together on monthly reports and roles/goals surveys for READ.

Celebrating progress toward and achievement of goals is another way to build self-efficacy. Notify READ/OC of milestones and accomplishments so they can be acknowledged (such as in the *Proud Moments* column in this newsletter, with a certificate or other appropriate recognition). Encourage learners to identify a friend, co-worker, family member or fellow learner as a mentor who can also offer encouragement and accountability. Encourage learners to explore "next steps" for continued or expanded learning opportunities.

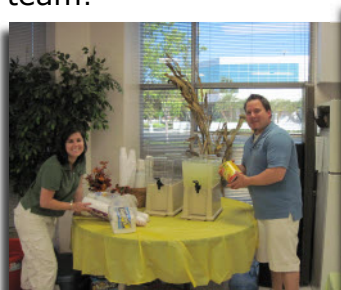


The Fall Feast turned out to be a great potluck event, and our READ/OC volunteers turned out in record numbers. Thank you to all of you that attended. It is great to see so many familiar faces returning year after year. We were also very excited to see so many children this year. Many thanks to the adorable kids that helped with the drawings. You can never start volunteering too early!

The new time of year gave us the opportunity to reflect some of nature's beauty and bounty in our décor. The cornucopias and cornstalks felt very festive and the fall leaves floating overhead looked great blowing with the breeze. And the food was amazing. Did you get to try some new dishes? The food tables were covered with so many options it was hard to know where to start. The committee members that attended the table did a great job keeping things looking very appealing. And oh, the dessert table!

As important as the food was the recognition of all the Presidential Service Award recipients. All the READ and FROC volunteers are so giving of their time and talents; there would be no READ/OC without them. So many hours given to support literacy. We truly can make a difference when we share our passion with others.

If you would like to help the Friends of READ/OC with future events, we are always looking for enthusiastic volunteers that like to have fun and have a little extra time. Please contact FROC via the [www.friendsroc.org](http://www.friendsroc.org) website or call the office to express your interest. We'd love for you to join the team!



# KUDOS to the Following READ/OC Volunteers!



Congratulations to the following volunteers who were presented with President's Volunteer Service Awards at the recent Fall Feast.

## Lifetime Volunteer Service Award

*(recognized for 4,000 or more hours within a lifetime)*

Chris Calcinari, since 1998  
Julie Cottle, since 2006  
Vaughan Hedges, since 2003  
Linda Kricfalusi, since 2005  
Anita Taillon, since 2006



Silver and Lifetime Honorees

## Silver Volunteer Service Award

*(recognized for 250-499 volunteer hours within a 12-month period)*

Alyce Chapman  
Richard Scott  
Thu Van Ly



## Bronze Volunteer Service Award

*(recognized for 100-250 hours within a 12-month period)*

Robert Ang	Angie Mattson
Ada Barnes	Alice Medina
Debby Connick	Linda Mensinga
Joe Hart	Jim Mitzel
Robert Hayes	Ryan Ramos
Patrick Ho	Pearl Rodgers-Hatch
Mary Lou Jeffries	Larry Rushing
Kristy Kim	Alice Schreiner
Kristin Kwan	Ann Thede
Jeanne LaMar	Anne Uyeda
	Sing Wong



Bronze Honorees



*This special annual recognition is possible due to volunteers completing and submitting their monthly reports to READ/Orange County. There is also a Gold level award for 500 hours or more in a 12-month period.*

**Remember** to send READ/OC your monthly reports every month and include all READ/OC volunteer hours, including FROC meetings, special events, and fundraisers. It is the only means for READ/OC to track your efforts, as well as recognize the accomplishments and progress toward goals of your learners.

# A "Fall Feast" of Family Traditions

At the recent READ/Orange County *Fall Feast* many shared tasty "family favorite" dishes. Many of our tutors, learners and their family members also shared family get-together traditions and memories, written on fall leaves, which also served as part of the festive decorations for the event.



Some of those family get-together traditions for the upcoming holiday season are shared below. More will be shared in the next newsletter as the holiday "season" continues.

*"One of our family tradition is that when we celebrate Eid, which comes twice a year, we get together and give money to small children. We also make a lot of sweets during Eid."* - Christopher

*"At Thanksgiving we circle around and each person tells what they are most grateful/thankful. This includes the very youngest who are beginner talkers to teens, to parents, grandparents and all friends."* - Mary Lou

*"I remember a time I went to Thanksgiving at my grandmother's house and my whole family was there."* -Jordon

*"The whole family would get together for our own feast wonderful prepared by my mother. My dad would then fall asleep."* - Grant

*"I really don't have a favorite. Looking back on my childhood, the best memories are of the family tradition of eating nice meals on Sundays. These would include holidays, Christmas, Easter, etc. I still celebrate those traditions - "The Sunday Rice."* -Eugenia

*"On Thanksgiving my children and grandchildren come to my home. They come from Los Angeles and we have a fun time. It is a day I give presents to everyone. I love cooking turkey and apple pie for my family."* - Hena

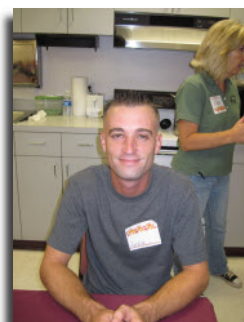
*"Every year since I was 13 yrs old I woke up at 5am to cook the huge turkey for the family. After we eat, we get ready for sales on Black Friday."* - Alice

*"My favorite family tradition is when all of my family gets together on Thanksgiving and catch up on our lives."* -Ebony

*"All my sisters and me cook different dishes and delicious Peruvian food, dancing and fashion."* - Doris

*"Eid is one of special holiday. We celebrate every year. This is on of our favorite holiday when we get together. We have lots of fun. We meet all of our families. We make our special food and wear new dresses."* - Jammila

*"My grandma would like to spoil me and my cousin with fireworks, so for major holidays and birthdays my cousin and I would put on big firework shows for the family."* - Erin



# A "Fall Feast" of Family Traditions (continued)



"Thanksgiving wins it hands down. All the children and grandchildren come home with tasty dishes to go with Gramma's turkey and Grampa's Italian stuffing. There's football, desserts, table games and conversation that goes on way into the evening." - Alice

"Thanksgiving was/is a time for our family to plan a feast for our relatives whom we never had time to visit during the year. When I was young, we would have the old folks (people the age I am today) for dinner. Now our family is more spread out and we try to get our kids back for Thanksgiving." - Phil

"A family tradition I really like is Thanksgiving because it really brings my family together with all kinds of good food. Just like a big feast and it also gives us the opportunity to give thanks for what we have which is family, a roof over our head, and food. Thanksgiving is really my favorite family get together and want to keep celebrating that tradition for years to come." - Fernando

"I like Thanksgiving because the all family her and I meet with him." -Jacklin

Upcoming family celebrations include: Thanksgiving - November 25, Hanukkah - December 1, Christmas - December 25, Kwanzaa - December 26, and New Years Day - January 1



## OUTREACH NEWS

Thank you to our community partners Borders Books for a successful gift-wrapping weekend and Ingram Micro for inviting us to participate in your Holiday Boutique. If your company or organization has a community event or would like a speaker, please call us at 714-566-3070.



**(Fun advice for tutors and learners)**

Dear Paige,

I have a learner who is in need of a break in our learning sessions. We have been averaging 6 to 8 sessions per month for the last 6 months and he has come a long way in reading and writing skills. Knowing how important review is to retention, I am wondering if losing the next three months will have a major effect on my learner's progress.

We are staying in touch on a weekly basis and continue to discuss whatever reading material he has reviewed as part of his "homework". I am not pushing him to read or write on a regular basis, but we do discuss how easy it is to "forget" if we don't practice what we have learned. Is there anything I can suggest to my learner that will help him retain his skills, without straining his ability to handle personal needs?

I do not want to take on a new learner at this time as I am sure my learner and I will get back to our regular sessions in the 60 to 90 day period he has requested. We have a good relationship and enjoy our learning sessions, and both of us have found the results to be very rewarding. Please let me know what common practice in these situations is.

--Larry Levinson, Tutor

Dear Larry,

The situation you are describing is indeed a common occurrence. Since all of our tutors and learners are adults with adult responsibilities, it is not at all unusual for one or the other to need some time off to deal with personal concerns. You are quite right to try to help your learner practice during his time away, since that will help him maintain the skills that he has learned so far, and help him ease back into the tutoring when he is ready.

One possibility is to keep in touch via email. You can read and respond to his messages just as you would with an entry in a dialogue journal, modeling correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation without actually correcting his work. This will also give him an opportunity to ask for your assistance if he runs into a reading or writing dilemma while he is away. By remaining unstructured, casual, and focused on your learner's personal needs, you will help him stay active without overburdening him.

As for taking on a new learner, I suggest that you wait for your learner to come back rather than attempt to make a new match for both of you. You say that he is learning a lot and enjoying your sessions, so it makes sense to maintain as much continuity as possible. As long as your learner is still working towards his goals, he can stay with the program until he decides that he is ready to move on. This is a common theme in learner persistence. (See the article on page 2 about learner persistence for more information).

Many adult learners do drop in and out of programs as their needs, goals, and personal situations change throughout life. In fact, many successful learners have to make several attempts at tutoring before they are able to accomplish their goals and feel that they have "completed" the program. It is important for them to feel that they *can* stay in a program or return to it at a later date according to what suits their personal needs and constraints at any given time. Despite life circumstances that may be out of their hands, they are still in control of their own learning. In your case, it sounds like you and your learner will be back on track in no time! --Paige

PS: Thanks for submitting a question!



# READ Reminders!



## Lifelong Learner, Leader and Winner!

### Learners and Tutors – It's Time to Get Writing!

All Writer-2-Writer entries must be at the READ/OC office by Friday, December 17, 2010.

### Tutors!

Watch the mail for the annual Role/Goal Surveys that must be completed and returned to READ/OC by Friday, December 17.

The surveys are an important requirement for READ/OC's funding with California Library Literacy Services. READ/OC appreciates everyone's effort to complete the brief survey and return it to the READ/OC office as soon as possible. Once you and your learner complete the survey, you can put it in an envelope at the library and ask the Library staff to send it to READ/OC.

### Calling All Literacy Champions!

It's time to line up presenters for SCLLN's **Annual Literacy Conference**. The 2011 Literacy Conference will be held on Saturday, March 5, 2011, at the Holiday Inn Buena Park Hotel & Conference Center, and is open to everyone interested in the field of literacy.

We are looking for exciting new workshops as well as repeats of those ever popular workshops from past years. If you are interested in presenting or co-presenting a workshop and want to discuss scope, content, or anything else, please call READ/OC office at 714-566-3070.

The Conference committee is interested in new topics such as life skills, financial literacy, health care, job interview skills, and real estate terms, but all topics are welcome! As usual, there will be tracks for learners, volunteers and staff.

If you would like to present a workshop, request a "Call for Presenters" form from READ/OC and return it no later than **December 10, 2010**. All submissions will be considered, but only the workshops that fit with the life-skill theme of the conference will be chosen.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend another great conference. We hope that it will be bigger than ever.

READ/OC would like to congratulate one of our adult literacy colleagues, John Zickefoose, who was recently elected to the School Board for the Corona-Norco Unified School District.

John has been the Outreach Coordinator the Corona Public Library since 1994. He is actively involved in several local, state and national efforts for education, literacy and health. John is also a lifelong learner who was "barely capable of writing or reading his own name," when he sought help from the Corona Public Library in 1993. Since then, he has been an advocate for youth in his community and adult learners across the nation, raising funds, speaking to children and adults about learning, and volunteering his leadership skills and enthusiasm for learning at home and with national organizations such as ProLiteracy and the American Cancer Society.

It is inspiring to all involved in adult literacy efforts that John continues his lifelong learning journey as an elected official in public education and service to his community, state and country.



***If you are reading this line, call the READ/OC office to claim your "Reader Of The Month" prize.***



# Proud Moments



Proud Moments – September/October 2010

Congratulations to our tutors and learners as they continue to work towards their goals! Here are just a few of their achievements in September and October, taken from monthly reports:

**The monthly report winner**

**for August is  
Linda Mensinga  
Congratulations Linda!**

Monthly Reports are due by the 5th of every month. Get yours in on time for a chance to be next month's winner and receive a \$10 gift card to Starbucks.

Speaking of Monthly Reports, don't forget the READ/OC Branch Sign-In Book has blank copies of Monthly Report Forms. It also has notebook paper, and other useful forms.

This is also a reminder to be sure to sign-in the READ/OC notebook each time you meet in the library.

Of course you can still access monthly report forms online, submit them by email to [readoc@occr.ocgov.com](mailto:readoc@occr.ocgov.com) or mail them to READ/OC, 1501 E. St. Andrew Pl., Santa Ana, CA 92705

- Barbara's learner passed her GED, and is now looking for a new job with her new degree.
- Tammie's learner spoke with her Homeowners' Association about some home repairs. The conversation was completely in English, with no translation from the family.
- Bonny's learner received her First Aid certification, which is the first step towards her major goal of working or volunteering in a convalescent home.
- Kim's learner feels more confident ordering items from a menu.
- Debby's learner got a job.
- Katie's learner completed a t-shirt order form and two grocery savings card applications. She is also reading more to her children.
- Eugenia's learner is no longer shy to read aloud, and his family has noticed an improvement in his reading.
- Judy's learner got his first library card at the Anaheim library and checked out a book about the Citizenship test.
- Judith's learner got a library card and learned to use a dictionary.
- Alice's learner is now writing in patient logs without problems at work, and can communicate in writing with other staff members.
- Debby's learner has a new job that forces her to use English in everyday life.
- Erin's learner got a library card, checked out materials, and read to his kids.
- Rick's learner called her children's school with no assistance.
- Kathy's learner has started writing her own checks.
- Ellen's learner got her library card and checked out an ESL dvd.

Please remember to submit your monthly reports. We want to let everyone know about your accomplishments!

## Newsletter Editors

Barbara Neder &

Karen Ruhl



Staff & Volunteer

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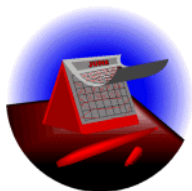
Ms. Paige Turner

Larry Levinson

*If you are interested in contributing an article for READ WRITES, contact us at 714-566-3070.*

When you have finished reading this newsletter, please share it with someone so they will know about the services and volunteer opportunities of READ/OC.

[Click here to go directly to the READ/OC Calendar of Events](#)



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READ/OC is the adult literacy services of OC Public Libraries and OC Community Resources

## November - December 2010 Calendar

Thursday, November 25  
& Friday, November 26

Thanksgiving Holiday Observed -- OCPL Libraries & READ/OC Office closed both Thursday and Friday

Tuesday, November 30

Tutor Training Workshop Session 4 @ READ/OC HQ, 9am-12pm

Thursday, December 2

Family Reading Time @ El Toro Library, 6-8 pm

Tuesday, December 2

Family Reading Time @ La Palma Library, 6-8 pm

Tuesday, December 7

Family Reading Time @ El Modena Library/Orange, 6:15-7:45pm

Saturday, December 11

Family Reading Time @ Irvine University Park Library, 10am-12pm

Tuesday, December 14

Family Reading Time @ Taft Library/Orange, 6:15-7:45pm

Friday, December 17

**Writer-to-Writer Deadline for All Entries to be at READ/OC office!**

Friday, December 24

READ/OC Gift Wrapping @ Barnes & Noble Bookstore in MetroPointe Costa Mesa 9am-6 pm

Friday, December 24 &  
Saturday, December 25

Christmas Holiday – OCPL Libraries & READ/OC Office Closed both Friday and Saturday

Friday, December 31

New Year's Holiday – OCPL Libraries & READ/OC Office Closed on Friday & Saturday

# Happy Holidays!

**1501 E. St. Andrew Place, Santa Ana, CA 92705**  
**Phone: 714-566-3070 • www.READOC.org**