

LEARN

Alive!

Libraries Empower All to Read Now

Adult Literacy Program

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February/March 09

WELCOME, NEW AMERICORPS MEMBERS!

The year is off to a fresh start and so are the new AmeriCorps members, Nene Ogbechie, Nick Crosby, and Laura Burlew. The AmeriCorps workers have been mentioned in other issues of L.E.A.R.N. Alive, but that is because we are so proud of the work they accomplish and thankful that we are able to have them on our staff. The AmeriCorps workers are a vital part of the L.E.A.R.N. staff. They are full-time volunteer workers who help tutor learners; as well as plan events, workshops, and classes. We are excited to have our new AmeriCorps members and are looking forward to a great year ahead with them.

one step closer to their goals continues to inspire me to do my best in helping them achieve their goals. Working with such great staff in the Vista library and L.E.A.R.N. has also been a pleasure and an opportunity to learn with great teachers.



Nick Crosby

My name is Nick Crosby, and I originally hail from Bakersfield, CA. I recently graduated with a degree in Literature from the University of California, Santa Barbara and decided to come down to San Diego to make my first mark on the world. I can't

imagine a better way to make that mark than working with AmeriCorps and L.E.A.R.N.. I guess the most obvious question is, Why AmeriCorps? Why L.E.A.R.N.? For me both of these things are synonymous with investing in your community, and San Diego is now my community. I grew up with a firm belief in a kind of golden-rule—that you should treat others as you'd like to be treated, and that all should have access to the same resources. Working with L.E.A.R.N. and AmeriCorps is a chance for me to put into practice those convictions, to take advantage of the resources that others have to offer as well as make available whatever resources I may have to give. I look forward to

working with everyone in the program and to the possibilities that are opening up before me.

My name is Laura Burlew and I will be working full-time in the Vista Literacy Center. I am originally from Michigan but moved to California last year because my husband is in the Marine Corps. I have a B.S. in Communications from Grand Valley State University in Michigan. I am very excited to be a part of the L.E.A.R.N. staff. I think that this job presents the opportunity to become involved in my new community. I have always loved the library and reading so when I heard about this job, I knew that improving literacy in San Diego County was the perfect way to get involved. My favorite part of the job so far is the L.E.A.R.N. staff themselves. They have really made me feel welcome and I enjoy coming to work everyday because of the great staff here. I am also very excited about the upcoming citizenship classes I will be teaching; helping immigrants become naturalized citizens is going to be a challenging and rewarding experience.



Laura Burlew



Nene Ogbechie

My name is Nene Ogbechie and I have been working as an AmeriCorps member for the literacy program since October 2008. I was born in Nigeria, but I have resided in the San Fernando Valley for the past ten years. I attended the University

of California, San Diego and got a B.A. in Political Science- Comparative Politics. I am very excited to be a part of a program that aims to improve literacy here in the city that I have come to love. Since I began working here, I have been met with many challenges but even more rewards. The joy of seeing learners take

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we have been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

-Barack Obama

TUTOR/LEARNER WORKSHOP: HEALTH LITERACY

L.E.A.R.N.'s first workshop of the year was held on Tuesday, January 27th. Jackie Davis of Sharp Hospital was kind enough to share with us her years of knowledge and experience concerning the often intimidating and confusing world of healthcare and medical treatment. Free refreshments were provided to attendees, along with useful tips such as never feeling intimidated by your doctor, and always asking your doctor to speak to you in language you can understand. Several helpful websites and other resources you can utilize to better understand what ails you were also presented. Jackie's presentation was also full of goodies such as take-home resources and pamphlets, all of which were provided free of charge. The program was free and open to the general public. L.E.A.R.N. hopes to make this the first in a series of free workshops,

which will cover a wide range of topics that include how to work with dyslexic learners as well as, a workshop on filing for unemployment and navigating the world of job-seeking. Check out our calendar of events for updates on when and where these free workshops will be held, as well as what information will be covered.

Jackie and L.E.A.R.N. will be holding another free, daytime session that will cover the same subject matter. If you were unable to join us for the meeting on February 27th, please feel welcome to attend our next workshop on Friday, February 20th from 12:00pm-1:00pm in the El Cajon Library Community Room.

AmeriCorps Member -Nick Crosby

For article submissions, please contact Laura Burlew at
Laura.burlew@sdcountry.ca.gov or (760) 643-5144

MAKING STRIDES TO HELP DYSLEXIC LEARNERS

L.E.A.R.N. continues to make strides towards helping dyslexic learners. After attending the Orton-Gillingham Seminar (see October issue), I immediately began tutoring a dyslexic learner in order to gain experience and put into practice the valuable skills I had just learned. I set out to experiment with the techniques and drills of the Orton-Gillingham Approach while using the workbooks and materials of the Wilson Reading System. I then put together a short training for tutors matched with a dyslexic learner and started meeting with each pair separately at their local branch library. I discovered that within an hour or so, I was able to teach and demonstrate to the tutor the basic lesson plan, drills and techniques needed to successfully tutor a dyslexic learner in the first two out of the 12 levels of the Wilson Reading System. Once they are

ready to move on to level three, which introduces two-syllable words, I will visit each pair again for an additional training session.

Tutors not matched with a dyslexic learner will also benefit from the knowledge I gained in the Orton-Gillingham Seminar. This year we have made some improvements to our Tutor Orientation/Training, including the addition of several slides to our Power-Point presentation covering drills that can be used with any learner, from the mildly dyslexic, to the severely dyslexic, to the second language learner. In addition, I will be conducting two workshops on dyslexia, one at the El Cajon Branch in March and the other at the Vista Branch in April (See Dates to Remember: Learner/Tutor Workshop).

Library Associate – Hector Ortega

SECOND ANNUAL VOLUNTEER TUTOR APPRECIATION PICNIC CELEBRATION

- **Who:** All volunteer tutors and learners
- **Where:** San Dieguito Park, Area 1
- **What:** A fun filled day of food and friends!
- **When:** Saturday, April 25th, 2009
Time- 12:00pm-3:00pm
- **Why:** We want to say thank you!

DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Tutor Trainings**
 - **Spring Valley** (1st & 2nd parts together)
February 28 (10:00am-4:00pm)
 - **Vista** (1st & 2nd parts together)
March 21 (10:00am-4:00pm)
 - **El Cajon** (1st & 2nd parts separate)
March 10 (5:30pm-8:00pm)
March 11 (5:30pm-8:00pm)
 - **El Cajon** (1st & 2nd parts together)
April 18 (10:00am-4:00pm)
- **Learner/Tutor Workshop**
 - **El Cajon**
Health Literacy
February 20th (12:00pm-1:00pm)
Dyslexia Workshop
March 16 (1:00pm-2:30pm)
- **ESL Café**
 - **El Cajon** (11:30am-12:30pm)
February 16 and 23
March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
April 6 and 13
 - **Vista** (10:30am-12:00pm)
February 21, 25
March 11, 25
April 8, 22
+Every Saturday (3:30pm -4:30pm)
 - **Lincoln Acres** (6:30pm-7:30pm)
February 17 and 24
March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
April 7 and 14
 - **Bonita** (9:30am-11:00am)
February 20
March 6 and 20
April 3

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE GRADE



June Park

I immigrated from Korea with my parents and three siblings in 1973 when I was 17 years old. I was in the middle of high school right before I came to the U.S. Right away, I continued high school in order to graduate. Without speaking English, that was a nightmare. That pressure made me focus on the high school diploma instead of learning English. I only tried to get good grades to graduate.

Before I joined the Vista library Adult Literacy Program I went to Palomar College and took a semester and a half of the English as a Second Language program. I got an A but I got pressured again just like

in high school, so I quit. I learned my lesson to concentrate on learning, which was more important than getting a good grade. I finally made the right decision that I wouldn't worry about the grade, but instead concentrate only on learning English. Now I'm really enjoying the Vista library Adult Literacy Program. I truly appreciate all the books I've been provided with. Those books are a perfect fit for me. It took me 36 years to find the right opportunity. I'll take advantage of this program until I think I speak English fluently.