

# LEARN

Alive

Libraries Empower All to Read Now  
Adult Literacy Program  
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March '10/April '10

## NEW BEGINNINGS

On Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, LEARN held its first Citizenship Ceremony to congratulate 12 citizenship class learners who were naturalized in 2009. A total of 59 guests attended the event at the Vista Branch Library, including most of the graduates and their families, our current citizenship learners, as well as library staff. After a delicious dinner, our patriotic cake, which read "Congratulations new American citizens," was cut by recent graduate Rosalba Trevizo.

Hector Ortega— master of ceremonies and coordinator for the LEARN citizenship classes— then proceeded to introduce the entire LEARN team, after which he gave special thanks to Laura Burlew for helping to launch the first citizenship class at the San Marcos Branch. Also receiving special thanks for their generosity and support in making the Citizenship Ceremony a reality was adult services supervisor Susan Moore and library director Jose Aponte. As keynote speaker for the evening,

Mr. Aponte proudly spoke about being the first Latino library director for the San Diego County Library, highlighting his family's history and immigration from Puerto Rico. Mrs. Trevizo went on to thank the LEARN staff for helping her achieve several of her personal goals.

Framed certificates were distributed to the graduates by the entire team of citizenship instructors, which included: Laura Burlew (instructor at the San Marcos Branch during 2009), Hector Ortega (instructor at the Vista Branch), Sarah Seene (4S Ranch Branch), Raquel Sojourner (Spring Valley Branch), and Desiree Garcia (San Marcos Branch this year). The citizenship classes continue to attract new learners in all four branch locations; this year we hope to increase our outreach as well as the number of people we help to become new American citizens.



Director Aponte and library staff involved in citizenship classes, along with the recent graduates.

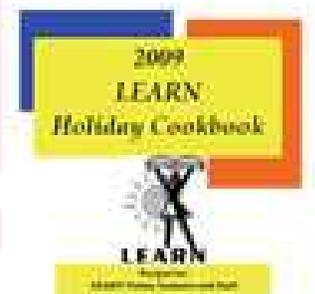
**Hector Ortega—Library Associate**

*"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell, where his influence stops."*

- Henry Brooks Adams

## LEARN COOKBOOK!

In December of '09, LEARN threw a Holiday Party to celebrate the expansion of the program as well as the hard work and accomplishments of its many tutors and learners. The party was a potluck, with each person attending bringing a dish as well as its recipe. Recently, all of the recipes were compiled into the first ever LEARN Holiday Cookbook! The cookbook can be found online at [www.sdcl.org/learn](http://www.sdcl.org/learn). It is available in PDF format for easy printing.



## RUNNIN' IN THE RAIN

On Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, employees from the San Diego County Library and LEARN, along with their families and friends, laced up their running shoes and took part in the San Diego Union Tribune's Annual Race for Literacy. The event promotes and raises funds for literacy programs throughout the San Diego community.



A wet and fun-filled day.

This two-day event started on Saturday with the Kids Magic Mile. Children and families participated in a one-mile, non-competitive run in San Diego's beautiful Balboa Park. Aside from the fun-run, the Kids Magic Mile also included musical entertainment, tasty treats, and a free book giveaway, making it the perfect family event. The 8K Race for Literacy, the weekend's main event, followed the next day. This downhill run began in Balboa Park, wound its way through scenic Highway 163, and finished with a festival at Pantoja Park on G Street in downtown San Diego.

Despite the weekend showers, we had great team participation on both days, totaling 57 SDCL-LEARN Alive team members. This high number of participants resulted in the LEARN Alive team having the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest membership among the San Diego Council on Literacy Affiliated Programs. Another distinction came from our very own Library Director Jose Aponte, who placed 4<sup>th</sup> in his 8K running category! The Race for Literacy was not only a fun event but an active way to help eliminate illiteracy in San Diego.

**Raquel Sojourner —AmeriCorps Member**

## TUTORING FROM A DISTANCE

A favorite aspect of my job is holding English Conversation Cafés, and, in particular, the café at the 4S Ranch Library. The students at this café are beginning English speakers, so conversation is rather limited. Nevertheless, I enjoy teaching new words, helping them practice pronunciation, and easing them into simple conversations. One of my most energetic and engaging students was Fuying Mao. Fuying would always try to answer my questions, even the harder questions that others were too shy to respond to. She would enthusiastically pour over any handout I gave, involving her peers in her quest to determine the meaning of every word on the sheet.

You can imagine my disappointment when Mao communicated that she was returning to China for a 7-month visit. She gave me her email address and said that she wanted me to send her the lessons we covered each week. I did not expect much after I sent the first lesson. Even though Fuying was en-

thusiastic in class, once she returned to her family and got involved in her life in China, it would be easy for her to forget about learning English.

The first lesson I sent was a lesson on Thanksgiving. Imagine my delight when I received an enthusiastic e-mail response wishing me a happy Thanksgiving.

Now, we email back and forth a few times each week. Every time I send back her corrected lesson, I receive a warm and friendly response.

Mao learns from her mistakes, and her progress is evident even in the last month. I love getting glimpses into her life in China, and I marvel at her determination to learn English at the age of 63. She inspires me to believe that it is never too late to tackle a new challenge with enthusiasm.

**Sarah Scene—AmeriCorps Member**

### DATES TO REMEMBER:

- **Tutor Trainings**
  - **4S Ranch**  
*May 15th (10:00am-4:00pm)*
  - **Bonita**  
*May 22 (10:00am-4:00pm)*
- **Learner/Tutor Workshop\***
  - **El Cajon**  
*Health literacy*  
*Tues, April 20th, 4-5 pm*
  - **El Cajon**  
*Personal Safety*  
*Tues, June 8th, 11 am-12 pm*

### THANK YOU!

- All Race for Literacy participants
- Rheana Corrirossi (Spring Valley)
- Jose Ocadiz (Lincoln Acres)
- Hugo Perez (Spring Valley)
- Diana Velati (Encinitas)
- Sandy Housley (Encinitas)
- A very special thanks to Maureen Nicholson at El Cajon. All the best and enjoy your retirement!