

LEARN

Libraries Empower All to Read Now

Adult Literacy Program

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Alive!

May '10/June '10

AMANDA ROCKS!

When I first stepped into the El Cajon Branch Library nearly five years ago, I couldn't help but notice the sparseness of the literacy center. There were no computers on the desks, a large wall devoid of color, and only one bookshelf with a handful of materials. The literacy office was a clear reflection of the nearly empty center adjoining it, except for one computer, a few file boxes scattered on the floor, and Amanda Schukle.

Amanda was LEARN's first literacy coordinator and the sole staff member of the month-old program. As an outreach librarian, Amanda was hand-picked to take the reins of the fledgling LEARN program, which previously had been managed by the San Diego Public Library. Although many tutor/learner pairs had participated in the SDPL-run program, only twelve tutor/learner pairs successfully transitioned to LEARN. Amanda was tasked with getting more adult learners and tutors involved while attempting to develop an effective literacy program.

Initially, she faced a number of challenges. Some of these challenges included how best to provide services throughout the San Diego County Library's large geographic area, developing effective volunteer recruitment strategies, figuring out a comprehensive training model for tutors, and building a literacy program that was fully integrated with the library. Periodically, communicating the significance of LEARN proved to be difficult, but Amanda



consistently informed people of the program's unique value.

Along with these challenges came successes. "The first being the very existence of LEARN," stated Amanda. "The program was and continues to be a conduit for people to create their own success." As adult learners improved their literacy skills, they began to accomplish long-established goals, such as obtaining a driver's license, a promotion at work, or reading a story to their children. These successes reaffirmed Amanda's belief that "literacy programs go hand-in-hand with libraries... the library is for everybody."

LEARN had grown leaps and bounds by the time Amanda was promoted to the department of Collection Development at library headquarters. More staff members came on board, and a second literacy center was added at the Vista Branch Library.

Adult literacy and ESL services expanded as the number of tutor/learner pairs steadily increased throughout the county.

Nearly five years later, LEARN continues to grow, as does Amanda. Recently, Amanda announced that she accepted a position as one of three library services managers in the San Mateo County Library system in Northern California. Although she will be taking many memories of the San Diego County Library with her, LEARN holds a special place in her heart. "I'm so proud of how far [LEARN has] come" stated Amanda. "It's nice to see the impact the program has made on people." With over 500 active adults taking advantage of literacy services in the San Diego County Library, it's nice to see the impact Amanda has made on LEARN.

Congratulations and the best of luck Amanda! You will be missed!

—Kevin Vigil
Library Associate

UPCOMING EVENTS!

- **Workshops**
 - *Learning Disabilities/Budgeting Vista Branch, Community Room June 26th (9:30 am-1:30 pm)*
- **Tutor Trainings**
 - *Vista (1st & 2nd parts together) June 26th (10:00 am-4:00 pm)*
 - *El Cajon (1st & 2nd parts) July 24th (10:00 am-4:00 pm)*
 - *Vista (1st & 2nd parts) August 21st (10:00 am-4:00 pm)*

TWO BIG WHITE DUCKS

Hi! My name is Lucy and my story begins at the front entrance to the Bonita Library.

The day was Sunday and the weather wasn't at all like San Diego. Strong winds were blowing and it was raining heavily.

Two large white ducks were hanging out around the library entrance. People tried to feed them bread but they weren't interested. Eva who runs the coffee stand gave them water which they drank and spilled, quacking all the time.

On Tuesday, the third day that the ducks were at the library, I went to the ESL class where Mr. Morton is the teacher. After class, we walked out the

door and the ducks were still there, quacking away, entertaining the people. Eva said that the ducks must be starving, they hadn't eaten in three days.

I asked Eva why they didn't join the wild ducks on the golf course which is next to the library. Eva said that they were not in the same group. I said, I can bring these ducks home. I have a big yard and it is fenced in. Mr. Morton held a box and I put one duck in. Then I got a zippered traveling bag, and Mr. Morton held it while I popped the second duck in. I took those ducks home and they seemed to like my backyard. I fed them cooked rice and I

chopped up some cabbage. After 2 weeks, Mr. Morton bought a bag of duck food. They seemed very happy.

After a while, I began to find duck eggs in the backyard. Not in a nest, just wherever they felt like. Some days we found 2 eggs. We learned that we probably had two females. Why did the ducks go to the library? They didn't try to go in but they liked the entrance to the library. We think that someone raised these ducks at home from small ducklings.

SUMMER READING IS HERE!

If a learner completes any combination of the following 4 objectives, he/she will win a tote bag! (You can repeat objectives)

- Read a book
- Listen to an audio book
- Meet a goal

Please call LEARN for more details!

When they got tired of keeping them (they are noisy, dirty and always hungry) the people brought them to a pond on the golf course where there are wild ducks. The wild ducks are smaller but they frightened the bigger white ducks. The white ducks were accustomed to living with people and were comfortable at the library door.

It is now the middle of April and we have had more than 24 eggs. The ducks are showing their thanks for having such a nice home.

—Lucy Chan
Adult Learner, Bonita Branch



GREAT DAY FOR A PICNIC!

On April 24th LEARN hosted its 3rd Annual Appreciation Picnic for tutors and learners, where both were rewarded for their hard work and commitment to the program. The picnic was held at beautiful San Dieguito Park in Solana Beach on a sunny and warm afternoon.

LEARN thanked both tutors and learners by offering delicious food catered by Z Pizza. Live entertainment

was provided by local instrumental band, En Fuego. Crescent Moon provided complimentary henna tattoos for picnic participants. There were also board games, bingo, and a trivia game which quizzed attendees on fun facts about California, the Library, LEARN and various other LEARN-related topics.

Towards the end of the day, there was an opportunity drawing for

various prizes. Those who participated in the trivia game had additional chances to win tickets for the drawing. The picnic had a wonderful turnout with over 100 people in attendance. It was a great ending to an excellent day. Thanks to all who attended the picnic and made it a huge success!

—Desiree Garcia
AmeriCorps member