



Redlands Reads!

Learner and Tutor Succeed in Reaching New Goals

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REDLANDS ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM



To become a volunteer or receive services from the Redlands Adult Literacy Program, please call Diane Shimota, Adult Literacy Coordinator, at:

(909) 798-7565 ext. 4110 or email literacy@akspl.org

The next tutor orientation is scheduled for January 21, 2025

All literacy services are free and confidential



Literacy Changes Lives!



In 2021, Zaida Maytorena made a decision that changed her life. She joined the Redlands Adult Literacy Program. She had been employed as a school custodian for years but was unprepared for new workplace requirements. Training sessions involving equipment and potentially dangerous chemicals, as well as regular email communications, were now part of her job description. Zaida knew she had to take action. She sought help from the literacy program and started meeting with a tutor once a week. In short order, thanks to her hard work and dedication, she was able to function successfully and safely in her job, to compose work reports, and to publish several pieces of writing in the Redlands Adult Literacy Program anthology.

Lisa Zufferey, Zaida's tutor, has also been with the program since 2021. She had retired from teaching and was looking for a way to remain useful and active in her community. In addition to weekly tutoring sessions with

Zaida, Lisa now participates regularly in literacy events and serves on a volunteer committee. Since joining the program, Lisa says that she has gained a new appreciation for the number of people, especially women, who want to do better by continuing their own learning despite the demands of already busy lives. She describes the whole program as an inspiring "feel-good atmosphere for everyone."

Zaida and Lisa, working together, have accomplished Zaida's original literacy goals. Her reading and writing skills are much improved, and communication at her workplace is no longer a hindrance. However, she is not satisfied. Working with Lisa has given her the skills and confidence to set a new goal. Zaida is now studying to become a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA). The literacy program was happy to provide the appropriate CNA preparation materials in support of this goal. In two years' time, when Zaida retires from the school district, she will be ready



Zaida Maytorena (left) and Lisa Zufferey

to begin a new chapter in life as a home healthcare provider. Just like her tutor, she wants to stay active, help people, and make a difference in her community.

Zaida would like people to know that the adult literacy program "opened doors" for her. She invites any adult who wants to improve their reading and writing skills to contact the program and "learn to open doors" for themselves. Lisa agrees and adds that, as a retired person, she has come to realize there are different stages of life, lots of things to learn, and one can always open a new door!

Literacy Program Welcomes New Tutor Volunteers

The Redlands Adult Literacy Program's success depends upon the generosity of community volunteers and donors who know the importance of every adult having access to literacy services.

This year the program welcomed 40 new tutors who joined the ranks

of the 70 volunteers who support the adult literacy program through tutoring or other important program activities. Special thanks are owed to library trustees, the library director, and library staff who support adult literacy. Adult literacy has

changed our city for the better by changing the lives of adult learners, their families, their tutors, their employers, and more. Tutors directly observe the impact of their efforts as lives are changed.

Redlands Adult Literacy Program

Sponsored by A. K. Smiley Public Library and
The Friends of A. K. Smiley Public Library,
a 501.c.3 organization.
Donations are gratefully accepted.

For more information...
Call: 909.798.7565, ext. 4138 or 4110
Email: literacy@akspl.org
Stop by: A. K. Smiley Public Library,
located at
125 W. Vine St., Redlands, CA

Visit the literacy web page:
www.akspl.org/literacy

Follow us on Instagram: *friendsofsmileylibrary*



The **MISSION** of the Redlands Adult Literacy Program is to provide professional and confidential tutoring in reading and writing to help learners in the Redlands community reach their literacy goals.

All participants are treated with dignity and respect.

You can help support adult literacy in our community:

- Spread the word that literacy help is available at Smiley Library—most learners find out about the program from family and friends.
- Become a literacy volunteer.
- Come to literacy events.
- Join the Friends of A. K. Smiley Public Library and purchase books at the Friends Bookstore, located in the lower-level of Smiley Library.
- Make donations to the Redlands Adult Literacy Program by using the donate button at www.akspl.org/literacy.

Help change someone's life!

Redlands Adult Literacy Program Celebrates Learner Authors

On September 29, 2024 the Redlands Adult Literacy Program celebrated the publication of its seventh volume of original writing, *Our Stories, A Collection of Writings*. This collection has become a much-anticipated annual tradition within the program. Each year, adult learners and participants in Family Literacy are encouraged to capture in writing their personal journeys to literacy.

To showcase this year's volume – which features work from over 40 authors – the literacy program hosted a Celebration of Authors. An audience of approximately 150 family members, tutors, other learners, and community members gathered to honor the newly-published authors and listen as they read their work aloud. The readings ranged from childhood memories and travelogues to powerful stories of survival and hope.

Raul Becerra, first published in last year's anthology, expressed how his life has changed in *My Reading Journey Continues*, "With the ability to read I am more confident at work and doing my job."

Maricela Casillas, a caregiver, wrote *Mr. C.*, which described the impact she felt from her 85 year-old client who told her, "It's never too late to study and learn."

One author who made a particularly strong impression was Sharhonda



Learner Authors, "Our Stories, A Collection of Writings, Volume 7"

McLaurin with her poem, *I Told the Storm*, excerpted here:

*I told the storm, I am aware of your tactics
Have seen your clouds try and block the sun
You have turned beautiful days into gloomy ones
Your wind blows past my window singing songs
of defeat and my lips can't help but sing along
I love sad songs on dark afternoons
I asked the storm why does it enjoy raining on
my parade?
It never answered...*

In her story, *My Journey*, Katerina B. shared "...participating in this program allows me to express my thoughts more precisely and completely ... we know that finding our voice is finding ourselves ... I will not take the ability to communicate clearly and freely for granted."

To read these stories in their entirety as well as the work of other inspiring new writers, visit A.K. Smiley Public Library. Copies of *Our Stories, A Collection of Writings, Volume 7* are now available for checkout.