



# Redlands Reads!

## Ana Alcantar, Adult Literacy Graduate, Shares Her Story

**LEARN MORE  
ABOUT  
THE REDLANDS  
ADULT LITERACY  
PROGRAM**



To become a volunteer or receive services from the Redlands Adult Literacy Program, please call

Adult Literacy  
Coordinator

Diane Shimota at:  
(909) 798-7565 ext. 4110  
or email  
[literacy@akspl.org](mailto:literacy@akspl.org)

The next tutor  
orientation is  
August 19, 2025

All literacy services are  
free and confidential.



**Literacy Changes  
Lives!**



Tutors and literacy volunteers are a key component to the success of the Redlands Adult Literacy Program. Currently, 100 tutor-learner teams meet weekly to work on learner goals for reading and writing. Adult literacy volunteers also help in adult literacy conversation, computer, and family literacy classes.

At the Adult Literacy Volunteer Celebration, funded by private individuals who recognize the vital role of adult literacy volunteers, Ana Alcantar, a 2021 graduate of the Redlands Adult Literacy Program, spoke about the impact of adult literacy on her life. The following is taken from Ana's remarks:

"I was born and raised in Mexico and came to this wonderful country to be with my husband, who has lived here since childhood. For me it has been very difficult since the beginning. Leaving everything behind, and starting in a new country, a new culture—and even more challenging, a new language.

At first, it wasn't too difficult because most of my friends spoke Spanish. But everything changed when my daughters started elementary school. I didn't speak English and couldn't help them with their homework because I didn't know how to read or write. We often had to wait until my husband came home from work so he could help them. It made me feel helpless and heartbroken, like [I was failing as a] mother.

I heard about the program through one of my friends, Marisela... [My tutor, Kim Green and I]...read countless books and articles; we



Ana Alcantar (right) and her family

shared life stories; and we solved many crossword puzzles. She helped me shape my thoughts into sentences, paragraphs, and letters. She corrected every period and every comma...

As I gained confidence, I started to support my daughters more: helping with school, volunteering, and becoming more involved in their education. Thanks to this program, many doors opened for me.

• I attended the Adult Learner Leadership Institute, a training program sponsored by the California State Library to help adult learners grow as leaders.

• I had the chance to speak at events to support the program and recruit more tutors.

• I even had the incredible opportunity to meet and have dinner with one of my favorite authors, Francisco Jiménez "Panchito", author of *The Circuit*.

• And thanks to the Literacy Program, I also became a published author myself.

But more than anything, I've had the privilege of meeting incredible people who changed my life. To everyone who helped me along the way—thank you from the bottom of my heart.

As for my daughters:

• My oldest graduated with a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in psychology. She is happily married and has made me a proud mother and a proud grandmother of two beautiful grandchildren.

• My middle daughter...returned to school and is now learning coding and web development.

• And my youngest daughter is graduating with her bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

### I am a proud mama.

I left the program when I began working full-time with my husband...In 2015, he opened his own business here in the City of Redlands, and we've been working together ever since...Not everyone has the heart to volunteer and give without expecting anything in return. Because of your kindness, you change lives, just like you changed mine."

Thank you, Ana, for sharing your inspiring story. Adult literacy volunteers often say how the adult literacy program changed their lives for the better.

We congratulate you on your successes!

## 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](mailto: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](http://www.akspl.org/literacy)

Follow us on Instagram: [friendsofsmileylibrary](https://www.instagram.com/friendsofsmileylibrary)

Facebook: [Friends of A.K. Smiley Public Library](https://www.facebook.com/Friends.of.A.K.Smiley.Public.Library)

*Help change someone's life!*

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.friendsofsmileylibrary.org/donate](http://www.friendsofsmileylibrary.org/donate)



**Volunteer Appreciation Celebration, April 12, 2025**

### **Each Adult Literacy Tutor is Unique, But They Share the Vision of the Importance of Reading and Writing**

**Did you know...**

The youngest adult literacy volunteer is 23 years old, and the oldest isn't telling us her age!

**Did you know...**

All adult literacy services are free and every volunteer receives training, support through tutor roundtables, and library staff guidance.

**Did you know...**

Adult literacy tutors focus on the goals of the learners. Extensive literacy materials are

available to help with instruction. Prior teaching experience is NOT required!

**Did you know...**

Graduates of the adult literacy program have gone on to open businesses, pursue advanced education, help their children with schoolwork, and become full participants in our community!

**Did you know...**

Some adults read their very first book after working with a tutor in the Redlands Adult

Literacy Program. Would you like to help someone change their life through literacy?

**Did you know...**

It takes courage for adults to admit they need help with reading and writing. Most adults learn they can get help by talking to a trusted friend or family member. Spread the word that free help in reading and writing is available at Smiley Library!