

The Literacy Update

The American Dream Starts @ Your Library

... at the Azusa City Library, to be exact. The American Library Association and Dollar General Literacy Foundation awarded a 2014 **American Dream Starts @ Your Library** grant to the Azusa City Library. This national program helps immigrants to learn English to continue their education, help their children in school, get better jobs and become American citizens.

The award will help to expand tutoring for Spanish-speaking adults who are not literate in their native language. According to the American Community Survey 2009-2011, 11.6 percent of adult Spanish-speaking immigrants in Los Angeles County cannot read or write in any language, creating a barrier to learning English. The Institute for Work and the Economy's 2006 report, *The Integration of Immigrants in the Workplace*, states that an estimated 32 percent of adults enrolled in ESL (English as a Second Language) classes lack basic literacy skills in their native language, making them "slower in learning a second language than their literate counterparts."

Through the library's partnership with Centro Latino for Literacy, the dedication of *Leamos* (Let's Read) volunteer Monica Mejia, and with support from the American Dream grant, adults will be able to gain basic literacy skills in Spanish in approximately 150 hours of study. They can then successfully transition into English classes and find themselves well on their way to achieving their American Dream.

If you know a Spanish speaker who needs to improve their skills, call Cathay Reta at the literacy office: 626-812-5266.



The American Dream Starts @ your library

For more information, please visit: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/>

Meet The Literacy Staff

"Literacy arouses hopes, not only in society as a whole but also in the individual who is striving for fulfillment, happiness and personal benefit by learning how to read and write."
-UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg, Germany

The literacy staff of the Azusa City Library invite you to stop by the library to learn more about the programs they offer and learn how you can become involved. Here is an introduction to the staff and some faces to put together with the names.



Pictured left to right: Melissa Martin, Cathay Reta, Helen Goodwin, Efrain Villa, Arlene Calderon

Cathay Reta, Adult Literacy Coordinator, became a volunteer tutor in 1984, never realizing it would set her on a new career path. She has worked on local, state and national levels since then, and joined the Azusa City library staff in 2011. "I learn something new everyday," she states about what keeps her involved. "The programs are very rewarding. I love to watch them grow."

Helen Goodwin, ESL Specialist, trains and supports volunteers with the Grassroots ESL program. With an extensive background in ESL, she was able to jump in just as Grassroots ESL started. "I love teaching. It's fun and exciting to see a program start from the beginning and see it grow. I love being able to give people the tools to learn and grow, and I have the opportunity to do that with tutors and students," says Helen. "I like the atmosphere, and I like my team."

Arlene Calderon, Literacy Assistant, is the newest member of the staff. She started out as a Basic Literacy volunteer tutor in 2013, and now works directly with the Basic Literacy tutors and students and provides support to all of the literacy programs. "I really liked the program and was very proud to be a part of it," says Arlene. "I enjoy contributing where I can. I've seen it grow significantly in just a year and a half to adding ESL and now Citizenship. There's so much that the library offers."

Melissa Martin, Communications Intern, is an Undergraduate student at Azusa Pacific University, and studies Communications with an emphasis in Interpersonal and Organizational Communication. She was first introduced to the Literacy Program when she became a volunteer Grassroots ESL tutor for Dalton Elementary School. Melissa then became the Communications Intern for the Literacy Program in September 2014, and works primarily with recruiting volunteers and promoting the program throughout the community.

Efrain Villa, Citizenship Specialist, worked two years at the Central American Resource Center as the Citizenship Research Coordinator in charge of recruitment and educating before coming to the Azusa Library to establish Inspired Citizenship. "There is a need in many communities to teach citizenship preparation, teach English, and to find funding to establish those programs. I want to help people become citizens," shares Efrain. "Being a part of it is such a great experience. You can see the development of the students. They learn how to be in a classroom setting and to be in a class with others. Helping them reach their goals is very rewarding."

Library Sponsors Driver's License Law (AB60) Forum

There was standing room only in the library auditorium on January 20 where the community gathered to learn more about the new Driver's License Law which provides opportunity for undocumented individuals to get a California driver's license. Ana Garcia, Policy Director of DriveCA/CARECEN made a presentation about the new law and answered questions from the audience.



Photo courtesy of Brooke Seipel, The Clause Azusa Pacific University

Garcia shared that the Department of Motor Vehicles reports that many adults who take the written exam do not pass it, and applicants are given only three attempts. In response, the Azusa City Library's Inspired Citizenship program will set up study circles to help those interested prepare to take the exam in February. For schedule information, contact Efrain Villa at evilla@ci.azusa.ca.us or 626-812-5173.

For more information about the Driver's License Law, go to <http://driveca.org/bill-ab60/>



For more information on Grassroots ESL visit our YouTube page: <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvTTb0vVUOEocokIrUwriAsQ>

Welcome to new Volunteer Tutors:

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| ESL/ Citizenship
Asti Altenritter
Lizbeth Angel
Miles Artis
Fong-Fong Chu
Glorya Dominguez
Steve Escusty | Stephanie Jan
Gabriel Lee
David Levine
Sheila Lewis
Isaac Lyles-Smith
Kiley Martzen
Julie Park | Kimberly Portillo
Linda Romero
Elena Silva
Richard Thomas | Basic Literacy
Nicolemarie Sartin
Derrick Wong |
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Upcoming Calendar

Citizenship Information Session
Saturday, February 7, 11:00 am
Azusa Civic Auditorium, 213 E. Foothill Blvd., Azusa

To register call (626) 812-5266 or email literacy@ci.azusa.ca.us

January-February 2015

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To contact us:

The Literacy Program
Azusa City Library
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Azusa CA 91702
(626) 812-5266

Or email:
literacy@ci.azusa.ca.us

- Staff & Volunteers**
- Literacy Coordinator:
Cathay Reta
- ESL Specialist:
Helen Goodwin
- Citizenship Specialist:
Efrain Villa
- Communications Intern:
Melissa Martin
- Literacy Program Assistant:
Arlene Calderon

The Literacy Program is a member of

California Library Literacy Services
www.libraryliteracy.org

ProLiteracy
www.proliteracy.org

Southern California Library Literacy Network
www.sclln.org

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literacy@ci.azusa.ca.us