

ReadingNotes

A publication for ReadingWorks @ Stanislaus Literacy Center
Bringing Reading to Lives

ReadingWorks is changing lives through literacy

Almost 1500 adults and 300 children were served through a variety of programs through ReadingWorks @ Stanislaus Literacy Center. But this number means even more when our students share their personal stories about how one or more of our four educational programs helped them learn and meet a goal.

The ReadingWorks Adult Literacy program, in partnership with the **Stanislaus County Library**, provided 169 students with individualized tutoring in reading.

Tony Pacheco is one of those students we have helped. He came into our program reading very little. He ate at Denny's so he could order

off the menu using the pictures. He had his girlfriend read his mail and pay his bills. He had to ask for help at the grocery store to make sure he didn't buy food with sugar in it since he is diabetic. He was laid off from his job of many years and was having difficulty getting a new job because of his reading skills. After meeting several months with his tutor,

Brenda Schmidt, he was able to pass a reading test and obtain a new job, read menus, his mail and the labels on food.

The ReadingWorks Learning Center and other GED classes provided 541 adults with help in passing the GED test which 89 did successfully. Another 87% made a significant improvement in math or reading.

Susanna Holson, mother of two, dropped out of high school to

take care of younger siblings and finally at age 28, received her GED. She is now a tutor for ReadingWorks and enrolled at Modesto Junior College for the fall semester.

Another woman in our program was laid off

after working many years for the county. She didn't have a GED and her job search became impossible without it. This year, she received her GED and is now working and had three other offers for jobs she turned down.

Family Literacy teaching English as a Second Language and Citizenship classes serve the adults

Stanislaus Literacy Center, a non-profit corporation, in partnership with the community — business, education and government — teaches adults and their families basic education skills — helps parents become their child's first and best teacher and prepares a more productive workforce.

Bringing Reading to Lives



Having a baby caused Bo Jackson to dedicate himself to learning so he can achieve his goals.

Call 209-558-4505 for information on becoming a tutor and help someone like Bo

**“I don’t believe in making excuses. I just believe in working hard and doing my best”
—Bo Jackson**

Bo Jackson chosen as Shining Star for SLC

Bo Jackson, age 20, could have been another statistic. He could have followed the way of many of his family members and been a young black man who dropped out of school, and either went to prison or even died at a young age. But Jackson is determined not to be that person. He is, instead, an inspiration. For this reason, he was chosen as

the same time he had an aunt and uncle and then a young cousin die -- all of them suddenly and needlessly. “There for awhile I just didn’t care. I started drinking a lot because I thought I would be just like all these people in my life and I would die young too, so what was the point.” Bo dropped out of Johanssen High School the middle of his senior year and in the middle of his despair about his life.

Much credit is given by Bo to his girlfriend, Jamie Cunningham, who he says has helped him immensely to be happy and to hope for his future. “Having a baby has been a big motivation for me plus having my girlfriend and my mom who are behind me all the way.”

Bo came to ReadingWorks the end of April — soon after becoming a father — because he wanted to be able to pass the GED test. His reading level put him into the individualized tutoring program and his volunteer tutor is Hallie Van-

Deventer. The first thing they did when they started meeting was set goals. “At first his goal was to get his GED but as we talked, he also realized he had other goals — getting a job and getting his driver’s license, going to college and playing football. “The week of this interview, he had just been hired at Seneca Foods and he and his tutor have been studying for the driver’s test. He also increased his reading level two levels. Hallie says Bo inspires her every time they get together.

“He is so hard working and motivated. He never misses our sessions even though we meet three times a week. Instead, he comes early and he never complains at the amount of homework I give him — he just does it. I’m the one who ends up having to cancel our sessions because of sickness or something. It is never him,” she says.

“I don’t believe in making excuses,” he said. “I just believe in working hard and doing my best.”



Bo Jackson receiving his award from Supervisors Dick Monteith and Terry Withrow.

the 2011 Shining Star Award winner for ReadingWorks @ Stanislaus Literacy center

“Ever since I met my girlfriend and now since I’m a dad, I am motivated to take a different road with my life,” he said. “I want to be the dad to my four-month-old daughter that I never had and I want to someday be a good husband to my girlfriend.”

Bo freely admits he has made a lot of mistakes in his life, but he also says those days are over. Having a dad he can’t remember and moving frequently between the Bay Area and the Central Valley, made school harder. But, Bo said, when he wanted to, he could make good grades. He just didn’t always want to. “I was doing really well for awhile in high school when we lived in the Bay Area and I was on the first string football team. I had good grades then.” But then, he said, his mom moved them back to this area and about

ReadingWorks makes a difference (continued from page one)

who have moved to this area from other countries and need help learning English or preparing to take and pass the Citizenship test. Family literacy program helps the children either be more ready to enter school or improve in school through parental support of their education and opportunities to enhance their reading skills. There were 339 adults and 300 children served in six locations.

Ignacia Madrigal came to the United States eleven years ago from Guadalajara, Mexico. She realized how critical learning English was and attended Family Literacy classes to learn English and also Citizenship classes. She has improved her English, received her GED and has applied for her Citizenship.

Educational programs at the Stanislaus County Correctional facilities:

Through a partnership with Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department, SLC provides tutoring for inmates in GED studies and in reading. Last year, 300 adults were tutored and 39 received a GED. Another 96% made a significant gain in their reading or math scores.

Partnerships enhance educational services

Partnerships have been a key method of doing business for ReadingWorks@Stanislaus Literacy Center. Here is a synopsis of some of the partnerships and the value these bring to literacy in Stanislaus County:

Stanislaus County Library provides funding, space, equipment and furnishings, collaboration on projects, and assists with recruiting of volunteers.

Community Services Agency provides funding and referrals to the program services plus supports the students with childcare and transportation.

Alliance Worknet provides funding and referrals to the program and access to job readiness software. They also provide assistance to the students with childcare and transportation.

Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department provides funding and facilities.

United Way provides funding and collaboration opportunities

Riverbank School District: provides funding, facilities for classes and referrals to program

Sierra Vista Children and Family Services provides facilities, funding and referrals of students to the programs.

Parent Resource Center provides facilities, childcare and transportation for students and referral of students to program

City of Modesto and Housing Authority provide facilities for classes

AspiraNet: Provides a location for GED classes in Turlock.

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**Check out our website at
www.readingworks.net**



Wine, Jazz and Movie Event netted over \$12K

This year's Wine, Jazz and Movie event netted over \$12,000 for literacy — an increase of \$2,000 over last year. The event's Title Sponsor was Save Mart Cares. Hallmark Movie Channel and Hallmark Channel also contributed highly to the event by paying for the transportation and speaker fees for Stacey Bess to attend the event.

Stacey wrote a book about her true experience teaching in a K-12 one room school-room in a homeless shelter. Hallmark Hall of Fame then adapted the book to the movie, *Beyond the Blackboard*, which was shown at the event. Stacy told some of her story and introduced the movie.

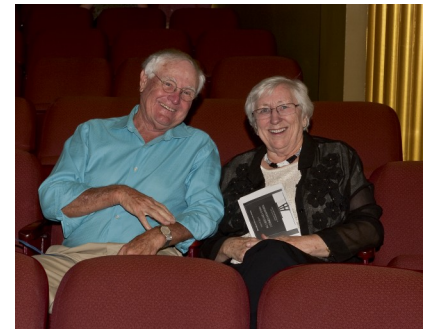
Other sponsors who donated at least \$1,000 included Rabobank, John T. Cunningham of Ameriprise Financial, Charter Communications and Comcast Communications and Valley First Credit Union. Other sponsors were MID and MOCSE Credit Union.

In-kind sponsors of at least \$250 included Modesto Bee, Hilmar Cheese Co., EJ Gallo Winery, Sally Gerbo Designs, Bordona Home Furnishings, and Gold Coast Protection.



Pictures by Jack McBride

www.mcbridephotographics.com



Special thanks to SaveMart Cares, the title sponsor of this event.

Your talent and expertise could help our organization thrive and serve even more adults next year.

Volunteers needed for board; fundraising

Stanislaus Literacy Center has set a goal of being less dependent on shrinking government funding and instead, developing partnerships with community members to support the free education provided to adults in Stanislaus County.

To achieve this goal, help is being sought from

community members with a passion for education to share expertise and talents with our organization to help us meet this goal. Please contact Karen Williams at 209-522-0656 if you are interested in learning more about opportunities to help ReadingWorks @ Stanislaus Literacy Center thrive.

Ways to Help Us:

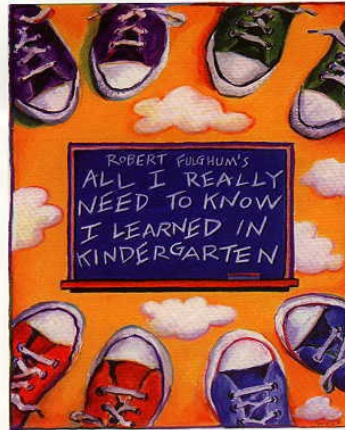
- Volunteer to assist in introducing others to the work of SLC
- Join the Board of Directors and provide leadership
- Teach students

Spotlights on Reading – A Reader’s Theater event

On Feb. 17 and 18, this year’s fundraising event, “Spotlights on Reading,” will feature the dramatic presentation of “All I Really Need To Know I Learned in Kindergarten” by Robert Fulghum.

This reflective and entertaining piece of literature will be presented with dramatic readings, music and humorous interludes. Kimberly Ogden, the volunteer who produced last year’s acclaimed “Children of the Dust Bowl” will again spearhead this production.

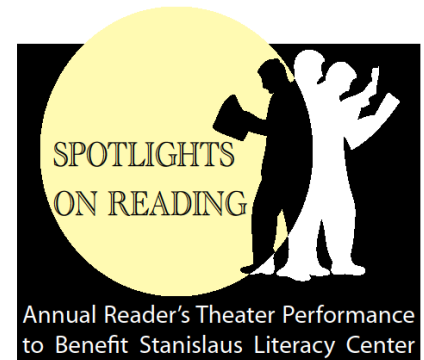
Tickets are available by call-



ing 522-0656 or online at www.readingworks.net/events.

The performance on Friday evening will include a wine and cheese reception. The Saturday performances will be a matinee at 1 p.m. and a dinner at 6 p.m.

Last year’s production was so well received, the cast and crew gave an encore performance at Gallo Arts Center in October. Save the dates so you can make sure to attend this year’s event.



Feb. 17 at 7 p.m.
Feb. 18 at 1 pm and 6 pm
Petersen Event Center

Your donation can provide the following:
\$50 = books for one student for one yr.
\$100= books and bus passes for one student for one yr.
\$300 = everything needed to help a student for one yr.

Thank You Donors for Bringing Reading to Lives

We could not have helped almost 1500 adults without your generosity.

Donors contribute to “Bring Reading to Lives”

Individual and business donations to Stanislaus Literacy Center provided over \$83,000 to help bring reading to lives. Here is a list of those who gave to the cause of Literacy in Stanislaus County:

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Bringing Reading to Lives

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