



Literacy Council for Josephine County

"Changing lives through learning since 1986"

FALL/WINTER, 2023-2024

106 N.W. F St. #18, Grants Pass, OR

Spanish-speaking tutor teams with student from Mexico forging a strong bond and cultural connection

Every Saturday, Anita Savio drives to Grants Pass from her home in Cave Junction, walks up the stairs to the Literacy Council office behind Newman United Methodist Church, unlocks the door and prepares for the next lesson with her student, Jose Martinez.

When he arrives, they settle into one of the smaller classrooms and spend the next 90 minutes working on reading and writing, with an emphasis on conversation.

"We are now on Book 3 of the four-book Ventures series," Anita says.

A native of Mexico, Jose moved to the United States about two years ago to be closer to his parents.

He holds down two jobs: as a cook at a Mexican restaurant and as part of a house painting crew.

When he decided he wanted to improve his English language skills about five months ago, a neighbor directed him to the Literacy Council.

Anita came to the Literacy Council eager to do some volunteer work.

"I wanted to do something more useful and more rewarding than watching too much TV," she says.

Before she moved to Southern Oregon, Anita had lived 10 years in Mexico, teaching English and working as a reporter for an English language newspaper



Jose Martinez and Anita Savio work together in the Literacy Council office in Grants Pass. Anita is helping Jose improve his English reading, writing and speaking skills.

in Mexico City.

Fluent in Spanish, she was a natural fit to work with Jose, though she conducts class in English, as much as possible.

"He has a limited English vocabulary and grammar, but we try to avoid speaking Spanish," she says.

"In class, we do a lot of language exercises, including the opportunity to speak extemporaneously."

Though Jose is eager to learn, does his homework and is making progress, Anita says that he has very few opportunities outside of class to practice his English.

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 on Facebook

CALENDAR

Upcoming Board Meetings

Meetings are at 12:15 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month, at the Literacy Council office, 132 N.E. B St., Room 23, on the third floor of the Newman United Methodist Church offices.

Dec. 20	March 20
Jan. 17	April 17
Feb. 21	May 15

 If you would prefer to receive the Literacy Council's twice-yearly newsletter via email, let us know, by contacting us at jocoliteracy@yahoo.com. Include your name and address as well as the email address we should send it to.

Why literacy matters

- The literacy levels of parents are crucial in predicting their children's literacy levels and educational attainment. *(National Institute for Literacy)*
 - More than 20% of adults read at or below a fifth-grade level, which prevents them from working at jobs with a living wage, hinders their ability to vote, and impedes their ability to read a newspaper. *(National Institute for Literacy)*
 - Adults who have not received high school diplomas are unemployed at nearly three times the rate of their peers with high school diplomas. *(State of Oregon Employment Dept.)*
 - The single greatest indicator of children's success is the literacy level of their parents.
 - 43% of adults with low literacy skills live in poverty
 - 36 million adults in the U.S. have low literacy skills.

**Break the cycle of poverty:
 Reach a child in need — Teach an adult to read.**

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He has little need to speak English at either of his jobs, and he lives with his family, so he doesn't speak English at home.

"His lack of immersion in an English speaking environment is a definite learning problem," Anita says.

Still, she admires Jose's enthusiasm and his commitment to doing the work and sees a lot of potential.

"Jose is a dedicated student and it's a joy to work with him," Anita says.



The Literacy Council's Board of Directors has made a new year's resolution for 2024: to build our pool of active tutors, which has been seriously depleted since the coronavirus pandemic.

Please consider becoming a Literacy Council tutor and, like Anita, reap the rewards of making a difference in someone's life.



Cultivating literacy empowers community

Literacy enables us to function in society, to achieve our goals and to develop our knowledge and potential.

Sadly, 20% of adults in America have low literacy levels. This means that one in five of us struggles to fill out a job application, read a prescription bottle or help a child with homework.

The impact isn't just on the individual, but extends into the economy, the workforce and the overall health of the community.

The Literacy Council for Josephine County is unique in its role in the Southern Oregon adult literacy community.

For 37 years, the Literacy Council has been working to improve adult literacy and change lives for the better.

We offer high-quality, no-cost, one-on-one education to those looking to improve

their lives, whether through learning English, advancing their reading and writing skills, overcoming the obstacles of dyslexia or advancing success through citizenship.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a huge disruption to education all around the world. It was a disruption that touched the Literacy Council as well, as our office was shut down and one-on-one tutoring was suspended for more than a year.

As with many other businesses and nonprofits, the Literacy Council has been struggling to get back on track. Tutors who suspended their work during the pandemic have been slow to return, and even the board of directors has had difficulties renewing its ranks.

Potential students, though, are still seeking our services. The need for the work we do continues.

Since 1986, the Literacy Council has been changing lives through learning. Providing tools. Providing language. Providing opportunity.

We want to ensure that we are able to continue to bring education to our community and meet the needs of some of its most marginalized members.

Community support is the primary way we are able to do this, whether it's through monetary contributions or through building our base of volunteers.

Either way, your contribution to the Literacy Council is an investment in the health and well being of our community.

With your help, we can continue to provide quality, accessible, affordable education to those who need it most and to

build a stronger, more stable community for all.

Please consider a gift using the envelope enclosed in this newsletter. Or, visit our website, literacyjoco.weebly.com, to make a secure donation online.

With gratitude and an eye toward a brighter future,

The Literacy Council Board of Directors

If you would like someone from the Literacy Council to speak at one of your organization's meetings, please contact Dee Pierce at 541-291-0004 or pierceda@q.com.





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*Wishing you old-fashioned
pleasures, happy memories,
and all the joys of the season*

*"We make a living by what we earn. We make a life by what we give."
— Winston Churchill*

The Literacy Council for Josephine County
106 N.E.W. F St. #18
Grants Pass, OR, 97526