



Literacy Action Corps of Columbia

Summer/Fall 2013

Student Stories

ELL student Jun Ahn and her LAC tutor Leslie Clay worked together for over a year on Jun Ahn's goal to earn a Master's degree in Art Education from University of Missouri-Columbia—and Jun Ahn did!

Jun Ahn and Leslie started working in spring of 2011. Jun Ahn's English grammar and pronunciation needed improvement, and they practiced through conversation. Jun Ahn also learned American idioms and culture. Each week, Jun Ahn and Leslie met at Leslie's work or Jun Ahn's apartment and discussed current events and news articles, covering topics from the arrival of the Weinermobile to the anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr's "I have a dream" speech. Jun Ahn also kept track of phrases from TV shows that confused her, which Leslie and she would break down.



Jun Ahn and Leslie Clay

Jun Ahn and Leslie also edited Jun Ahn's essays for her classes. Leslie helped proof-read Jun Ahn's main research paper. Working on the papers together gave Jun Ahn a polished product and Leslie a chance to learn a bit about art education.

During the time Jun Ahn and Leslie worked together, Jun Ahn not only succeeded in achieving her Master's degree in Art Education, but also had a baby. Earning a Master's degree and managing a growing family, all while improving her English language skills took hard work, but Jun Ahn succeeded in meeting the goals she set for herself with her LAC tutor. Today, Jun Ahn is back in Korea with her family.

Mark Your Calendars!

NEW Tutor Training Sessions Begin in September

Literacy Action Corps will host Tutor training sessions:

**September 17, 24th, October
1st, 8th, and 15th
First Baptist Church**

All training sessions are required for prospective tutors.

The deadline for registration is **DEADLINE DATE.**

**Annual Volunteer
Appreciation Dinner
Tuesday,
November 12
Dinner Times
The First
Presbyterian Church**

Literacy Action Corps
of Columbia
P.O. Box 7105
Columbia, MO 65205
(573) 442-4280



Donations

LAC continues to receive generous donations from the community! We thank all of our donors for their contributions to LAC. The generosity of donors is vital to LAC's mission to support adult literacy education. Donations go a long way and are put to good use. The need for training materials continues, as with each training session as LAC adds more volunteer tutors to its ranks. These tutors work with a growing number of ELL and ABL students in our community. Please remember LAC as you or your organization consider charitable giving in 2013 and in the coming year. Thank you again!

A very special **"THANK YOU!"** to our donors:



*Thank
you!*

First Baptist Church (for in-kind contributions)

The First Presbyterian Church

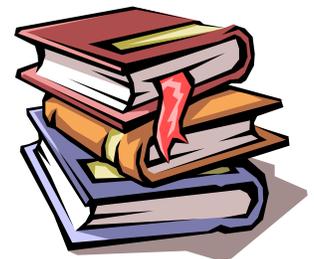
Shelter Foundation

Literacy News

September is National Literacy Month. Please take time during the month of September to share with others the importance of literacy education and LAC's mission to train volunteer to help improve the literacy of ELL and ABL students throughout our community.

Worldwide, approximately 26 percent of the population is non-literate.¹ Within the United States, millions of adults can't read well enough to learn a living wage. Millions of internationals in the United States can't speak, read, or write English, hindering their ability to find employment and achieve citizenship. Improved literacy skills positively affect many aspects of life for adults with low literacy. Literacy can improve an adult's life expectancy, health, income, as well as the academic success of his or her children.

Throughout the year, the LAC's volunteer tutors work with students in our community to achieve the literacy goals students set for themselves. These tutor-student partnerships produce real results for both the students and tutors, and can develop into rewarding friendships. Please spread the word about literacy education and LAC's work during National Literacy Month!



¹ (2013). *Fact Sheets*. Retrieved from <http://www.proliteracy.org/news/fact-sheets>

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FROM TUTORS

In order to make our annual report to ProLiteracy, we need to know many hours you have spent on LAC tutoring during 2013. Please email laccolumbia@yahoo.com with the following information: your name, your student's name(s), and how many hours you have spent with each of them in 2013 (please include both tutoring and prep time). Please don't include any hours you have already reported. Estimates are fine. Thank you!

Tutor Tips and Tools

This installment of “Tutor Tips and Tools” comes from Margaret Ruvalcaba, an ELL tutor with LAC.

A great way to learn new vocabulary and practice conversation is to take a step away from the study desk and get out and explore the town. It's also a fun way for students to become more familiar with American culture and their community.

Excursions can be free or inexpensive or they can be a little more costly, whichever best suits both tutor and student. An inexpensive outing is a trip to a local second-hand shop, such as Upscale Resale. If a student is at a “basic” level of English comprehension, tutor and student can walk through the shop and identify the names of each item for sale. It's an opportunity to practice vocabulary with actual objects, rather than using pictures in a book.

Another inexpensive outing is a visit to a yard sale. It's a fun way to spend a Saturday morning practicing vocabulary, experiencing American culture, and possibly scoring a deal on a great yard sale find. For a student working on “basic” English vocabulary, it's a chance to practice the names of commonplace household objects as well as discover the names of unusual items (you never know what you'll find at a yard sale). For a more “advanced” student, explain the practice of bargaining for a better price.



A free event during the summer is attending a concert during the annual Shelter Gardens Concert Series. The series showcases classic music, jazz, and songs popular from past generations. The concerts are a way to experience American culture, as outdoor summer concerts have been and continue to be a tradition in small communities. Much of the music is instrumental, so ELL students can enjoy without trying to decipher lyrics.



A trip to the Ashland rodeo can be a fun introduction to what is now considered a “Western” pastime and an opportunity to become familiar with different aspects of American culture. The “Cattleman Days Rodeo” takes place August 23rd and 24th and includes events such as a parade, a kids' rodeo, “the roundup” (which includes roping and stick horse barrels), and music. Use the explanation of the events in the program to guide discussion with the student.

Since Columbia is a college town, attending a college sporting event is easy and fun even though it can be a little pricey. A student might be interested in going to a game, which would be another chance to experience American culture and learn new terms as sports have their own lingo.

There are so many ways for students and tutors to practice English, so get out and have some fun!

Some of the best tutoring techniques come from our fellow tutors. Please share your favorite tips and tools for success to be included in future issues of this newsletter. We can all learn from each other!

E-mail ideas to laccolumbia@yahoo.com or send them to LAC at P. O. Box 7105, Columbia, MO, 65205-7105.

Student Success Story

ELL tutor Fern Anderson and her student Min Kyoung are a great example of the successful partnerships that develop through LAC and of the progress students make.

As a new resident of Columbia, Fern came upon an ad in the Columbia Daily Tribune for LAC's training sessions. The workshop for ABL tutoring interested Fern and seemed like a good way to get acquainted with her new community and to participate in the community as a volunteer. Fern had no teaching background, but she wanted to give tutoring a try. Like other individuals interested in volunteering with LAC, Fern was at first interested in becoming an ABL tutor. However, she soon learned that the demand for ELL tutors was much greater. The international community in Columbia continues to grow and the need for ELL tutors is growing. Fern completed the ELL tutor training in 2012 and when she was matched with student Min Kyoung, she was glad she had decided to become an ELL tutor.

Fern describes Min Kyoung as a "delightful person" and says that the progress she made was "unreal". Tutor and student typically met at the library to work on Min Kyoung's pronunciation. Min Kyoung had learned English in school, but she had mostly learned to write and understand it, not speak it. Min Kyoung's goal was to speak conversational English better, which she accomplished.

When they weren't meeting at the library, Min Kyoung and Fern did other activities together. They sometimes went shopping, which was a chance to converse about different topics, practice vocabulary, and explore American culture.



Once, Min Kyoung and her husband and two children planned a camping trip. Fern helped them prepare for the trip. She and Min Kyoung went grocery shopping for the trip and Fern

taught Min Kyoung how to make lunch meat sandwiches and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches—Min Kyoung had never before made these typical American foods.

Min Kyoung invited Fern and her granddaughter (who is about the same age as one of Min Kyoung's children) to her home to celebrate a Korean fall festival. Min Kyoung introduced Fern to traditional Korean festival food. Fern enjoyed learning a little about Korean culture.

The tutor-student relationship between Min Kyoung and Fern eventually became a friendship. When it came time for Min Kyoung and her family to return to Korea, her two children wanted to stay in the United States. Now that the family is back in Korea, Fern misses Min Kyoung. They try to stay in touch via email.

Having the opportunity to practice conversational English with Fern while in the United States, Min Kyoung returned to Korea with greatly improved English skills.

If you and your student have a tutoring story or experience to share, please email laccolumbia@yahoo.com or mail LAC at P.O. Box 7105, Columbia, MO, 65205.

Come See LAC!

Stop by and visit LAC's booth at the annual Hey Day at Columbia College's Bass Commons on September 3rd and at the annual MU Volunteer Fair on Lowry Mall on September 17th.

Literacy Action Corps of Columbia is a non-profit organization founded in 1968. It is affiliated nationally with ProLiteracy Worldwide, and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.