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Literally Speaking

Empowering adults to achieve greater success in their lives through literacy skill development

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IMPORTANT DATES

Limited Library Hours

December 22-24

Library Closed for Christmas Day

Thursday, December 25

Limited Library Hours

December 29-31

Library Closed for New Years Day

Thursday, January 1, 2026

Tutor Connection

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

BIRTHDAYS



to some of our fabulous Volunteers!

Peter

Judy

Nancy

Cindy

December 2025

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM PAL



Wishing You a Joyous Holiday Season!

We would like to extend our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones for a happy and peaceful holiday season. Thank you for a wonderful year — we truly appreciate your support and contributions. We look forward to all that the New Year will bring!

From,

Your PAL Gals



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PAL UPDATE: Library Holiday Hours

Please note the Library has adjusted their hours for the holidays.



Newport Beach Library Holiday Hours

Monday, December 22 - Library Closes at 6:00PM

Tuesday, December 23 - Library Closes at 6:00PM

Wednesday, December 24 - Library Closes at 1:00PM

Thursday, December 25 - Library Closed

Monday, December 29 - Library Closes at 6:00PM

Tuesday, December 30 - Library Closes at 6:00PM

Wednesday, December 31 - Library Closes at 1:00PM

Thursday, January 1 - Library Closed



**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS**



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EVENT RECAP: Literacy Holiday Potluck

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's Literacy Holiday Potluck! It is always amazing to see the Literacy community come together and celebrate PAL's yearly successes. We appreciate you (and your families) for continuously supporting this program and supporting each other.



Between the engaging conversations, the wonderful connections, and the delicious food, this is one of our favorite events of the year. Plus this was a great way to kick off the holiday season!



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LEARNER HIGHLIGHT: Meet Candace Kirby

Could you tell us a bit about your journey learning English?
When did you start, and what motivated you?

Life took a challenging turn for me at the age of nine when I lost my mother to breast cancer. Growing up without her guidance was difficult, and I faced many ups and downs that made my early education a struggle. Reading, writing, and comprehension were particularly hard, leaving me feeling lost in a world that often felt overwhelming.

However, rather than letting my past define my future, I sought a path toward improvement. In May 2018, I found a lifeline through Project Adult Literacy at the Newport Beach Public Library. My motivation to learn English was driven by my determination to support my children academically and socially. I wanted to be present in their lives, not just as a parent but as an active participant in their experiences.

In April 2019, I was honored to be invited as the guest speaker at the Gift of Literacy Luncheon at the Pacific Club in Newport Beach. Sharing my story with others was a profound experience, and I was deeply moved by how many attendees were touched by my journey and inspired by my courage.

Initially, I battled social anxiety, which made it difficult to engage in social situations. I often preferred to observe rather than participate.

But through the supportive environment of the literacy program, I began to build confidence. Now, I can articulate my thoughts clearly and feel included in our vibrant sports community. I still respect my boundaries, but I no longer shy away from engaging with others.



Candace Kirby
Previous PAL Learner



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LEARNER HIGHLIGHT: Meet Candace Kirby

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when you were first learning English, especially with reading and writing?

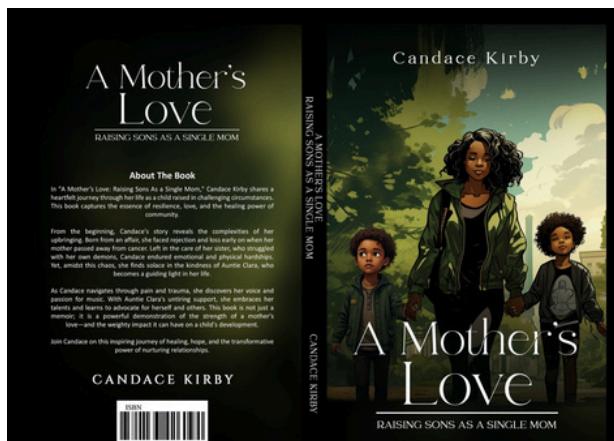
I often felt embarrassed to read out loud or even to ask questions during my tutoring sessions. I worried about sounding stupid, even though I was there to learn and receive help. However, I didn't let that fear stop me; I put my pride aside and focused on the belief that I would improve.

Writing was another significant challenge. At the age of 32, I struggled to construct proper, complete sentences. Revisiting the basics of English not only reminded me of what I had learned before but also introduced me to new information that strengthened my foundation over time.

Congratulations on writing a book! Can you tell us about the book? What is it about, and what inspired you to write it?

My book is titled "A Mother's Love: Raising Sons as a Single Mom." It tells the story of my journey as a single mother, navigating the unique challenges and joys of raising my sons. I wanted to share my experiences and the lessons I've learned along the way, hoping to resonate with other mothers who may be facing similar situations.

The inspiration behind writing this book stems from my desire to empower single moms and provide them with a sense of community. I believe that our stories can inspire others to find strength and resilience in their own lives. Writing this book was a cathartic process for me, allowing me to reflect on my journey and celebrate the love I have for my children.



Candace's book - "A Mother's Love" will be available to check out from the Literacy Office!

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LEARNER HIGHLIGHT: Meet Candace Kirby

How has writing this book impacted your confidence, particularly in your English language abilities?

Writing this book has significantly boosted my confidence in my English skills. It showed me that I could express my thoughts and feelings in writing, which was once a daunting task. However, I want to acknowledge that just because I wrote a book doesn't mean I'm perfect. I still have moments where I say the wrong thing or feel the urge to run away from social interactions.

Each day, I strive to be better than I was yesterday, embracing the growth that comes from both my successes and my challenges. The journey of learning and improving is ongoing, and I'm committed to continuing that path.



What advice would you give to other adult English language learners who dream of writing a book?

My advice to fellow adult English learners who aspire to write a book is simple: start writing, no matter how imperfect it feels. Don't let your fear of making mistakes hold you back. Writing is a process, and it's okay to start with rough drafts. Focus on expressing your ideas and experiences; the more you write, the more your skills will improve.

Also, seek support from others—whether through writing groups, mentors, or literacy programs. Sharing your work with others can provide valuable feedback and encouragement. Remember, every writer has faced challenges, but perseverance is key. Believe in your voice and your story; it matters.

Thanks to this program, I've transformed my challenges into strengths, proving that it's never too late to learn and grow.

Congratulations!

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SAVE THE DATE: 2026 PAL Events

SAVE THE DATE

Here is the schedule for our 2026 PAL Program Events.

Add these dates to your calendar so you don't miss one of our fabulous events!

2026

Please note: dates and times are tentative to change.

PROJECT ADULT LITERACY - 2026 PROGRAM DATES

JANUARY

TUTOR CONNECTION - AMERICA LEARNS - TUESDAY, JAN. 20 FROM 10:00-12:00PM
NEW INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION - TUESDAY, JAN. 27 FROM 10:00-12:00PM

FEBRUARY

MARCH

SCLLN ANNUAL CONFERENCE - SATURDAY, MARCH 14 FROM 8:00-2:00PM
COFFEE WITH THE COORDINATOR - TUESDAY, MARCH 31 FROM 2:00-4:00PM

APRIL

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION LUNCHEON - SATURDAY, APR. 25 FROM 11:00-1:00PM
LEARNER ASSESSMENTS - (TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY)

MAY

ANNUAL TUTOR/LEARNER CONFERENCES - (MONDAY/TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY)

JUNE

ROLES & GOALS DUE

JULY

COFFEE WITH THE COORDINATOR - TUESDAY, JULY 14 FROM 10:00-12:00PM
IN OUR OWN WORDS DUE
HOFFMAN NOMINATIONS DUE

AUGUST

NEW INSTRUCTOR ORIENTATION - MONDAY, AUGUST 17 FROM 2:00-4:00PM

SEPTEMBER

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY - THURSDAY, SEPT. 10 FROM 10:30-12:30PM
TUTOR CONNECTION - READING/WRITING - TUESDAY, SEPT. 15 FROM 2:00-4:00PM

OCTOBER

ANNUAL VOLUNTEER INSERVICE - WEDNESDAY, OCT. 7 FROM 10:00-12:00PM

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5 FROM 10:30-12:30PM

**Dates are tentative to change