



Today a Reader. Tomorrow a Leader.

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November 16, 2009

Dear Donor,

This is the time of year to give thanks, and no one could be more thankful than I. Drugs and corruption were destroying my community in Mexico so we moved to Asheville in 2000. I was unable to speak English. I was further isolated because I did not have a driver's license. Parent-teacher conferences at my children's schools were unproductive and I couldn't help my children with their homework. I felt their embarrassment and knew I needed help.

Everything changed when I became a student with the Literacy Council. Because some of the staff are bilingual, they could easily explain the program to me and make me feel welcome. Not only did they promise a tutor who did not expect to be paid, they matched me with a neighbor, Chris Fenny. Since she lived across the street from me, my lack of transportation was no longer a problem. Being tutored in my home also meant that I did not have to find and pay for childcare which would have been an obstacle.

This unique, one-on-one tutoring gave me the skills, and the courage, to speak, read and write English. I am now able to engage with others more freely and I completed my GED in 2004. It was a bittersweet day in 2005 when I graduated from the Literacy Council. I wanted to show my appreciation for all that I was given, so I took the training to become a tutor myself. I now teach one of the eight weekly classes at St. Eugene's Catholic Church. Being able to give back to the community that has given my family so much means the world to me.

I have also been licensed to open a pre-school. All of my students are native English speakers but I am teaching in both English and Spanish. These parents want their children to be bilingual from the very earliest age. I am grateful for this opportunity which would not have been possible without the Literacy Council.

Won't you help the Literacy Council this Thanksgiving? \$20 will pay for materials for one student who may be out of work and with no extra resources; \$100 will provide training for four tutors who may be retired or unemployed, unable to pay their fees; and for only \$1.85 per day, you can become a member of the Leader's Circle. Contact Mignon Durham with any questions and be thankful that over 14,000 volunteer hours each year are creating tales of triumph for so many in our community.

Sincerely,

Luz Maldonado
Volunteer Tutor