



Hivemind

WARMING UP

As things warm up and the pandemic (hopefully) continues to cool down, there is much to report: new tutors, new programs, new staff, a new board member, and renewed energy to improve literacy in our community. The chilling effect of COVID continues to abate and we anticipate an enormous need for tutors once school gets back on a normal footing this fall. Youth Program Coordinator Betsy Hood will be working with all eight Communities in Schools sites to place tutors with students who have lost ground during the pandemic. If you or someone you know would be interested in pitching in to help a K-12 student get back on track, please contact us at YouthProgram@rcliteracy.org. We have also been tapped to assist with a Summer Camp for English Language Arts at North Rowan High School this July 7-23. Tutors will help students master concepts and complete requirements that many struggled with during the challenging 2020-2021 school year. Contact us to sign up! Our new Adult Program Coordinator Miguel Bustos (more on p. 2) is working to reduce our adult waiting list and bring new tutors on board.

HARRELL JOINS BOARD

Bonnie Harrell recently joined the board of RCLC. Harrell is a Student Support Specialist for Communities in Schools and has worked with students at Isenberg Elementary School for the past four years. In her role, she matches students with tutors to focus on literacy. In addition to the Gator Reading Club, she offers Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Girls on the Run, Why Try groups, and mentoring for Isenberg students. Before coming to CIS, Bonnie worked as a Substance Abuse Counselor for 23 years. She is married and lives in Salisbury with her husband Will. They have two adult children who live in Charlotte. Welcome Bonnie!



Bonnie Harrell brings a passion for youth literacy to her role as board member for the Rowan County Literacy Council.



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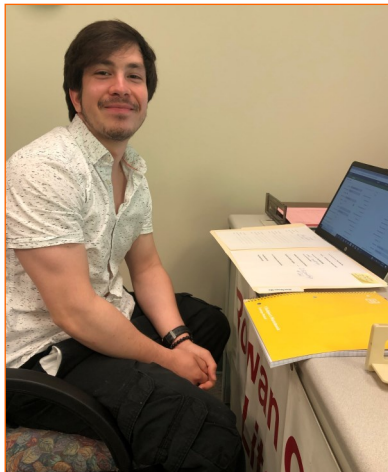
RCLC ADDS SECOND PROGRAM COORDINATOR

When Miguel Bustos Rivero bounced into the RCLC office in November to sign up for one-on-one English language tutoring, it was hard not to conjure up an image of Tigger bounding into the room to greet Piglet and Pooh.

Sunny outlook? Check.
High energy? Check.

After a brief time on the waiting list, Miguel, a native of Venezuela, began working with tutor Joel Scott. Miguel had a good command of written English, but needed help with conversation, vocabulary, idioms, and pronunciation. His tutor worked with him to expand his vocabulary, and helped him start preparing for his first goal, getting his NC driver's license.

During the time they worked together, Miguel also received his work authorization from US Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS). Joel helped Miguel navigate the process of applying for work in his new country.



As it happened, there was a job opportunity quite close at hand. The Literacy Council had been planning to hire a second part-time program coordinator to handle the Adult Program, after bring in Betsy Hood in January to focus on the Youth Program. Our adult program is roughly 75-80% ESL students and 20-25% Adult Basic Education (ABE) students. Most of the ESL students are Spanish-speakers, so we hoped to hire a native Spanish speaker for

the position. Miguel decided to apply for the position and his tutor helped him draft his resume and cover letter and prepare for the interview.

The rest is history.

Did it hurt that Miguel has a law degree and is an IT whiz? Not a bit. Miguel joined the RCLC team in late March and has leapt enthusiastically into his new role. If you are in the library on Thursdays or Fridays, please come say hello.

“To the uneducated, an A is just three sticks.”

— A. A. Milne

LIBRARY HQ HOURS

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9:00 am - 9:00 pm	9:00 am - 9:00 pm	9:00 am - 9:00 pm	9:00 am - 6:00 pm	9:00 am - 5:00 pm	9:00 am - 5:00 pm	Closed

UPCOMING RPL HOLIDAYS/CLOSURES

May 29-31

Closed—Memorial Day Holiday

July 5

Closed—4th of July (observed)

NEW TUTORS SWELL RCLC RANKS

In recent weeks, seven—count 'em,—seven new volunteers have completed the training process to become tutors for the Rowan County Literacy Council (RCLC).

Melissa Gillis is a U.S. Navy veteran who served in Desert Storm. She holds a master's degree in Business Administration. Melissa is currently tutoring two adult ESL students.

Amanda Day has teaching experience in early childhood education and currently is working in the home health field. She is tutoring an adult ESL student.

Helen Kichefski is a retired ESL teacher who spent 20 years in RSS district schools. Helen is working with youth in the tutoring center at North Rowan High School.

Sarah Wooten is a retired nurse who recently moved back to Salisbury after living in the mountains for the past several years. Sarah is tutoring an adult ABE student and will

also be active in RCLC's youth programs.

Ana Avila is a former ESL student at RCLC and has now transitioned into the role of a tutor. Ana has a bachelor's degree in psychology from her home country of Honduras. She is working with adult ESL students over Zoom.

Soila Medina has a bachelor's degree and is working as a chiropractic assistant. She is currently tutoring an adult ESL learner.

Katie Kessler currently teaches at a music school and has joined RCLC as a youth program tutor. She is volunteering at North Rowan High School, helping students stay on track toward graduation.

Please give them all a warm RCLC welcome if you see them in the library!



Clockwise from top left: New tutors Melissa Gillis, Amanda Day, Helen Kichefski, Sarah Wooten, Katie Kessler, Soila Medina, and Ana Avila.



SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP FOR RCLC

Pro tip: AmazonSmile is an easy way to chip in to help out your favorite charitable organizations. AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible purchases made via AmazonSmile to whatever charitable organization you specify. (Hint, hint, pick us!)

To reach the AmazonSmile site, simply type [Smile.Amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) into your web browser. Once you sign up for the program, it will connect with your existing Amazon account, so your shopping cart, registries, and account settings will transfer over. If you're an Amazon Prime member, those benefits will transfer as well. You can also access AmazonSmile on the retailer's shopping app. Navigate to the app settings, tap on "AmazonSmile," and follow the instructions to start generating those micro-donations!

Note that AmazonSmile specifies "eligible" purchases because not every item on the site qualifies for donations. There are tens of millions of eligible products, but some items, such as recurring subscribe-and-save purchases, are not.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

The Buzz

GRANT NEWS = GREAT NEWS

The Rowan County Literacy Council has again received grant funding from the **Blanche and Julian Robertson Family Foundation** in support of both our Adult and Youth Programs. The Robertson Foundation was created in 1997 as a charitable entity dedicated to making positive change in Salisbury by addressing social issues, nurturing positive relationships, increasing opportunities for at-risk youth, and improving educational opportunities, among other priorities. Funds will be used to continue to recruit and train new tutors, provide educational materials, and help us provide the personalized one-on-one tutoring for adults and youths that is so effective in

changing lives for the better. We are honored to have been chosen as a 2021 grant recipient.

RCLC has also received a 2021 **National Book Fund** grant which provides our adult literacy and basic education programs with materials to help teach adults to read or master English. These materials enable us to provide high-quality leveled workbooks and teacher's guides to our students and tutors, as well as picture dictionaries, GED study materials, short novels created with new readers in mind, and materials to help English Language Learners tackle a tricky new language.

IN MEMORIAM: LIZ HARRY

Tutor Liz Harry passed away in March after a bout with cancer. Liz started volunteering for RCLC in 2018 and worked with an ABE student, an ESL student, and numerous elementary-school students during her time as a tutor. She was a mentor to her students, always supporting them while encouraging them to reach for their goals. She modeled perseverance as she continued to tutor even during her chemotherapy sessions.

Early in her career, Liz worked as a teacher in South Carolina, but soon decided that the peripatetic life of a flight attendant was more to her liking. Liz loved to read, ride horses, ski, garden, and travel, and so in retirement, those became her favored pastimes. She began tutoring shortly after moving to Salisbury from Virginia.

Always energetic, illness did not slow Liz down and she continued to tutor, travel, and enjoy life fully. The Literacy Council is grateful for the dedication, selflessness, and generosity of spirit that Liz displayed during her time with the organization.



SO MUCH STYLE: HAT-I-TUDE CONTESTANTS SHINE



Riders Up! Just a few of the fabulous hats submitted in our 2021 online Kentucky Derby with “Hat-i-tude” contest. Competition was fierce and several categories came down to the wire! Many thanks to our generous event sponsors **Greg & Missie Alcorn, Sharonview Federal Credit Union, Custom Glass Products, Ting Hao Restaurant, Allison & Mark Doby, Dr. Nan Lund, Busby & Webb Orthodontics, and Kelly Freeze.** We look forward to an in-person event in 2022!

RCLC WHO'S WHO

2021 Board of Directors:

Don Doering-President
Nan Lund-Vice-President
Maggie Blackwell-Secretary
KC Scott-Treasurer
Wen Ye
Scott Maddox
Davian Ellison
Kelly Freeze-RCCC Rep
Macon Stewart
Allison Doby
Bonnie Harrell

Staff:

Laurel Harry-Executive Director
Betsy Hood-Youth Programs
Miguel Bustos-Adult Programs

BY THE NUMBERS...

18.5%

The 2020 recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic saw **adults with less than a high school diploma suffer the highest unemployment rate** (18.5% in May 2020) compared to all other education levels. This was worse than the peak of the great depression (17.9%).

—Pew Research Center FactTank
June 2020

30%

Overall, California students' oral reading fluency (ORF) assessments in second and third grade are approximately 30 percent **behind expectations** due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

—PACE (Policy Analysis for California Education)
March 2021

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Number of students currently on RCLC's adult waiting list. We have new students and several returning students waiting for tutors. If you have 90 minutes a week to help one of these students, please let us know.

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5