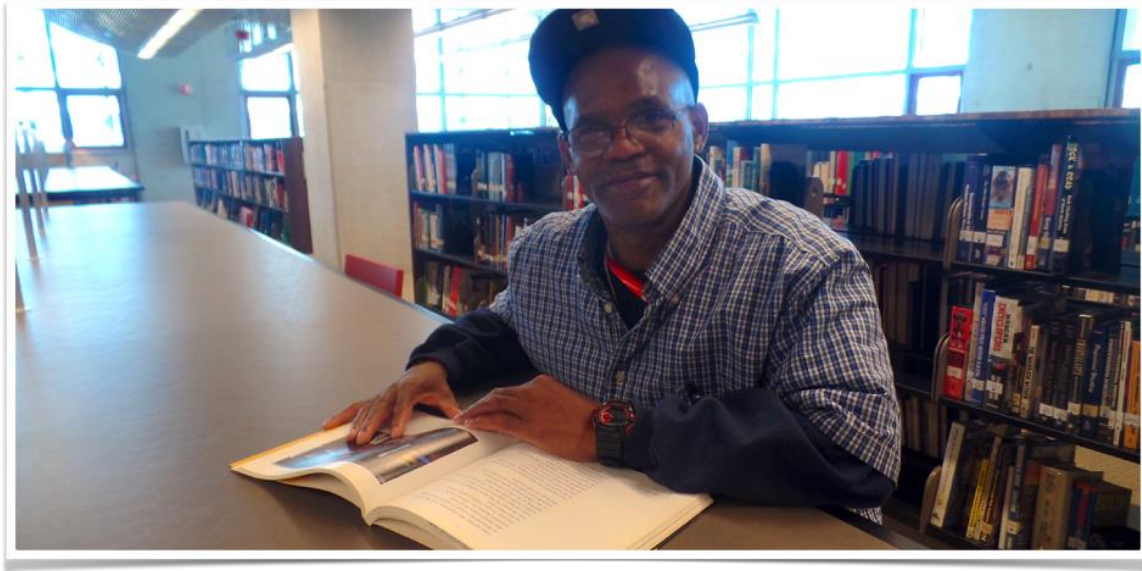


Antoinette Mosley
Adult Learner of the Year Award Winners



Kirk Bey

“Frustrations do come and there will always be bumps in the road, but the thing is to get past those things—and I have.”

Kirk has a special appreciation for READ/San Diego and the opportunities the organization has given him. He says, “Since I first started, I’ve gained a huge amount of progress.” Kirk read his first book—something he “never did in my lifetime”—and has been reading books ever since. “Everywhere I go, I take a book with me,” he says with a smile. Kirk is grateful to his mom, who brought the family to San Diego with just the clothes on their backs. “Where I came from, it wasn’t a nice place to live,” he reminisces. “We came to a better environment; she gave us a chance to live. If my mom never moved us from Chicago to San Diego, I may not be alive today.” Kirk’s main goal is to get his high school diploma. He says, “I promised my mom that I will get my high school diploma and I want to keep that promise.” He also encourages his children to excel in school. His oldest is about to graduate from high school and Kirk has made certain his son has completed all the requirements for graduation. Kirk says, “You’ll see yourself grow and when you see that, you’ll be even more motivated to make yourself proud and

make your family proud of you. But, you've got to do it for yourself because no one else can accomplish your goal but you."

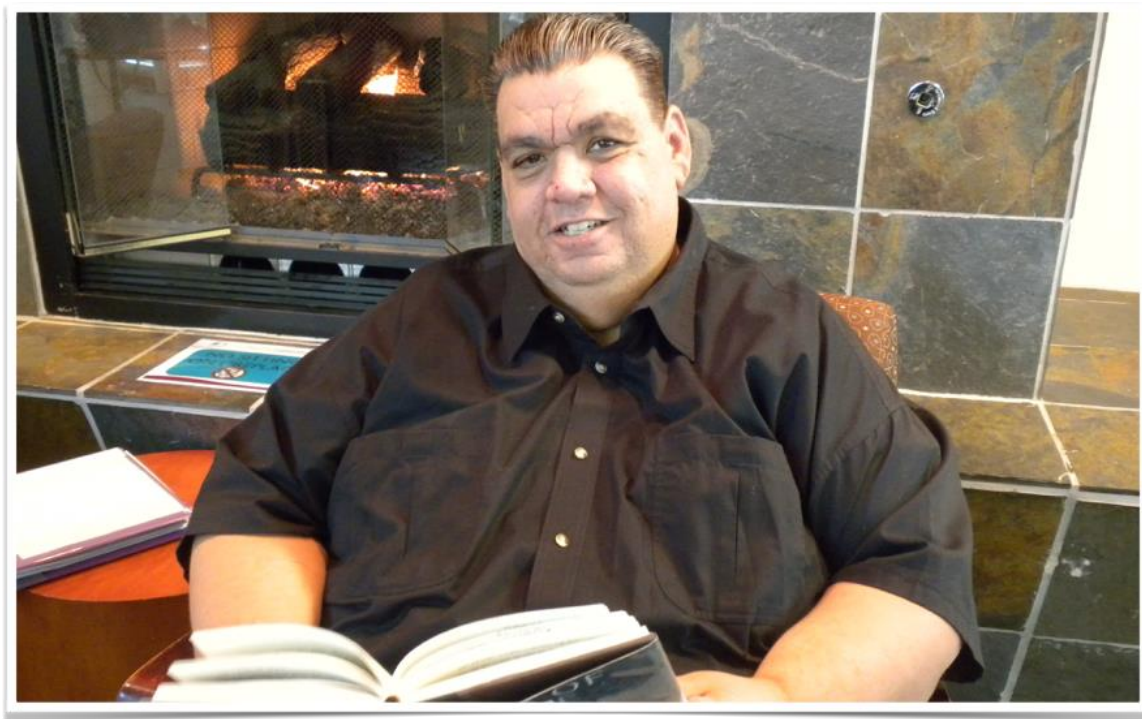


Lemlem “Eden” Ghidey

“I wish I could meet five days a week.”

As a mother of three school-aged children, Eden found it difficult to set time aside for improving her English literacy skills—a challenge she has overcome. She values her twice-weekly tutoring sessions and even wishes she could meet with her tutor more often. She says, “[Tutoring] warms up my mind to engage in English and to use the language in my life. I practice all the time.” Improved literacy skills have

enabled Eden to do things she wouldn't have attempted in the past. She's created flyers for her children's schools and participated in the adult literacy *Writer to Writer Challenge*. She helps children in kindergarten and first grade who struggle to read and she supports other parents who want to further their education. She says, “One mother needed help on Friday mornings and [weekday] afternoons. I help her out with her children so she could go to school.” Eden's ultimate plan includes getting a college degree, but that will be on hold until her children are older. In the meantime, she wants to keep improving her skills. She'd like to work or volunteer in the library—to be around reading and books. Eden says, “When I'm in the library, I feel like I'm in paradise.”



Ray Hernandez

“Being in this program has given me confidence in myself to achieve whatever I set my mind to.”

Ray is tenacious about his education, but that wasn't always the case. “I wasn't used to completing things,” he says. “Not giving up has been a challenge. It takes responsibility and accountability to show up for an hour and a half, twice per week. I'm proud of my commitment to this program.” Ray says, “My main goal is to find a good paying job so I can take care of my family. The program has helped me with job interviews because I can speak to individuals and make eye contact. I can even comprehend their questions better.” Ray notes that he used to have difficulty with complicated word problems, but his tutor has helped him with comprehension. “She showed me how to break it down so it became easier to understand. I'll have a moment where I think, ‘Wow, I actually get this! Wow, I can do this!’ The GED HiSET Exam has a total of five tests and I've completed both the reading and social studies tests. Now, I'm studying for math and science.” Ray acknowledges that he couldn't have accomplished so much without support. “I'm a Christian and that has played a role. My wife has been a major support to my education. She deserves to receive this award too. I couldn't have done this without her.”



Bichok Kier

“Reading is a gateway. There is no way around. You have to read to get what you want.”

Dedicated. Hard working. Determined. Bichok has accomplished a lot in three years’ work with his tutor. “When I started, my reading was poor and so was my writing and spelling. I’ve come a long way since then,” he says. “I feel really proud about that. I feel more confident.” Bichok notes that he has overcome many obstacles in pursuit of his education. He continues, “Grammar was a challenge for me and I still struggle a bit with spelling. I’m a family man and that’s another challenge—to have kids and to work and study. I have five kids. The youngest is one year old and the oldest is eleven. But the program is good for somebody like me who struggles with reading and is also a parent. If the parent doesn’t read, the kids won’t read. Before, I felt embarrassed when I read to them, but now I can read to my little girl.” Bichok’s ultimate goal is to get a college degree and obtain a better job. He says, “My tutor, Jenny, works very hard. She takes my education as her education. It’s never too late. You have to go to school and you have to want it.”



Edward Leonard

“You can do it. Don’t give up. It doesn’t matter what age you are.”

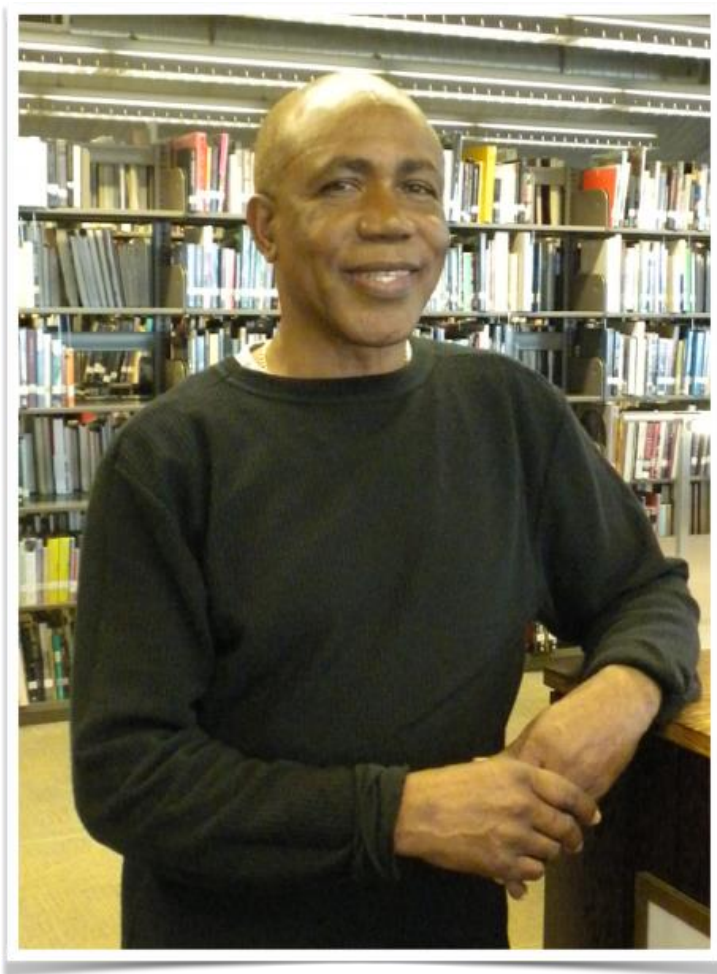
For Edward, learning to read was so intimidating that he avoided it. He used his inability to read as an excuse to make bad decisions. He dropped out of school in the seventh grade. He spent the next years of his life working and fighting a growing addiction. In 2014, finally free from addiction but now unemployed, Edward enrolled in READ/San Diego. He worked with a tutor and in the computer lab. His improved literacy skills led to finding not one, but two jobs. Still, despite working seven days a week, Edward has diligently made time for his studies. He sees the improvement in his reading skills. Work materials are easier to read. He’s read his first book cover to cover. And, reading no longer intimidates him! “I still have to ask questions,” he says, “but I don’t have to ask as much as I used to.” He knows he has a ways to go, but Edward has an eye to the future. His next goal is to get a driver’s license and eventually, he’d like to mentor new learners. He says, “It can be done, because I’m doing it.”



Ammu Sathiamurthi

“Keep studying hard. If you have to skip things to go to class, you need to go.”

Ammu is on a mission. She says, “I didn’t finish high school in my country and I want to finish high school here. I want to do everything I can for myself. I needed to do this for me—not anyone else. I’m motivated for learning. I’m improving a lot.” Indeed, Ammu has already accomplished an impressive list of goals. She applied for and obtained a job working for the Poway school district as a noon duty supervisor. She visited the literacy office with her tutor to get new materials, schedule an assessment meeting, and to discuss enrolling in Career Online High School. Despite the fact that, “spelling and grammar are the most difficult,” Ammu has also achieved several writing goals. She wrote an entrance essay for the high school program. She wrote a story—which was selected for publication—and submitted it to the "This is Your Page" section of *Easy English News*. She wrote a letter for the *Writer to Writer Challenge*, the annual adult learner writing contest. She even completed and submitted an online review of an orthodontist with whom she had a good experience. Ammu says, “I’m very thankful to my son every day for finding [this program] for me. My tutor is helping a lot.” In the future, Ammu wants to go to college to study Early Childhood Education.



Lynford Stewart

“Just hang in there; take your time.”

Lynford Stewart likes to tell people who want help with reading and writing to “go to the library because it’s a good place to go.” For him, the library has been a positive influence in all aspects of his life. Since joining READ/San Diego, he’s obtained a driver’s license, found a job as a dish washer, and worked his way up to being a cook. He’s become a leader at work. “Everything in my life is improving,” he says. With his

tutor’s help, his reading and writing skills have improved significantly and he feels more confident in both. At work, he can now read the menu and the recipes. And, though his work takes up much of his time, Lynford is committed to being around for his adult kids. “I taught them about the right way to do things,” he says. And Lynford isn’t done learning yet. He’s working on passing the U.S. Citizenship test. “Maybe after that I can retire,” he muses...but after retirement he *would* like to teach people how to cook.

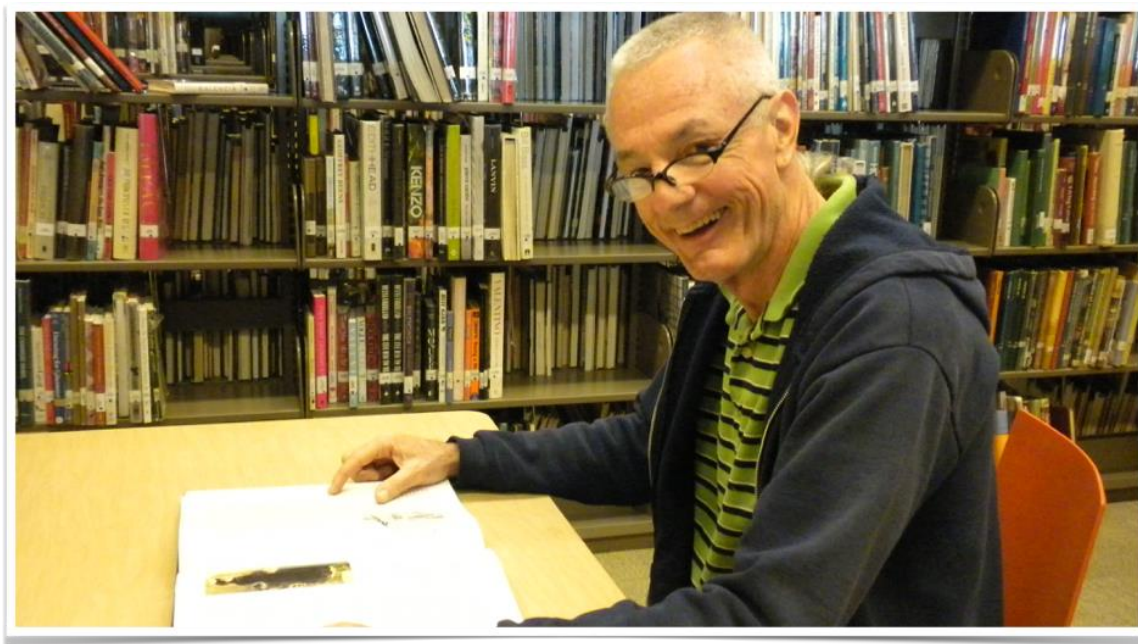
Rebecca E. Lytle
Tutor of the Year Award Winners



Bill Graffius

“It’s a long term goal that can be accomplished by staying on track, staying focused.”

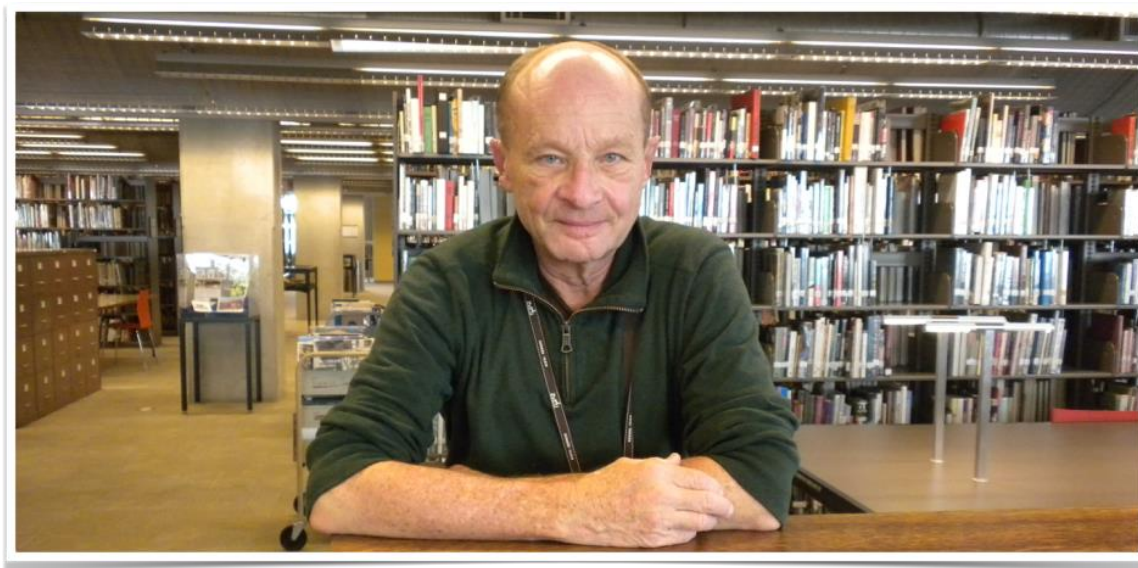
How many tutors can quote the monthly tutor report questions verbatim with the word *goal* frequently imbedded in them? There is only one that I know of—Bill Graffius. And it’s no wonder he has the questions memorized; he has provided nearly 500 hours of instruction through READ/San Diego. You can tell he takes the questions to heart with reports like: “This month, my student got a library card and checked out his first book.” Or, “My student volunteered for her children’s school Halloween parties and attended her first PTA meeting.” Or, “My student has now reached the goal of sharing two to three picture books every day with her youngest child, has helped her oldest son prepare a class report, can understand emails from the children’s teachers, and signed her children up for a summer program!” Mr. Graffius says, “I’m especially proud of being able to recognize individual needs and of finding the right method of teaching. My favorite experience as a tutor so far is being present when a student looks up a new word and understands it, having a revelatory moment. This has been the greatest experience.”



Ken Hinds

“Helping [at READ/San Diego] is incredibly rewarding and worth the time.”

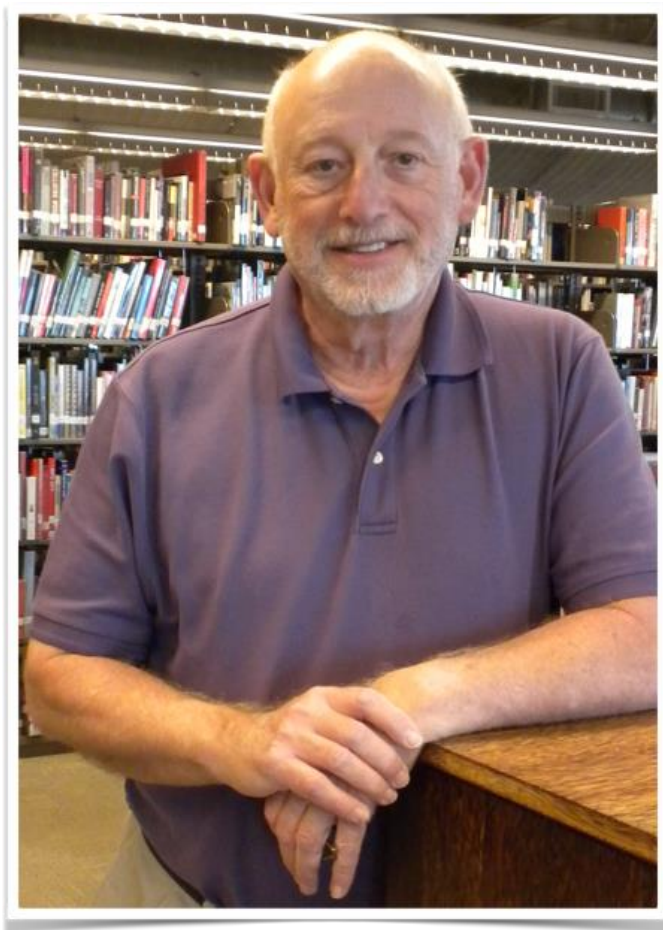
Ken is such a regular presence in the literacy office one might think he’s on staff. But no, Ken is simply one of those people who always wants to do more. After retiring in 2013, Ken decided to tutor in math at a San Diego middle school. He enjoyed the experience so much he wanted to do more—and signed on with READ/San Diego. Ken says it was gratifying to help his first student obtain her high school diploma and go on to culinary school. Once she moved on, Ken was paired with a new student who is enrolled in Career Online High School. But one student wasn’t enough for Ken, who asked for an additional learner. And, what could be better than tutoring two students at READ/San Diego? Well, tutoring three students, of course! Ken is extremely proud of all his students and the progress they’ve made. He says he’s especially proud of helping one of them become a *Learner of the Year Award* recipient. Ken says he’d tell prospective students, “This is a safe and supportive environment.” And he’d tell prospective volunteers, “I thoroughly enjoy my time here.”



Kenneth Martin

“Literacy affords everyone a richness of experience that other media doesn’t offer. It involves thinking and engaging one’s whole being.”

Kenneth taught children for nearly 30 years and now he enjoys teaching adults. In fact, after tutoring for six months, he requested an additional student. He says, “[Teaching] adults is very different. It has been a social opportunity for me to meet people from a part of the world that I knew very little about. That’s exciting! My students have taught me a little bit of their first language. They have a lot to share.” Kenneth knows that learning to read takes time and patience. He reminds tutors and students not to get discouraged—even when progress seems slow or incremental. He says, “Some of my best moments tutoring are the times when students [are able to determine] the meaning of new vocabulary because of something I taught them—like the roots of words—or from context. I feel accomplished when they make an important connection. It’s as if there’s a spark created in their mind. You can see it in their face. Their excitement is infectious! Nothing is more rewarding than seeing an adult better their literacy skills.”



Peter Politzer

*“Being able to read is important.
The more you read, the more you
know.”*

When Peter retired, he looked for some kind of community involvement for, as he calls it, “his post employment years.” Literacy attracted his interest. Over the past 14 years, he has tutored six learners, helping them accomplish a variety of goals, two of which stand out as especially rewarding experiences. He says, “With my first student, it was going to the graduation ceremony for her GED.

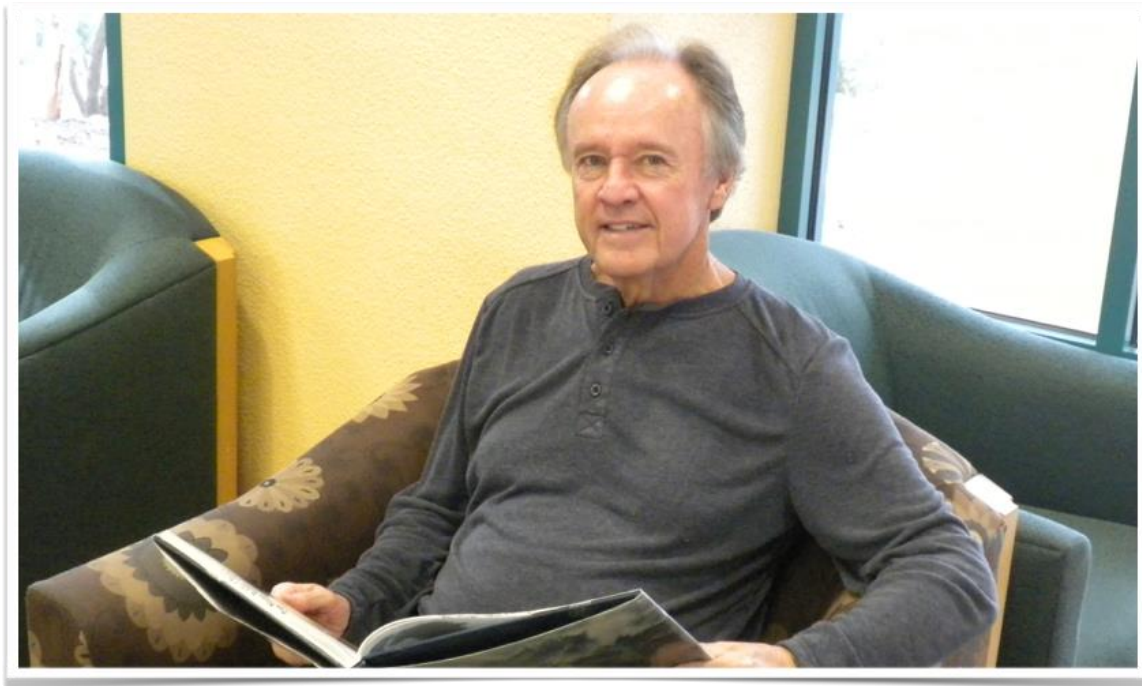
For me, there wasn’t any question she’d pass. She was so motivated. I felt very pleased and happy for her. [Another] student was part of a bible study group. They had readings—motivational things and passages—they’d read out loud once or twice a week and she wanted to be able to read aloud in a group and be more confident. I helped her with that and she met her goal. I was pretty proud about that.” Peter understands that literacy changes lives. He says, “I find tutoring very rewarding. I like to see the progress! I’m always impressed by adults that have the courage to walk in the office and say, ‘I need help.’ It takes a lot of fortitude to do that and for that reason I enjoy working with each person.”



Sara Powers

“Tutors will learn a lot. It’s beneficial to student and teacher—a worthwhile experience—and, not too difficult.”

Sara has been working with her student, Ammu, for a couple of years. She says that meeting Ammu, watching her progress, and becoming friends are among her most cherished experiences as a tutor. Sara is receiving this award as the direct result of her outstanding encouragement, support, and advocacy on behalf of her student. She supported Ammu in starting a new job, completing and submitting an online review for an orthodontist, starting a typing program, and in journaling regularly. She supported her in composing and submitting a letter to the annual *Writer to Writer Challenge* and an article for the literacy newspaper. Sara says, “I’m especially proud of Ammu being published in *Easy English News*.” Sara also made a special trip with Ammu to the literacy office to pick out new materials, arrange for a progress test, and to learn about the Career Online High School program. Subsequently, Ammu has written an entrance essay in pursuit of this goal of starting the high school program. When asked what pearls of wisdom she might share with READ/San Diego students Sara says, “There is nothing that will give you more freedom and confidence.”



James Quiring

“Everyone starts at a different level or learns at a different pace.”

Jim goes where many tutors dare not to go; he teaches math. His knowledge is in constant demand. Jim has worked with six students in his three years with READ/San Diego. Jim is flexible and versatile, meeting with students anywhere from Carmel Mountain to Fashion Valley teaching everything from Geometry to Algebra to Basic Math. He says, “I’m especially proud of tutoring through, and finishing, a standard GED math workbook. It takes lots of hard work and many hours of review to help a student start at a basic level and then master advanced math operations.” Jim’s students respect his ability to relay math concepts in understandable terms and his no-nonsense style. He believes in being sensitive to a student’s pace while adhering to high standards. Jim’s sage advice? “I’d tell a potential tutor not to go faster or slower than what a student can handle. Support their accomplishments.”



Kathy Reynolds

“I don’t think anybody should underestimate what they’re capable of doing. We all need a little [help] from time to time, and we all have our dreams.”

Kathy has entered into tutoring with open arms. She signed up in honor of her mother who imparted the love of reading to her. She says, “Tutoring has been a pleasure. It’s fulfilling to me and I hope I can continue to help others.” Kathy has worked with four students so far, teaching students of multiple literacy levels. Currently, she’s taking great pride in helping her new student learn to read menus and to learn the days of the week. She has encouraged all of her students not to underestimate their capabilities, and she has modeled perseverance, open mindedness, and patience for them. She has a knack for interspersing life and social skills in between books. She says, “Be prepared not to be overbearing and show respect to [your] student.” Of her experience so far she says, “It’s uplifting. Being able to hopefully form a relationship with people that will allow them to read and write a little better than what they do currently and perhaps help them pursue their dreams. I feel very capable to help.”



Barry Schechtman

"I think instilling a love for learning and reinforcing that is important."

As a literacy coordinator, it's not every day one receives a monthly tutor report like this: "My student and I continue to discuss science and math topics as chosen by the learner. Recent emphasis has been on electricity, magnetism, neutrinos and subatomic particles, the role of creatine in biology, and the Nobel Prize in physics. I have taken a video of a couple of our science kit projects in action." Wow! Is there an Einstein in our midst? Barry says, "For adults not to be able to read, they're missing one of the key sets of skills that can open up the whole world for them. So teaching an adult to read or write seemed like an opportunity to make a life changing difference, and that would be a major contribution that I could be proud of." READ/San Diego is certainly glad he took on the challenge. Barry submits his monthly reports promptly, tutors multiple students, and often calls his tutor/learner coordinator with questions and updates. He says, "I'm doing stuff with my student that's a little different. My favorite experience so far has been when we built a motor and got the motor running. We used coils, wire, and paper clips and it was so fun. [My student] was very satisfied with the outcome and we were both very happy."

Mildred Massel
Families for Literacy Award Winner



Miho Shigenobu

“The first step is difficult, but if you come to this program, kids and parents can both get help at the same time.”

Miho didn't grow up going to the library. "I watched TV a lot," she says. "Reading was hard for me. I didn't want Sophia to have the same trouble." A friend invited her to Families for Literacy. She says, "To me, it was like wow! The kids can name the letters and say the sounds. It was amazing." Miho was eager to learn. She attended FFL with her daughter and got a tutor too. She says, "My tutor helped me and after awhile, I could read a children's book. Now my tutor is focused on vocabulary. I read a story, pick words I don't know, and make short sentences with them. I'm happy I'm learning a lot." Miho has learned how to teach her daughter too. "We go to the grocery store and I talk to her about the food in the store. I want her to get a lot of information. And, the program teaches me about what books are good for Sophia. We get two books every month [in FFL], so now I have a lot of books at home. Sophia loves books. She loves the library."



Danelys Sillas

“You learn how to be a better parent, how to better teach your child. It’s a beautiful program.”

Danelys has been attending FFL since Paulette was seven months old—time well spent, in her opinion. “Now, I understand how to help Paulette with her home work. And she won an award for being the only child in her class to know every letter sound. Elianeth does *Itsy Bitsy Spider* and loves to color. They sing a lot at home. They’re more outgoing.” Both girls treasure books. “We didn’t have any books at all before the program. When we first got our books, I kept them in a small shoebox. Another mom told me, ‘That’s not going to be big enough.’ We have a section in the house full of books now. I still have Paulette’s first book and Elianeth’s too.” She continues, “We learned about the importance of reading and make sure to read one or two books a day. We do more arts and crafts at home. We find things around the house to use. Last year we saved paper rolls and made Christmas trees with them. I’m happy we do more things like this together.” Danelys says, “This program has helped me teach [my children] about commitment. Paulette dreams of becoming a teacher or a veterinarian. She can do it. To help her I’ll keep showing my children how to be committed to things and be responsible for their future.”

Erika King Award



Ann Albertson, Elaine Campbell, Maggi Hall, Mariko Killion, Jan Kujawa, Anthony Moore, Vicki Reed, Ann Schlegel, Terri Stafford

For many students, making the initial call to READ/San Diego requires a great deal of courage. As students' stories attest, struggling with reading is often a lifelong difficulty—and not a comfortable topic of discussion—especially for students who are new to the program. An assessment counselor is often the first person a student has ever confided in about their challenges with reading and math, and the many ways this has impacted their life. Assessment counselors need the ability to make new students feel welcomed. They need extra sensitivity and compassion in addition to great communication skills and excellent attention to detail. The nine individuals honored here tonight possess all of these qualities in abundance.

Volunteer of the Year Award Winner
Clifford Braden Office Volunteer of the Year Award



Jo Ann Olson

***“By being functionally literate
[adults] are able to be full
participants in their community.”***

If it's Monday or Wednesday afternoon, Jo Ann is the smiling face and enthusiastic voice welcoming you to READ/San Diego. She might also be the person calling to let you know about your new tutor or student, or to remind you about your upcoming training or orientation. But

wait, there's more. Jo Ann also helps with office projects “as needed” and has taught students one-on-one and in small groups. She's especially proud of teaching a series of financial literacy workshops to students. She says, “I feel I've made a real impact on their lives.” Jo Ann is a strong advocate for adult learners increasing their comfort level with technology. She says, “Part of being functionally literate is being able to navigate the world of the internet via computers, tablets, and smart phones.” She enjoys teaching learners how to access the electronic resources of the library system, including audio books, e-books, and education sites. She says, “I especially point out that they're all free!” Jo Ann envisions a world where “all adults are functionally literate in reading and writing so they would be able to help their children and their friends navigate our increasingly complex and diverse world.”



Julie Wilson

“My wish for my students is that they continue a lifestyle of learning, reaching beyond their community to further enrich their lives.”

As coordinator and liaison for the PQ Center Group since 1997, Julie Wilson has gone beyond the call of duty and then some. She seamlessly attends to the behind the scenes details ensuring that the group runs smoothly. She coordinates with the apartment complex management, opens the classroom at the appointed time, facilitates the group, liaises with READ/San Diego staff, and submits all necessary reports. Her nominator says, “Julie is always there no matter what. She enjoys the work she’s doing to help others.” Over the years, Julie has helped many students achieve goals from passing a driver’s test, to earning their U.S. Citizenship, to going shopping on their own—all things her students never thought they’d be able to accomplish. Julie says that teaching has been a delight. “I’ve enjoyed learning about each person and their life experiences, building relationships, and being able to share things that have been joyful and sorrowful to the students and their families.” Her favorite experience has been “seeing [my students] go from a zero level in reading to being able to express their thoughts, concerns, joys, and frustrations.”

Dale Lovell Literacy Advocate Award



Ruby Grayes

“The joy of promoting this program is a great thing!”

When you hear Ms. Ruby speak about the library’s literacy program, you know it has made a huge difference in her life. She says, “I know I have a career and am independent because of my progress with READ/San Diego. Before this program I couldn’t read and improve my life. Everyone can be helped. I’m passionate [about the program] because it has worked for me and I want everyone to be able to learn how to read!” That’s a powerful message for incoming tutors and learners to hear. Ruby regularly speaks at trainings and orientations, and is always willing to speak at other events—often on short notice. She says she loves speaking and seeing the sparkle begin in people’s eyes. “When I tell [potential students] of my life experience before and after READ/San Diego, they know that if I could do it, they can do it.” She continues, “And being able to talk to people and bringing in new tutors is a great joy to me. Knowing that my contribution to the program is helping others is the best thing ever.”

David Miles Corporate Award for Outstanding Corporate Support



Pi Beta Phi

“Read, Lead, Achieve”

In 1912 members of Pi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women—the first national organization to adopt a philanthropic cause—ventured into the mountains of Appalachia to establish Pi Beta Phi Elementary School. This is the legacy behind Pi Beta Phi’s commitment to literacy. It continues to this day. During the past year, the California Kappa Chapter of Pi Beta Phi provided generous grant funding to support READ/San Diego’s adult and family literacy programs. Thanks to their generosity, READ/San Diego purchased additional Kindles and Android tablets used for teaching technology classes, children’s books to help families in the program build literacy rich home environments, updated GED study guides, and copies of *rime magic*, an innovative decoding program. READ/San Diego is proud to honor Pi Beta Phi Foundation for their support of our program and for their long term commitment to literacy in the community.

Ten-Year Veteran Tutor Awards



Kenneth "Bob" Keiser