



Family Literacy Academy at Lake Wales

Newsletter

October
2022

Executive Director's Column

Wow! It is so great to see increasing sizes of classes of students making major gains on GEDs and improvements on English! Impacts from COVID are still evident, but the impediments from the past few years are greatly diminished. We have many new GED students “fired up and ready to go.” Our evening and daytime ESOL classes are increasing. Many of our students are faced with the dilemma of wanting to improve their education and hold a job as well. We have students who work all night and come to our day program in the morning, or some who leave the nighttime program early to go to work—or ask for packets of Math or Language Arts or Social Studies to deal with at home.

Oh, yes, we do have students who returned from last year ready to complete their studies this year—and a few former students who have decided it was time to get serious to achieve their academic goals. And who are these students? Well, that is what this newsletter is dedicated to—meeting some of these students who are raring to improve their education for the betterment of their families and the community and its economy.

Let's get started....

RETURNING FROM THE PAST FEW YEARS

A number of our students from the last two years have resumed their pursuit of their high school diploma. **Jessica Martinez** has only to pass her Math exam - and she is very close. **Andrew Denton** is well on his way in Math, with only Science to go. **James Maddox** has to complete his Math and is only a few points shy of conquering Language Arts. **Marion South** needs only a couple of points in Math and Social Studies to achieve her GED goal. **Rose Watson** needs to finish up her Math journey. **Angeles Andrade** needs one point in Math.

With their current determination, and if the creek doesn't rise, these returning students will be able to resume their lifetime pursuits with their high school diplomas in hand.

TREVOR COWELL came to our evening classes at Janie Howard Wilson before our move to the Mary Campbell Center. He had studied at the New Beginnings School in Winter Haven up to the equivalent of the eleventh grade. Now at 24 years old, with a job in health care and a three-year-old child to raise, he has rejoined the Academy to complete his high degree and move on. He is serious, works hard, has good attendance, and should reach his educational goals this year.

THERE ARE MANY NEW STUDENTS

MICHAEL OCASIO joined the Academy this year and already has completed all the requirements for his GED except Math. With a “few more items,” Miss Sue claims he should be ready to gain his diploma before the end of this semester.

Michael is married with two children, for whom he sees education as his way to be able to provide a “better, and happy, life for his family.”

JOSEPH LOPEZ joined the Academy in October to gain his high school diploma and enroll at Polk State. He is currently employed in Winter Haven as a supervisor-in-training at a plasma company, raising two small children on his own. He is pleased by the opportunity that the Academy provides him for his educational advancement and help with his children through our parenting/life skills classes.

BELEN PINEDA joined the Academy this fall and is already taking the practice Language Arts exam on her way to the final GED Language exam. She is a serious student dedicated to gaining her high school degree.

Belen and her partner are looking for housing in the Lake Wales area, and have moved from his converted work van to the home of one of our teachers. Belen currently is a server at a local restaurant and her partner, a certified electrician, works in Frostproof.

AMBROSIA STEELE, mother of a three-year-old, joined the Academy in September. She has already passed her Language Arts exam and is working on Social Studies. Her attendance is reliable, something she knows to be good for her success as she pursues her high school diploma, as well as for her son’s

start on his future success in school in the Academy’s preschool.

MARISSA BROWN, a mother of two, enrolled at the beginning of the fall semester and is on a fast track to obtain her GED. She has already passed her Language Arts exam and is scheduled for her Social Studies and Science tests in the near future. (Marissa is able to take her GED component tests at home and has secured special authorization from the FL GED program to accommodate her test taking around her baby’s schedule.) That leaves only Math for her high school diploma, with which Marissa seems to handle well in class and with her home studies.

JEREMY RAWLS and **JASMINE BUSH** enrolled in the Academy at the beginning of the fall semester and have made steady progress toward their goal of obtaining their high school diplomas. Both have passed their Language Arts tests and have moved on to their Social Studies tests—both have passed the practice test and are preparing to take the final Social Studies test shortly. Jasmine and Jeremy have three small children so they will benefit from the parenting/ life skills classes. Both should be GED-ready next semester.

This is just a glimpse of the activity at both morning and evening classes, hopefully providing the true picture of many of the current students. (We are always happily gaining new students committed to meeting their goals.) We believe we have overcome the lion’s share of the impediments we experienced as a result of the covid pandemic and are well on our way to returning to “normalcy.”

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PIONEER DAYS

Once again, we participated in the community's Pioneer Days celebration with a booth manned by members of the Academy's staff and Board of Directors on the shores of Lake Wales on October 29 and 30, providing information about the Academy and passing out books for children and adults provided by the Library and the Care Center to assist the community's READ 20 campaign. In all, we served a few hundred people.



Thanks for reading this tome, and please look forward to our next issue, in which we will introduce our ESOL students and the progress of our preschool program.

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