



**Fermin Gaytan Flores:**

**“I enjoy my life now living here in Madison.”**

When Fermin Gaytan Flores first came to Madison in 2003, he felt lost. “I didn’t speak any English so it was really hard for me to understand everything. I felt like a child, like a baby. I needed help to do everything.”

Fermin had a hard time finding work when he first moved to Madison. “It was difficult for me to pass an interview and get a job.”

Soon, Fermin found work as a laborer for a carpenter. He earned minimum wage. “The communication was difficult. I had some problems with my boss because I didn’t speak English and they tried to take advantage of me with my hours.”

Fermin’s primary goal was to get a better job. “I thought that the only way for me to get a better job was to learn English,” said Fermin. “I was very happy to find Literacy Network and I’m still very happy to work with them.”

Fermin began working with personal tutor Madeline to improve his English language skills. She helped him learn how to apply for jobs, answer interview questions and taught him how to use a computer to create a budget. Soon, Fermin landed a better paying job at Sara Lee.

Madeline’s tutoring complimented the classroom instruction Fermin received at Madison College. “It

helped me a lot because I practiced my English and I felt more comfortable making mistakes because it’s not in front of a whole class. We studied the homework I had or the questions that I didn’t understand in the classroom. She helped me understand it well.”

Madeline introduced Fermin to many new things in Madison. “We went to Overture Center and saw the Phantom of the Opera. It was my first experience in the United States to go to a theatre. We went to Olbrich Gardens and we had a really good time. All places I had never been and it was nice to have my tutor go to these places. If she had just told me about them, I never would have gone.”

“Literacy Network was a good option for me because they had many different programs to learn and they had a flexible schedule. And they were free!”

Fermin is now enrolled in the START apprenticeship program. “My goals now are to begin an apprenticeship in carpentry and learn more. I’m working at Literacy Network to prepare for the citizenship test.”

Now married with a young son, Fermin has a good life. “Literacy Network has helped me be more active in the community. I enjoy my life now living here in Madison.”



**Literacy Network**  
Improving Lives Through Literacy

**Fermin tells his story in video at [www.litnetwork.org](http://www.litnetwork.org)**

Literacy Network teaches reading, writing and speaking skills to adults and families so they can achieve financial independence, good health and greater involvement in community life. All programs are free of charge.

*Photo and Video: Narayan Mahon*