A collection of inspirational stories from adult learners reaching their goals with Literacy Network.
OUR IMPACT

Literacy Network teaches reading, writing, communication and computer skills to Dane County adults so they can achieve financial security, well-being and deeper engagement with their families and the community.
1 in 7
Dane County Adults Struggles with Low Literacy
THAT’S 55,000 PEOPLE

Literacy Network was founded in 1974 and serves approximately 1,000 low-income adults each year in Dane County, Wisconsin. With a staff of 28 and more than 20,000 hours of volunteer time, we help adults achieve their goals through personalized education services and support.

The people we work with improve their skills in English language communications, reading comprehension, and use of information technology. As a result, they advance their careers, help their kids succeed in school, achieve their U.S. citizenships, understand health information, or obtain their high school equivalency diploma or other degrees.

We offer small classes and individual tutoring to personalize the learning experience for everyone we serve. We build strategic partnerships with schools, businesses, libraries and community organizations to serve local needs throughout our community.
WHY I WON’T QUIT

The following writings from adult learners in Literacy Network programs offer an authentic personal perspective on the importance of literacy in their lives. These stories are unedited as much as possible and reflect the abilities of dozens of learners, all at different places on their journey of literacy education.
ALAGIE GAYE

My goals are to become a cook at my job and to get my driver’s license. To achieve my goals, I will need to practice cooking and get training from a mentor and to learn how to read so that I can pass the written driver’s test. I think it will take three to six months to become a cook and hopefully one year until I get my driver’s license. It will be challenging to get better at reading, and then to become a cook I will have to learn how to use seasonings and how long to cook each meal. I have two coworkers helping me at my job in the kitchen and my tutors helping me learn to read. I will feel happy when I reach these goals and I will be able to drive to see friends and get places I want to go and I will get to do more at my job. I won’t quit because I want to make more money so I can do more in life and maybe start my own business and take care of my family.

"I won’t quit because I want to make more money so I can do more in life and maybe start my own business and take care of my family."

ALEJANDRA PEREZ

My name is Alejandra. I have been here for almost 13 years. I came here with goal in my mind, get a house for my daughters in Mexico. After I reached my goal, I came back to my country where I realize that a own house wasn’t enough for a living. Everything was expensive, I didn’t have enough money to support my family. So, I had to come back to the US again with a new goal. Bringing my daughters to live with me in the US. After several years of waiting,
finally my daughters are with me now, but during the time that I was waiting for them I found that I want to be bilingual because this is the best way to get a better life in this country.

I have been study for more than 5 years and I’m still learning. I’m a student at Literacy Network now and I’m going to keep going taking step by step until I reach my goal. The most difficult part is that I do not have to much time to take more classes. I have a full time job, I’m a mother, but I won’t quit of my dream because through the time I got many good opportunities in my job only because I can speak a little bit of English. It will take several years more to be totally bilingual but it’ll worth it because I’ll be able to take a technical carrer or a better job.

“It will take several years more to be totally bilingual but it’ll worth it because I’ll be able to take a technical carrer or a better job.”

AMADA ALMONTE

My name is amada I moved to the us from Mexico 14 years ago, my dreams is to go to school is understand English Iam want to learn write, read and talk to get all of the fallowing good job.

Iam excited to continue working on my goals right now I am talking an English class with my tutor and other teacher

Iam fell than I can and very happy to achieve

Thinking that if you can and I will achieve is because it is my desire to reach the goals
MARIA LANDEROS

New US Citizen Will Earn Her GED

My dream and goal in life is to learn English. I need to get to Literacy Network classes to get help. I also need to go to GED classes to earn my high school diploma. It might take me three years to earn my GED. I am not sure how long this will take. So far, my intern and my tutor at Literacy Network are helping me. Eventually, I hope to take a GED class. I will feel happy when I earn my GED because I will have a better future and my four kids will be proud of me. Continuing is important because I do not want to forget what I have already learned. This November ot 2019, I finished and passed my citizenship classes and tests. I am haping in the future to finish and pass my GED classes and tests.

ANONYMOUS

My Dream

I want to teach Spanish to the children as a Second Language. First, I need to take English classes improve my reading, writing and oral language. I plan to study at the University of Madison, take Intermediate and Advanced ESL classes, I to take electives vocabulary and grammar classes. I want to learn more vocabulary, so I will read books and newspapers, play trivia and scrabble, watch TV and go to the movies. I think this is the way to learn English. After that, I will look for a job to give private Spanish lessons to children in Madison.

I won’t quit because I want to buy my own home and travel to meet other cultures.
ANONYMOUS

My Dream

One of my dreams is to celebrate my 25 years wedding anniversary.

To achieve my goal is to keep my marriage happy, by having better and more communication and by listening to each other. I can see the changes since we were first married.

We just have to wait a couple more years for this big dream. It might take a lot of time to prepare for a celebration, but I know I will have a good helper with my husband and my two sons.

This dream is very important in my life because my husband and I have had the opportunity to see our sons growing up and that makes me so happy.

ANONYMOUS

I am trying to learn more English for looking for a new job where they pay more money for buying a house.

I want to be a manager and help my children with their home work.

my goal is to go to Mexico to visit my family.

my tutor and my coworkers help me for this goal.

it is important because I need to speak more engles
MORE THAN 60% OF ADULT LEARNERS HAVE THE GOAL TO GO TO MADISON COLLEGE TO PURSUE CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES.
I Will Not Quit

I have been studying English for five years, and I don’t feel I can speak it correctly. So, sometimes I owe up and spend long periods without studying it. That’s why my learning has been slow. Seeing this, I have made the decision to develop my speaking, writing and reading skills in English this year.

For this, I have drawn up a plan; I am receiving twelve hours of weekly English classes which I reinforce with one hour of daily “Duolingo”. I have also decided to listen to the news, music and watch movies only in English to train my listening.

I firmly believe that if I don’t quit my goal, this year will be very helpful in my learning English.

MARTINA CARAPIA

My name is Martina.

I am from Mexico. I live in Madison 18 years. My family is Raul husband I have 4 daughters 1 son, Elizabeth 22 years, Joselyn 19, Mayra 17, Natalie 20, Alexis 9

My goal in life is to teach cooking classes. I like to cook healthy foods. It is important for my family to eat healthy. Right now I don’t have time to take classes. Maybe next year I will take cooking classes instead of english classes.

I will be happy.
Well I have so many dreams.

The first is to have opportunities the same rights for everybody. I don’t want to feel scared when I speak English.

My goal is to learn to speak more English and write too. I’m working to learn when I come to English class. My tutor is very patient with me. I feel I don’t learn very fast, but my tutor said I’m doing well and learning English takes a long time.

It is difficult because I don’t have much time to practice and I’m looking for more classes. It is difficult for me to learn when my mind is full of other things. It is hard to find people to practice English with. Also people speak English with different accents. Sometimes I try to understand but my mind plays with my words. My tutor is helping and gives me confidence.

When I achieve my goal I will feel complete and I will use my English to help other people learn.

It is important I don’t stop learning because I will forget all I learned and I will pitch all the hours I worked in the garbage. And it is important because my tutors feel good with my progress.

Now I must quit because my brain is smoking.

“When I achieve my goal I will feel complete and I will use my English to help other people learn.”
I Will Not Quit

I won’t quit taking my English classes because they have helped me learn, understand, communicate and talk in my daily activities.

I know I have to learn and increase my knowledge. I want to have more advanced skills to express myself more clearly. For that I will continue attending English classes. In the future, I would like to take computer classes and start GED classes. I know that with the evolution of technology and science it is better to continue to be prepared.

In addition to increasing my knowledge, I hope to find a better job and be a successful woman.

I Will Not Quit

One of my goal is to have my own child care.

I have the first basic courses to work with. To reach my goal I need to raise my English level. I am working on it. I am taking classes and I have an English tutor two hour a week.

I need to take additional courses to take care of the children and update two required courses.

I also need to move into a house with enough space and conditions required by the county to get the permits.
My sister is helping me; she had her own business two years ago.

How long will it take?

This will take me 6 to 8 months, first I need to complete the courses and then, we need to move to a new place.

It’s very important to continue the process to achieve my goal because that’s what I want to do.

I’ll be very happy when I reach my goal. I like to take care kids.

**SALVADOR GUZMAN**

I’m from Mexico. I moved to Wisconsin because I wanted to visit my father and I have been living here around one year and a half. Actually I’m student at Literacy Network. I would like to be fluent in my second language because I know it’s difficult learning English as a second language but I hope to perfect my conversation. I want to be confident with my speaking.

I want to study English in order to go to the college and get a diploma. Over time I want to meet new people because I don’t consider myself a sociable person but I like to know new culture and create for relationship but it’s difficult because I’m very busy I’m absorbed in my work. P practice a little bit but I don’t have native speakers to practice with. I do not meet a lot of new people and it’s hard to do.

It’s hard to learn another language but it depends on you to complete your goals. I think that you should keep specific time for study. In conclusion you should practice more all the time because you get oportunities you have to overcome fear.
What Keeps Me Going

Without Literacy Network I cannot study, so what make me keep going is I can meet with teacher on a flexible schedule. It is helping me to have life easier in the future. Only help me to study is the flexible schedule, because I have a full time job and four kids to care for.

With the help am getting from Literacy Network, will help me get a better job. If I have a better job I do not have to work over time every weekend.

I want to keep learning. That way I be able to help my kids do their homework. I am the one able to help my kids with homework, because my wife study French. She does not know English that much.

“With the help am getting from Literacy Network, will help me get a better job. If I have a better job I do not have to work over time every weekend.”

ADRIANA BERNAL

The dream of my life is to speak fluent English to be able to talk with Native people of this country and learn more about American culture. This is one of my biggest dreams since I was little. I ussed to speak the language as a little girl. Now I have the opportunity to learn English, I wouldn’t like ot miss it, but sometimes I think I’m a little big, but I don’t lose the hope. Some day I can speak English
maybe not so perfect but I will achieve my dream.

To achieve my dream, I think not to miss my classes and take the time with my tutors as much as I can, also talking to English speaking people that would help me a lot. I would like to achieve my goal as soon as possible but the problem is my mind that does no retain much information. I have to repeat two or three time to not forget what I learned.

I thanks my tutors very much because never achieve my dream if the doesn’t help me to speaking English, especially my teacher. She has motivated me to keep going and not quit. With her and each one of the tutors will achieve my dream.

When I achieve my goal I will feel good abouth myself. In this way I will demonstrate to myself that is if you can only need constancy and responsibility.

I don’t know when I will achieve my dream but every day I feel good when I talk to native people and I can communicate without any problem. I think that every day I have an answer to my hard work and I feeling very proud of myself.

JUDY FERRANDO

My dream and goal in life is to study English. I dedicate myself more. Maybe take two years.

I do not have people to speak it. I need to speak and listen. Literacy Network is my opportunity with their teacher who takes her time with dedication. I will be happy when I achieve my goals. It’s a new opportunity for the work, communication with my doctor, with other people and my family.
EDUCATION PLANS MEET INDIVIDUAL GOALS
SUCH AS CONFIDENCE IN COMMUNICATING WITH HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS.
What makes my heart beat in my life?

This is the question that I asked myself as I began to write this. Is there anything that makes my heart beat? My concern made me think of two words: RUNNING and LEARNING

Running that has led my life_ (my PAST)

Shortly after my third child was born, I started running in 2000. Running saved me 15% in premiums when I purchased life insurance for my family. Four years later, I had the opportunity to participate in the 2004 Boston Marathon. After four years of running, the total distance that I ran was about 12,000km. (300km x 12 months = 3,600km x 4 years - 14,400km = 12,000 km (excluding rain)) The 12,000 km distance is also the same distance from Seoul to Boston. I think this may be “the power of a father.” In conclusion, RUNNING gave me the opportunity to visit the United States to run for the Boston Marathon in 2004, which triggered my children to dream about studying in the United States and ultimately led us all to live here today. One of my goals is to compete 100 times in a marathon. I believe this will be a great stepping stone to achieving another life goal.

Learning to lead my life_ (my FUTURE)

As digital technology evolves, we will have more English than ever before. I think that we live in and era where the English divide leads to a difference in quality of life. To introduce two of my life goals:

First, I want to help the younger generation to have a steadier retirement through pension plans. In order the achieve this goal, I will gain expertise in retirement and pension planning.

Second, I want to help those who want to learn Korean study
efficiently. In order to achieve this goal, I will improve my English skills to communicate flawlessly with learners. Ultimately, I want to challenge my English literacy skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing to the level where I can take college classes. In addition to these dreams/goals, if I improve my English at a certain level, I believe I can have other dreams and goals.

Both RUNNING and LEARNING make my heart beat for different reasons. “What makes your heart beat?”

“The best is yet to be!” (My motto) I will never stop and learn to do my best so that the end of my life can be the best moment of my life.

A chance to thank Literacy Network.

I heard about Literacy Network from my daughter and started taking courses since the fall of 2019. I remember my first visit like yesterday. I was excited for the opportunity to learn and improve my English while meeting my teachers, tutors and classmates. I thank Literacy Network for providing me a chance to learn about American culture, language and people. It made me realize what my dreams and goals are with the benefit of knowing English.

“I will never stop and learn to do my best so that the end of my life can be the best moment of my life.”
Why I won’t quit

Always grateful

I am from Mexico. I live in USA more than 20 years.

When I started to learn English I filled with dreams. After then the week passed I thought that would never learn English because I told myself that it was too hard.

My dreams to learn English back when my first child was born.

I wanted to find resources to learn English. I met one day people who helped me improve my life moving forward.

When I started taking English classes I found it difficult to speak read and write in it. But with time I improved.

However one day due to financial reasons, I had to stop attending my classes and focus on work to be able to meet my basic needs. In my job I did not have the opportunity to practices my English skills that I learned in class. My coworkers only spoke Spanish.

My main motivation to go back to English class was my sons. Since I know I would continue to live in USA I needed to be able to communicate with Teachers, Doctor and other parents.

In 2004 I was referred to Literacy Network by my oldest son school, where I had the opportunity to meet tutors who were devoted to helping me. I was granted my Cosmetology degree with license dues to the help of volunteers from Literacy Network and other organizations.

Tutors and volunteers have made an impact in improving my life, and my family’s life. I had the opportunity to learn skills to be able
to communicate with teacher in order for my sons to have success in school.

Both of my children graduated High school and are now in college.

I am glad that I went back to me English classes.

In conclusion the volunteers Mentor and tutors are the best thing that happened in my life.

CAMARA

My name is Camara.

I am U.S. Citizen, but my original country is Guinea.

I came here for learning and work. My goal is to learn English and to speak very well.

My dream is to get my Political Science degree.

If I get opportunity, I will help the childrens.

I don’t know exactly how long it takes. Maybe about 5 years. The difficult is finance support. My tutor is helping me, and some peoples like my teachers in college.

I will feel happy when I learn English. It’s important to continue because it will help me, and others peoples. In summary, I will help the childrens and women.
BINU SUGATAN

When I moved to US in last April, I had a clear vision and goal. Firstly I have to get a driving license within two months. Thank to God, I achieved it within two months. After that I planned to study English classes. I took ESL classes from MATC. In the meantime I got my green card and employment authorization. Right now my plan is taking any health care degree classes from MATC. I understand that in Madison there is a great demand in health care jobs, before joining the classes I need to improve my English communication skills. That’s why I joined in the Literacy Network classes. I know if I take more efforts, I will achieve my goals.

If my goals come true, I will be happy and it’s a great blessing for my family. I am sure if we work hard definitely there will be a positive result. Think positive and try hard and achieve your goals.

JULIA RAMOS

Learning a Second Language in My Life

My goal is learning to speak English very well. I need to study and practice English in the school and different places. Some things I can do to increase my English would be to speak more English at home with my girls, watch tv, read more articles or magazines, etc. It may take 2 years, but if it is difficult for me, I will need to practice speaking more English. My family and teachers will help me achieve my goal.

When I achieve my goal, I will feel very proud. It is important to me. I will work very hard at it. English is a very hard language to learn.
LARRY ALLEN

My dream is to get my GED. I would have to study very hard to get there. I hope to get there in six months. The challenges are math reading and writing. My tutor Lynn and my sister LaVern who are very supportive. I will feel very emotional when I reach my goal. It is important not to quit because I would be a failure to myself.

“It is important not to quit because I would be a failure to myself.”

HOCHI BAUTISTA

My Motivation

Eighteen years ago I started a dream in my country that drove me to be better at what I like which started at the university of my country.

First I took biology class and studying physiology, biochemistry and basic chemistry and introduction human anatomy. That happened in the first two semesters.

Second I took Anatomy 1 subject, it is describe the head and necks all the organ in that region.

Third I took Anatomy 2 where I learned all the organs found in the torax and abdomen and neuroanatomy where the nerve and brain are know. In the following semesters I took the different subjects of parasitology, microbiology and infectology so I love what study although I can not exercise it here right now.
Why I Won’t Quit

Whenever my grandson comes over, he wants to see the video of us where we are both reading a book together and I’m explaining to him how important it is for a person to learn how to read.

Learning to read opened my eyes to the fact that there’s so much in this world that got to do with reading and writing. To be 60-something years old and not know how to read is an awful thing and I don’t want nobody to have to go through what I went through. Reading is a part of survival in America, so to survive you’ve got to know how to read and write and comprehend what you read. You gonna get all kind of doctor’s papers, all kinds of bank papers, newspapers, magazines, this whole world is made up of knowing how to read and if you can’t read you’ll be left behind.

I’ve come to the point where I just have a desire to read stuff. I want to know what the TV’s saying and what the people are talking about on the radio because to I felt like somebody who was blind or deaf and then all of a sudden could hear or see, so then I just became overwhelmed with so much stuff that I’d been missing.

I want my grandson to grow up to be an educated and intelligent man that can do positive things and take his life in a positive manner that would make me proud of him. He saw something positive in himself when he was sitting there reading a book in the video when he was excited to show me that he can read a book without me telling him all the word. It made me feel like he understood what I was trying to tell him all the time.

To give up now, I would be giving up on myself, my grandson, and my tutor and that’s why I won’t quit.
FRANCISCO VENEGAS

My name is Francisco H. Venegas; I move the United State from Venezuela two years ago. My dreams learn English and have a good job, but, it is hard and will take a time, but I am excited to continue working in my goals.

Right now, I am taking an English classes and meeting with a tutor once week in Literacy Network. My son and my wife are support me on my goals.

One day I will achieve my goals and start to have new job offers and be able to help other peoples.

JOHNNY S VILLANUEVA

I am from the Dominican Republic. I came to the US a year and a half ago for work, but not speaking English has been my biggest stumble in my personal advancement. But I met a place called Literacy Network, a place full of people always willing to help people like me, who seek to overcome their goals. There I am learning English, and getting ready to get my GED diploma and then go for my goal that is to graduate as an electrician, and have my own company. I know that it is not and will not be easy. Since I have to work and study, the day is short for so many things. But thanks to the support of my family and all those enthusiastic people I have met in Literacy Network, every day I am more convinced when you want to achieve your dreams the first thing is to never give up on them. Be sure that your graduation will come, and then with great pride and satisfaction, you can say: I GOT IT!!!
PARENTS LEARN SKILLS
SO THEY CAN SUPPORT THEIR CHILD’S LEARNING AND BETTER COMMUNICATE WITH TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS.
Why I Won’t Quit

I stayed in the United States by accident. I had everything I knew back in Mexico. My family, business and education came from my hometown and my intention was never to leave that behind. I ended up staying because of the overbearing sadness that I felt every day after the death of my mother that happened here in Wisconsin and then the unexpected death of my father months later in Mexico. I was grieving and trying to move forward after I lost my parents and decided to stay in the U.S for a few months to try to move forward and figure out what to do next. During that period of time, I met my wife who I fell in love with and, that is when my daughter was born. I had something to live for and that’s when I knew I needed to stay in this country for my kids in order to give them the opportunity to grow up in an enriched environment where they would be able to accomplish their goals and dreams in a country full of possibilities.

My dream is to see my daughters finish college and watch them pursue careers that they truly love, but also I have personal goals that I would love to achieve. Such as expanding my knowledge in English communication and other fields of study that I can certify myself in, so I can keep learning and growing as a student and parent. I have always had the passion to learn, and always wanted to elaborate and expand my educational background, but because of economical challenges, I made the choice to put my daughters first. I have many dreams and ambitions but it is more important to me to have my daughters finish college and have a better life than what I did coming to this country. To achieve my goal of continuing my education and gaining native fluency, I need to improve my English. If I accomplish my ambitions I will have a sense of pride within myself because time does not slow down. My personal goal
of proving to myself that I can still achieve anything even with setbacks and challenges. It’s not to please other people but to please myself. Being able to improve my English would give me the opportunity to expand my options in different fields of study. I am not sure how long it would take because raising two teenagers with one starting college, plus balancing a full time and part-time job as well as being a present father figure in the lives of my kids is challenging. I will feel relieved and proud of myself alongside being proud of my family because they are the ones that support me with everything I do.

I have always had dreams. Those challenges and dreams go hand in hand and it encourages me and makes me have a sense of accomplishment not just for myself but also for my family. Life throws a lot of difficult situations, but with perseverance and hard work, anything is possible. I won’t quit because everything I do is for my family. Every decision and sacrifice I make is for the better of my daughters. My family has motivated me and has made me a better person every day. People like me for different reasons are latched to different challenges but we continue to fight, dream and seek possibilities to be better people for ourselves and we learn that if we don’t quit anything is possible with the determination that we have within ourselves.

“I won’t quit because everything I do is for my family. Every decision and sacrifice I make is for the better of my daughters. My family has motivated me and has made me a better person every day.”
IRIS

Why I Won’t Quit

My dream is to continue studying English to get a better job and a stable life.

I want to keep studying English and practice it so I can speak it better and have a good conversation.

This is a challenge because I did not grow up speaking or writing English and gives us the opportunity to learn more in order for us to achieve our goals.

When I have completed my class work I will feel super proud of myself for being able to achieve my goals of being able to speak, read and write English.

It’s important to me to keep trying and not quit so that I can live independently and help people who can’t speak English. I also want to help people in the community.

JUAN CARLOS

I am from Honduras. I came to America 12 years ago. I came for opportunities. I want to study computers. I’ll learn English I’ll go to class. It’ll take 2 years. Teachers will help me. It’s important to continue trying for my family. I make more money for my family. My country is beautiful but money is not good. English is hard but I’ll keep trying.
IRINEO PEREZ

Learning English Through Literacy Network

I have been studying English through Literacy Network for five to six years. It has been very helpful in my life. Since I have been studying English, I have more opportunities in my jobs, like work in different areas and communicate with supervisors and co-workers. Also, I am able to communicate with my children’s doctors and teachers through e-mails or phone. I am able to read and write some e-mails or text on my phone. It is a privilege here in Madison to have a community center like Literacy Network to help people like me. Because of the tutors I have had through Literacy network they have helped me a lot.

In conclusion Literacy Network has been very helpful because it changed my life, and I am still continuing study with my tutor Jerry Marra.

Thank you to Literacy Network and my tutor Jerry because he helps me a lot in different ways of my life.

SERGIO ANCHONDO

I Will Not Quit

I am Sergio. One of my goals is to get American citizenship to prove to myself that there are no barriers put sit one. That’s the reason because I am studying to bless her.
Why I Won’t Quit

Hi my name is José A. I am Mexican and I’m 28 years old. I’m working to make my dreams come true.

The most important dream of my life is living in Puerto Escondido, Oaxaca. I love this because is beautiful and magic; it is different from other beaches I have been to, because is a small town. There are amazing sunsets, good food and the people are really friendly.

My goal is building cabins for rent and to live there too. I have been working in Madison for one and a half to save money.

This past year I bought land in Puerto Escondido. Now I want to build cabins to rent and then live there too.

I hope to make my dreams come true in two years.

My family and my friends help me to achieve my goals, because they are excited to visit me and Puerto Escondido. My roommates in Madison also help me to achieve my goals. They have become my family. When I was sick, they tried to make me feel better.

I’ll feel so happy when I achieve my goals, because I love the town of Puerto Escondido.
LUPITA HERNANDEZ

One of my first goals is life is to be able3 to speak totally English. I’m sure it’s very important because we live in the United States. In life sometimes we find difficult situations, we need to be prepared for this.

For me it is important to never stop following my goals because when I achieve them I feel happy, I feel good.

Before I studied English, I made excuses for myself, now I have done things that I would not have imagined, for example: go to the post office and change my address, buy a new car, open an account at the bank, etc.

I am happy for this.

“Before I studied English, I made excuses for myself, now I have done things that I would not have imagined…”

YENI ELLESTAD

My dream is that my daughters can one day be someone in life. That they follow their dreams. It might take time because life is not easy, but I will support them, so they can achieve their goals, and when they do, I will be happy and proud. I will encourage them to never give up, because to keep trying is how we survive life.
MORE THAN 50 STUDENTS BECAME U.S. CITIZENS LAST YEAR.
**LUIS RAVELO**

Hi my name is Luis. I’m from Peru and I came to USA in 2015. One of my goals in life is to work in some place helping people.

I’m a chef since 2007 but I realized that I love to help people in many areas like to give advice or solving problems and here in the USA I helped sometimes at work as interpreter to my coworkers and that make me proud and helpful for people.

One of my goals is to be an interpreter and the other one is to be a bank teller to help the community. I need to put effort in English to achieve my goals.

---

**JUAN LEBRÓN**

**I Will Not Quit**

I am a person with strong determination, with a lot of faith and hard worker. In life you must be a positive person. You have to be a goal oriented and have very clear in your mind what do you want in your life. Leaving the battlefield and not fighting is a defeatist attitude. We are not to lose, we are designed to fight, work hard to reach our goals. I’m not a loser. That is the reason I don’t quit from my goals.

Among my goals or dreams is to be in my professional career as an Outside Sales Representative and running my own business, buy a beautiful house, be healthy so I can reach to 100 year, be stable physically, spiritually and financially, help people specially my family and dear friends, have dignity retirement and work as volunteer helping the people in the spiritual area.
LUZ ELENA MAURTUA

I was born in a city south of Lima, Peru and when I finished high school I went to study in Lima as a computer technician. It was there that I met Ricardo, my husband. We have two children. We came to Madison in 2001 where my four siblings lived. My dreams and goals have changed over time.

Ten years ago my dream was to support my children in their studies. They are now independent. Ricky, my son, has a degree in business, and my daughter, Alessandra, has a degree in architecture. So my first dream was achieved.

Now I can focus on my next goal. I want to learn to understand English better and to speak English well. Right now my English does not feel complete because I just speak in short phrases. I want to build my confidence to explain myself, my ideas, my feelings, in English. When I achieve these goals I will feel relieved, happy, and proud of myself. And my children will also be proud of me.

I want to continue my studies at the Literacy Network. Thank you for helping me to work toward my goals.

“When I achieve these goals I will feel relieved, happy, and proud of myself. And my children will also be proud of me.”
**LUZ LOPEZ**

**Why I Won’t Quit**

I will not give up because they are my goals, and I will do everything I have to do to achieve it. My goals are to master the English language, finish my studies at the University of Wisconsin, and get my degree in Special Education. I won’t quit because I have my degree in Special Education but here no subjects are equivalent. I like my career and it is not complete here. I know that as soon as I have my degree I will have opportunities. Life is full of potential. We don’t have to let go because of insecurities.

**ANONYMOUS**

My goal in life is to speak English in level four, I will achieve speak very well.

I will organize my time to have more time to study.

I will practice English in my everyday life.

My goal is to be a stylist.

I will go to Madison College to submit and application

I will start school for cosmetology in three years.

In two years I will finish school and I Will be stylist

I’ll find a job
BEATRIZ LOPEZ

I won’t quit taking my English classes because they have helped me learn, understand, communicate, and talk in my daily activities.

I know I’m learning and increasing my knowledge. I want to have more advanced skill to express myself more clearly. For that I will continue attending English classes in the future I would like to take computer classes and start GED classes.

I know that with the evolution of technology and science we need to continue advancing our education.

In addition to increasing my knowledge, I hope to find a better job and be a successful woman.

MARIA C.

Why I Won’t Quit

My name is Maria C. I moved to US. From Mexico six years ago. My dream is to work in an hospital in the US. I am excited to complete my goal, but is difficult and it will take a long time because, I need learn English well and take a (CNA) Program. But I’m motivated to complete my goal.

Right now, I’m taking English classes and meeting with a tutor once a week. My son also help me with my little daughter.

One day I will achieve my goal and I will feel very proud and happy.
HUNDREDS OF TUTORS WORK ONE ON ONE WITH ADULT LEARNERS EACH SEMESTER TO PERSONALIZE THEIR LEARNING, MAKING PROGRAMS EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT.
My dream is to become a writer, a motivational speaker, and an activist to use my words to motivate, inspire, heal and encourage, and to be the voice for those who have been silenced. They have been silenced because of fear or abuse. They have been stripped of their honor or mocked because of the way they look or their ethnicity or their beliefs. They have lost the confidence to stand up for themselves or to speak up when they see wrong being committed because they are afraid that no one will take them seriously or believe them.

This is an important dream of mine because words are very powerful. They can transform people, lift them up or break them into pieces and shatter their ego. Words, whether they are written or spoken, can have a long lasting effect that can breathe hope into lost souls or despair to the degree that often can literally kill.

My advice to those who experience any of those things mentioned above is to be strong, always stand tall, be proud of who you are and where you came from. Do not allow anyone to tell you that you are worth nothing or that you will never amount to anything. You are not inferior to anyone regardless of their prejudice or their effort to destroy you. You are always going to be who you are, who you want to be, and you will always be someone worthy of respect.

“You are always going to be who you are, who you want to be, and you will always be someone worthy of respect.”
I Will Not Quit

All my young life I had a dream: to be a doctor or secretary, to married and have a big family. But life had another plan for me.

I began to be with illnesses since I was seven years old. From then, my life changed. I had problems learning, writing and remembering things at school. I was in first grade, and I decided I will not quit until I realize my dreams. I continued studying with very good grades. I received some awards and won school competitions.

Later, I had a relapse of my health condition. I was at the university. Again, my dreams were about to collapse, but I don’t give up and continue studying.

In the year 1991 I got married, but it wasn’t until 12 years later that I can be a mother.

Previously I had a job accident and I couldn’t continue working neither studying. I felt my life was finished.

My baby was borned prematurely and was in very delicate health. At the same time, my health began to be worse because of the maternity.

Today although my illnesses and my health are unstable, my decision not to give up still stands. Now with the desire to see my son with autism realized.

Life is not easy, but I WILL NOT QUIT.

“Life is not easy, but I WILL NOT QUIT.”
ANONYMOUS

My Goal

I want to learn English because I need to validate my Civil Engineering degree and continue working in what I like in the construction area. First, I need to take English classes to improve my reading, writing and speaking skills. I plan to study at the University of Madison. I have to pass 12 subjects that I did not pass at the re-validation. After I can take my degree and work on my own. I to make more money.

I am going to realize my dream because I want to buy my own house and travel to meet other cultures.

MARIA VILLATORO

My name is Maria Villatoro. This is my story. I was born in Honduras, the third of 11 children. I had to work from the age of 6 on the farm. Because I had to work I couldn’t go to school much. When I was 16 I met a man with whom I had a relationship. For 15 years, we had 3 children but it was difficult. I left because of domestic abuse.

Now I have a good life with my kids. I have dreams and goals.
LINA HERNANDEZ

Why I Won’t Quit

I dream to learn English to speak with other persons and understand when they speak. My goals now is learn about Quickbook this is an accounting program, is very important for my career.

I have a goal respect to buying my house in Colombia. I need to save money for 2 years for reach this goal. I will hard work for reach to this goals.

I need believe you can do it.

I need practice more English writing speaking and listen.

I need save money.

I need more time for go to school for learn about his program, also practicing in my job.

I think in 2 years be able to speak more and understand, and 1 year should have my house.

I need continue this important for my live.

“I dream to learn English to speak with other persons and understand when they speak.”
LEARNERS RECEIVE
INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT
FROM TUTORS TO HELP MEET GOALS
OF A BETTER JOB OR PROMOTION.
Five years ago when I got my Green Card and came to live in Madison, I had some goals and dreams. I wanted to become an U.S. citizen and work as a volunteer at the church or in the community helping the people.

However I had obstacles, because my native language is Spanish, I did not speak English very well and I could not communicate with people. Then I decided to attend ESL classes at Literacy Network. I had good memories about my first teacher, Mr. Gregg.

When I came to attend my first class I did not understand anything, did not feel confidence and thought that English language was not for me. After my first semester I had learned to write, to read, and of course Grammar.

Five years later I have improved my English and last year decided to apply for my citizenship, but I received important advice: It will be better if you attend a citizenship classes at Literacy Network before you send your application. It has been wonderful, because I have learned a lot, not I understand many things and am not afraid talking with my teacher and classmates. The class is pleasant, no stressed, the time goes fast, my teacher is so patient and when I come to class I think I’m going to a family meeting.

My first semester I sent my application and now I am waiting for my citizenship interview as soon as possible. My dream is coming soon.

About my other goal, I started to work as a volunteer at Literacy Network last month. It is exciting, I am so grateful because I am helping people now.

I know I still have difficulties with my pronunciation, so I have to continue improving this one studying and practicing with the best opportunities that Literacy Network have been giving to me.

Thanks a lot for all of them.
LATONDRA

Why I Won’t Quit

I want to become a R & B dance teacher and be on a dance team member. In order to do that I need reading and math. Math will help me manage studio expenses and costs. I can not be really happy until my dream comes true.

I want to become a better adult and stop acting like a teenager. And I want to continue to grow as an adult. Even though I shouldn’t brag, I like my job. I only have to take 1 bus because the job is near my house. I have an apartment and live by myself. I take care of my apartment. I babysit for my nieces. I spend time with Blessing, my cousin, when I am not too busy. “Never give up, never give up” from a song I learned as a chaperone for a children’s choir to Anchor Ohio.

PABLO MARTINEZ

I Will Not Quit

I came to the United States when I was 23 years old to live the American Dream.

My entire life changed when I came to this country. My personal growth started.

I came without English knowledge. It was hard for me to find a job. my first job was in a restaurant as a dishwasher. I worked there for a few months.
Then I worked in a maintenance company - cleaning floors in the 3rd shift for two years.

I worked in two or three more places trying to get a job where I felt comfortable.

I started to learn English listening to people and to music and watching TV. But it wasn’t enough.

Some years ago, I finally found a job where I feel good about it. It’s in a construction company. I started without skills in construction, but step by step I have grown as a worker and an individual.

I started taking English classes and soon after was promoted to a supervising position.

“\textit{I started taking English classes and soon after was promoted to a supervising position.}”

\textbf{YAYE MODJINOU}

My dream is to become a nurse. To achieve my dream, I have been taking classes at MATC and at Literacy Network toward my goal.

Now, I need to improve my English because nursing requires good communication skills. Also, I need to improve my English to be able to communicate with my co-workers effectively. I would like to have well-written English to express myself when I’m in a situation where I have to report to other members of the healthcare team.

To achieve my goal, I’m getting tutoring classes at Literacy Network. Nursing is two-year program. I also have family responsibilities.

When I get my degree, I will be grateful and thankful because I want to be a role model for my children and the rest of my family.
Helping My Children

The first thing I can say is thanks to my tutor for her time and her patience to teach me. I’m so happy learning new things. All that I’m learning helps me so much in my daily life, and I’m glad to help my children with their homework, I can attend teacher conferences without the help of an interpreter, and also have the courage to communicate or ask things to different people without fear that they don’t understand me. I think for people who live in USA it is important to learn English and computer, especially when you have kids. When the kids grow up we need to track all their activities in school and computer. Especially now technology is very different than 10-20 years ago. Some websites are dangerous for kids. It’s why we need learning about all what kids are doing. My son is in high school now; it’s why I see how he gets new ideas and projects.

I invite all parents don’t waste their time, enjoy what Literacy Network offers to us. It’s never too late for learning new things. You can give your children a better life because theirs is the future.

“I invite all parents don’t waste their time, enjoy what Literacy Network offers to us.”
LAST YEAR, MORE THAN 30 STUDENTS EARNED THEIR HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA.
Asmeret Adhanom

Why I Won’t Quit!

I WON’T QUIT GOING TO SCHOOL UNTIL I BECOME A CNA OR A REGISTERED NURSE.

My name is Asmeret and I am from East Africa, Eritrea in 2000 and found help and hope at the Literacy Network in 2018. I am working there again this year to improve my reading and writing skills.

I am a single mom and have three jobs to support my three daughters. Our family knows education is power and how important it is to make our dreams come true.

I have been working as a caregiver for about 14 years. My dream is to get certified as a CNA.

A CNA provides healthcare for patients at home or at hospitals under a registered nurse. Madison College has the program that I need and hopefully I will be able to take care of people in my own home. This is my dream and I WON’T QUIT until I am a CNA/RN. Not everybody can be a CNA. It’s very hard work and if you don’t have a caring heart don’t become one. Working as a CNA would give me a good job as I study further to become a registered nurse.

I am very grateful for all the help people have given me at Literacy Network. They have helped me so much to accomplish my dreams.

“Our family knows education is power and how important it is to make our dreams come true.”
Why I Won’t Quit

My biggest goal is to improve my English.

I need to practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

My husband Ignacio helps me taking care of the children.

My children help me practice homework.

Ricardo my little son helps me practice and pronounce some words.

Literacy Network helps me to take English classes.

Literacy Network helped me and offered me the opportunity of a tutor.

Rebecca thank you for being patient and helping me in my classes.

When I achieve my goal, I will feel happy.

“When I achieve my goal, I will feel happy.”
Why won’t I quit?

My goal is to get a college degree. I made this my goal because my life experience convinced me that I need a college degree.

When I was a young woman starting out I had a very rough life. I became pregnant and dropped out of high school. Later I found myself living with people who were dealing and using drugs. After I was threatened by two men that I already knew from the neighborhood, I ran for my life to my aunt’s house. But they were also dealing and using drugs. So then I moved in with my daughter and lived with her for ten years. Later on she moved to Madison. I came to visit her and decided to stay instead of moving back to Chicago.

Madison changed my life. For the first time in my life I had a chance to think about what I really wanted out of life. What I realized is there’s nothing like learning, and I really like learning new things. So I decided to go back to school. I went to Madison Area Technical College to get my high school diploma, which I received in 2015. But that’s not enough for me. I want to continue learning by studying for a college degree, and I’m determined to reach that goal even if it takes forever.

That’s why I won’t quit!
MAHMUDIJE SELMANI

My dream is to finish school and have a better job. I would love to work from home using my computer skills. After I finish my GED I want to continue furthering my education by getting a Technical Diploma from Madison Area Technical College. The diplomas that I am interested in are Medical Billing Specialist and Office Assistant. I hope to get my GED in 6 months. I have a lot of people who are helping me. Thanks to my mom and dad for watching my 17 month old baby while I am at school. I have a retired friend named Virginia and she offered to help me with my homework and spelling. Literacy Network has also helped me a lot and I want to say thank you to them. I do not have a lot of time to concentrate on just school because I have 3 children, a husband and parents that I help take care of. I will feel really great and happy when I reach my goals. It has always been my dream to get my GED since I left school in 8th grade from my home country. I had to leave school at a young age because of the war in Kosovo. I have always felt that educating yourself is the most important thing that you can do. I want to show my kids that no one can stop you from educating yourself as long as you never give up, no matter how old you are. Getting my GED will change my life. This scholarship will mean so much to me. Thank you for your time.

PHUTSONE “AMY” YAJCHERTHAO

My name is Amy. I’m from Laos and I have lived in the US for ten years. I moved here because my husband lives in this country and we want to have our own business so my husband he had his own job but I want to have my own business because I like fashion design. So I will open alteration shop to make custom and fix some cloth but my English wasn’t good for me to start it yet.
I would like to be a nurse.

Currently my job is taking care of an elderly woman who has dementia. I’ve only been doing this for one month but am really enjoying it because I love helping people. This job gives me much more satisfaction than my previous job cleaning houses. My dream job would be to be a Nurse, because nursing involves taking care of people and that’s what I love. To achieve my Nursing goal I will need to first finish my GED. To finish my GED I’m working with eTutor at the Madison Literacy Network. I am also studying for the Citizenships Exam which I will take in August. Then I can study for my GED. That will take a long time and be difficult for me because my daughter is only eight years old and because I need to work to support us. It’s very important for me to keep trying and not quit because I want a good life for my daughter and for myself and because I want work which is worthwhile and nursing is worthwhile.

ANONYMOUS

My dream is to have a house here in Madison. I would like a garage and yard that is not too big. Maybe I want a dog but I don’t know what his name is. In my job I want to speak English very well with my co-workers. I want to get a very good job. I want to take advanced classes in computer program.

In the future I want to go on a vacation to many countries with my family and friends. In the future I want to find a beautiful girl and start a family here. I want my sons to study in here and to speak English. I want to practice soccer with my sons. I want to have a beautiful daughter and she will be my princess.
ELMA RIVERA

My name is Elma. When I was young it was very difficult for me to study because of many problems. I only finished my middle school, but I always thought that education is very important for everyone of our lives. That’s why in 1994 I had to say goodbye to my three beautiful daughters and come to USE to work for their education. Today two of my daughters are graduated and one of them finished her high school also. Now it is time for me and my goals. My first goal is to improve my English skills. Also I get my GED. If I have it I can apply for a better position or a different job. I know I will take many classes, it will take more than one year. English is not easy for anybody. But is not impossible for me because I have support of teachers and tutors and free English classes. If I will reach my goals I will be very happy and proud of myself. I will continue and not quit because I will like help others in our community in the future as a volunteer.

“English is not easy for anybody. But is not impossible for me because I have support of teachers and tutors and free English classes.”

SERIGNE KANE

My name is Serigne Kane I’m from Senegal its west Africa. I want to be fluent in english After that I want to take my G-E-D classes at M-A-T-C or here when I get my G-E-D I want to take business clase but right now I want more reading hard and writing.
My dream is to live a very comfortable lifestyle. My plan is to complete my HSED program no later than May 2020, and then complete a college program in Radiology. My plan is also to fix my credit score and move to a house or condo. A Healthy life and closer relationship with God is also very important to me.

I need to go to school, create healthier study patterns, organize my schedule, and start paying my bills on time. I also need to take time out to make care of me physically and emotionally, and I need to keep my faith by praying, reading, and fasting. Literacy Network is helping me with my studies, and my faith in God is helping me with my personal growth.

I would like to complete this journey in five years. I have a couple of obstacles. My Dad who is 74 with memory issues came to live with my husband and me earlier this year.

In addition my husband is on dialysis 5 hours per day 3 days a week and has other health issues

I also make sure bills are paid on time, do all the cooking, cleaning and laundry. Not to mention I have a full time job and adult children who need help. Lastly I’m also overcoming self esteem issues of my own.

When I complete my goals and accomplish everything I expect to be happy and maybe even ready for more.

It is very important to me to complete my goals. I will be breaking my family cycle. I will be setting new standards for my children and grandchildren and generations to come.
GET INVOLVED

Volunteer

Volunteers are essential to our work. Help improve lives through literacy by becoming a volunteer tutor.

Learn more: www.litnetwork.org/volunteer
DONATE

Help Transform Lives Through Literacy

Your financial support is an investment in people through life-changing programs.

Donate Online: www.litnetwork.org/donate

or

Send Check to: Literacy Network
701 Dane Street, Madison, WI 53713
WHAT SETS LITERACY NETWORK APART

**Individual support.** Research shows that adult learners with basic skills need individualized support. Through a unique model in which interns plan individual lessons delivered one-on-one by volunteer tutors, we provide effective and efficient direct support.

**Personal education plans.** Each learner has an individual plan that follows them throughout their time at Literacy Network.

**Flexible curriculum.** Providing individual support for learners means meeting them where they are and ensuring that our team collaborates to give adult learners what they need.

**High-level support for success.** Literacy Network’s student services staff coordinate individual interviews with each new adult learner, identify their goals, skill level and chart a path for successful completion of these goals.

**Regular follow-up.** Staff follow up regularly with calls to learners to ensure they are committed to coming to our programs. We help navigate any obstacles to their success.

**High retention.** Because of the supports provided, Literacy Network retains 85% of learners and tutors each semester.

**Commitment to strong partnerships.** Each year, we have program locations around Dane County in schools, libraries, community centers and workplaces. We provide supports for great programming in each of these locations.

**Building relationships.** Our learners, tutors, interns, staff and supporters form strong bonds, creating cross-cultural connections, a sense of community and better understanding of diverse life situations and challenges. This leads to greater compassion for all people.

**Efficiency.** Literacy Network efficiently uses resources, volunteers to stretch dollars as far as possible. Literacy Network leverages approximately 20,000 hours of volunteer time at a value of more than $500,000 each year.
HELP CHANGE LIVES THROUGH LITERACY EDUCATION!

CONTACT US
701 Dane Street
Madison, WI 53713
(608) 244-3911
info@litnetwork.org

VOLUNTEER. DONATE.

LEARN MORE AT
www.litnetwork.org