

VISIONS

2005



A Publication of Student Work

VISIONS

Writings by New Adult Readers

Hillsborough Literacy Council

September 2005

900 North Ashley Drive
Tampa, FL 33602

813-273-3650

An affiliate of the
Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library System

From the Call of Story Organization, Brigham Young University:

Stories and storytelling lie at the heart of human experience. Since the beginnings of humankind, we have shared through stories the events, beliefs, and values that make us who we are and form our families, communities, and cultures. Some of these stories have been collected in myth and canonized in scripture. Others have become literary classics. Still others have become tall-tales and humorous yarns. Looking inward, story patterns and characters intertwine with the hard-to-perceive forces that shape our lives. Looking outward, story-threads join us to a larger cultural fabric. The most important stories may be those we share with family and friends, but all stories help preserve memory, explain our present, and imagine our future. Sewn across time, story-threads bind individuals to families and families to society, defining our collective values, beliefs, goals and traditions.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----------------|
| A Word from the President: | Page 5 |
| A Dedication: | Page 6 |
| Autobiographies: Our students share their stories in their own words. | Page 7 |
| Momentous Moments: Students describe a meaningful moment in their lives. | Page 10 |
| New Experiences, New Country: English for speakers of other languages students share their experiences in the United States. | Page 16 |
| Poetry and Personal Thoughts: Students share their touching innermost thoughts and dreams. | Page 20 |

A Word from the President

Dear Friends,

We are so pleased to present our 2005 *Visions* publication. We extend a heartfelt thank you to tutor Kari Bruursema who did an outstanding editing job!

The staff at the Literacy Council, the tutors, and I are proud of our students' excellent efforts venturing into storytelling. In our tutoring sessions with students, they learn the mechanics of the language and the fundamentals of reading, which gives them the skills necessary to explore and take in the culture through the written word. But story writing is where we make sense of the world through our own lens, in our own way. It takes us from passively experiencing our culture to actively contributing to it.

We are thrilled that many of our students have taken this opportunity to develop their ideas and share their experiences in this forum. It is our hope that this is just the beginning of students honing their storytelling skills to continue to impact their individual world and the larger world.

Sincerely,
Frank Shideler - President

A Dedication

Gifts I Treasure

The gift of your time.

The gift of your words.

The gift of your knowledge.

The gift of your dedication.

The gift of your laughter.

The gift of your friendship.

*These are some of the many
Treasured gifts you have given to me.*

Gratefully,

Your Tutor

Autobiographies



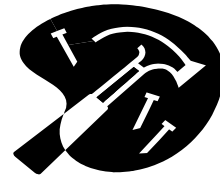
MY STORY

My name is Lisa Summers.
I am a Korean woman.
I came to America in 1971.
I have 2 children. Sue and Leanne.
I have 3 grand children.
My granddaughters are:
Daneka and Minji, one year old.
My grandson is Jacob, who is 13½.
I speak English and want to learn
to read and write English.
I like to garden.

I came to United States from another country when I was 8 years old. I didn't speak any English. I don't remember when I started to speak English very well. When I started school, I remember that I had a special class. It was called ESL. I think it meant English secondary language. Going through elementary was fine. When I started middle-school it got hard. I can only read up to a third grade level, and spell on a first grade level. They still pass me. Now I find myself in high school just going through the motions. In my senior year I stopped going to school because it was very hard for me and I had a family problem. I had to start working. I met my husband when I was in my twenties, got married and had two kids. All the time my husband didn't know about my problem because I read well enough to hide my literacy from him. I found myself at 30 something years old wanting to do something with my literacy. I was tired of hiding and turning down good job positions because of my reading and spelling problem. I was sitting and watching T.V. one day and there was a commical about the literacy program. I contacted the program and got Fay. She is now helping me on my way to achieve my goal.

-Anonymous





My name is Philip Morley and I was born and raised in London England. I have always had difficulty with spelling, reading and writing. At junior high school I was called a bad kid because I would get so frustrated with my work and I could never keep up with the class work. I never knew why I had so much trouble; I just thought that I was stupid. My parents always told me that I was not stupid and I just had a learning difficulty. My parents asked my school to get me tested for dyslexia but my school just said that I had behavior problems and not dyslexia. It was not until I got to high school I was told that I had dyslexia. I was eleven years old and I still could not read or spell very well. My parents decided to take me out of the school that I was in and put me in a school for learning difficulty. This school more than anything helped me out with my personality and made me understand that I was not stupid. After high school I went to a college where I studied traditional carpentry, joinery and furniture design. After the four year course I graduated and then got a job as a camp counselor at a summer camp in the USA, where I met a wonderful woman who is now my wife and we live in Tampa Bay my wife is a teacher and I am a custom furniture maker. I still have a lot to work on with my dyslexia if I want to reach my goals. One day I hope to own my own wood working shop and that when I have children I can help them with their school work. I am currently working on developing my reading, writing and spelling skills at home and with the Hillsborough Literacy Council where I meet two times a week with a teacher who helps me with grammar and spelling. I find working with this program is helping me to reach my goals.

Momentous Life Moments

My Very Short Trip to the Philippines

I was at Okinawa, Japan in the army on 24 hour alert when they woke us up at 2:00 a.m. Nine of us got on the plane at 2:15 a.m. to fly out. We were flying for several hours. We had to stop to land on one of the Philippine islands for some supplies and fuel. They told us the stop would be for five or ten minutes and they were not going to shut the engines off because enemy guerrillas were in the area.

The plane landed and I wanted off. But they had said no one could get off.

I said, "I'm getting off."

They said, "You can't get off."

I said, "I **had** to get off and I am going to do it."

They said, "why?"

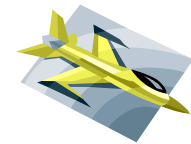
I said, "I'll probably never be in the Philippines again and I want to be able to say I was in the Philippines."

They said, "You don't have much time, so hurry up"

There was a major with us, so he said, "I am going to get off too," so he could also be in the Philippines. We both got off. We were on the ground about two minutes. We got back in the plane, they closed the door and we went on to our destination.

The Major said, "We are getting credit for this. We were in the Philippines."

They put it in our records.



Going Fishing Against My Father's Will
By Orien Hall

In my childhood days we lived in Indianapolis, Indiana only three blocks from White River. Both my parents worked days at the grocery store six days a week. Since I was young and alone I was told never to go down to the river because it was dangerous and I could drown like several children already had.

However, I loved to fish and my father was too busy working to take me fishing. My father hated fishing. Besides, he said, "Fishing is a waste of time." In past summers beginning when I was only five years old we would go to my Uncle's farm where I fished with my older cousins in their pond. There my fishing gear was heavy duty sewing thread, a bobby pin, and corn for bait with which I caught small Blue Gills.



But by the time I was 8 or 9 we no longer went to the farm but I still wanted to fish. So I bought a little fishing gear of hooks, line, and bobbers which would fold up and fit in a cigar box. I hid the cigar box in the only safe place I could find which was on the front porch under the glider with its skirt reaching to the porch floor.

Several times a week either on Saturday or after school I would dig my fishing worms in the back yard and walk the three block to White River and fish. At the river I just took the hook in my hand and threw it as hard as I could into the river. However, the fish I caught I couldn't bring home so I let them go.

Continued

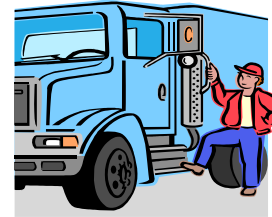
Going Fishing Against My Father's Will – Continued

One Sunday morning as we were eating breakfast my father said, "We are going to scrub the front porch." After breakfast he got up and said to me, "Let's go out and move the glider." As we moved the glider my cigar box with fishing gear was very visible. Father opened my cigar box and immediately saw my fishing gear. He looked at me and said "You better not lie but tell me the truth." I told him the truth, "I've been fishing down at the river." He was furious, really furious!! That ended my fishing trips down to the river.

My father knew a gentleman family friend named Glen who loved to fish. One day, to my surprise, Glen called me up on a Friday and asked me if I could go fishing with him Saturday. He picked me up early Saturday morning and we fished from his boat. I had a regular fishing pole to fish with and I could keep, clean and eat my fish. Glen took me fishing about once a month for years. He taught me how to fish. Glen took me to good fishing places like the lake and reservoir, and he showed me how to take care of my gear, a boat, and its motor.

Until this day I still love to fish. When my two boys were little I would take them fishing on week ends and vacations. They liked to fish as much as I did when I was little. They still fish. My older son will fish all day and he would still rather fish than eat. My younger son is not as fond of fishing as his brother, but he likes it enough that he bought the two of us a three day fishing trip in the gulf of Mexico. Also I have been fortunate enough to take my grandchildren fishing.





SETTING AND ACCOMPLISHING ONE OF MY GOALS

By Michael Perdue

Once I was a little boy, there were two things in life I wanted to do. One of them was to fly a plane or drive tractor-trailer trucks. I was cooking for a living at that time for Sambo's restaurant, and their food truck arrived which was a tractor-trailer. It caught my attention. I was like "wow"! I always wanted to drive a tractor-trailer – a big truck!

I looked into one of the schools and at that time the school's name was United Truckmaster out of Tampa, Florida. That's when it began. I signed up for the school and I completed the course in 1985 of January. I knew once starting to drive for a living that you would go through some hard times. This should be expected in life to accomplish things that you want in life, especially when you have an expensive taste, because you know how we like expensive things. I didn't want to just drive for anybody, but to get with a good company that you would enjoy working for and retire from.

My first job was with Kraft Food Service. Had some hard times with management but life goes on. I was terminated from that company but I didn't give up. I continued cooking and every time I would look at a tractor-trailer go by it was like a thirst when you are hot outside. That lets me know I still wanted to drive tractor-trailer because I went to school for it and accomplished my goal and my certificates and all my criteria to drive tractor-trailer.

Over the years I have worked for Sysco, Albertson's, Watkins, and Roadway. I was hired by American Freight FedEx on August 30, 2002 and I am at my happiest. "Praise the Lord". I accomplished my goal and I am still with FedEx Freight.



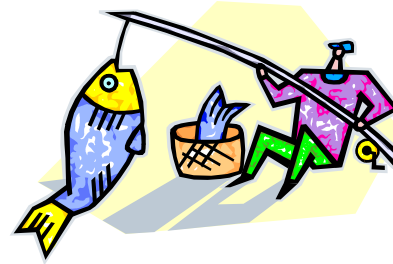
Visiting Miss Mary

I went to Rochester, NY to see Miss Mary. She is a friend of the family. She is a nice lady. Miss Mary took me to visit her friends and relatives. We went shopping for a fan.

While I was there, a lot of people got killed while they were being robbed.

I enjoyed the trip in New York. I plan to go back to Rochester in December with my wife.

- Clennon James



A True Fishing Story

By Ruben

When I was on vacation with my friends we chartered a boat in the Florida Keys. We bought some beer and we bought some food too and we went fishing for the day for dolphin fish (mahi-mahi).

We came back with 300 pounds of fish. I caught the most. I caught one that weighed 48 pounds and it was 52 inches long.

But the surprise was that I caught it with a 15-pound test line. It took me a half an hour to bring it in. I got him close to the boat twice and he would take off and come up about a block away so I would have to reel him in again.

The fish was too big for the line I was using on my rod and my rod was too small for the fish. But I was like the train that couldn't and I brought him in anyway.

I won a trophy and the fish is mounted on my wall at home!

New Experiences, New Country

THROUGH THE BIBLE

I like to speak about the Bible with other people. In Spanish it is easy for me. In English it is hard, but sometimes I do it, with difficulty, but I do.

Here, where I live (Nantucket Bay Apt.) there is a group of neighbors who meet in the Club House to study the Bible. They only speak English. They are my neighbors and they invited me to study the Bible with them. I answered "I don't know English". Mrs. Mabel Huggins, who leads the group and Mrs. Marge said to me "yes, Rosario, you can do it, you know English, come with us." I accepted. I thought it would be a good opportunity to hear and practice English. I began to visit them. At the beginning I didn't say a word, but one day Mrs. Mabel gave me the opportunity to read in her Bible some verses. I did it. When I finished reading she said, good! and I felt happy. When the class finished Mrs. Mabel told them about my experience and difficulty with English language. Today I continue the Bible studies and I don't only have neighbors, I have friends.

Now I bring my own Bible to the Bible studies. It is a bilingual Bible that I bought with the gift certificate that you Hillsborough Literacy Council gave me. Thank you for this gift.

Thank you, my Lord, who receives all glory, honor and blessings.

God bless you,
Mrs. Rosario Cortes



Remembering

Two years ago I could not imagine that I would be here. When I say here I mean here in the "country of the dream," in the country where there are many opportunities for everybody. If somebody is a hard worker, smart, and wishes for knowledge, this country is the right place for that.

But sometimes, no matter how happy we are here, we think about our country of origin. My country of origin is ex-Yougoslavie. The capital city is Belgrade. Ex-Yougoslavie belongs partly to the East, partly to the West.

Throughout its history, Belgrade has been at the crossroads of cultures, religions, and at the most important route in Europe, from the west to the east. One of the longest and largest rivers in Europe is the Danube. On its long way down from Germany to the Black Sea, it flows through Yougoslavie. All kinds of passengers and ships travel along the Danube. The loveliest region on its way to the sea is the Djerdap Gorge.

The very famous Belgrade Marathon is organized each April in the streets for some 20 – 30 thousand people to run. So Belgrade is an international place.

I hope that in the future I will go there to spend my vacations.

-Dejan Radivojevic





Appreciating the United States

I came here to the USA in 1999. The situation in Colombia is a little difficult, especially for people my age, in my fifties. In Colombia the people can get a job only until 30 years old. Most of them are doctors, lawyers, etc., but people can't get a good job with a good salary, so they have to have their own business, for example, driving taxis. In this country, we have more opportunities to get a job.

When the students finish their college in Colombia, most of them plan to get out looking for opportunities in another country.

My daughter comes very soon for a visit. She's so excited because she loves this country, and me too.

-Ana Martinez

Working in a New Country

When I came to this country three years ago, I couldn't speak too much English. I knew a little about grammar, but this was not enough to have a conversation with somebody. I studied dentistry in my country, so I wanted to get a job in this field.

Initially I started a job as a dental assistant. Although I knew how to do almost everything, I found that working as a dental assistant in this country was too different from my country. I remember that I couldn't understand what the dentist and patients wanted to tell me.

- Continued

Working in a New Country - Continued

Then I became frustrated and sad. I thought that I had to quit my job. But my husband encouraged me to keep trying.

Another thing was I didn't have too much knowledge about computers. I kept in mind that I was in this country for that reason. I had to learn English and get familiar with the computer programs.

When I completed three months working, I felt a little more comfortable at the office, but I knew I had to improve a lot. I have a daughter who didn't speak English at all at that time. I was helping her with her homework. Now it is my daughter who helps me with the pronunciation.

A friend of ours who is a dentist from Colombia too told us that I could take some Boards in order to get my license as a dental hygienist. I started by taking the written test. My tutor helped me very much. Then I took the practical exam. I am working now as a dental hygienist. I work for two dentists in different offices.

I enjoy working in this field because I am in contact with people every day. I learn from my patients a lot. Besides that, I feel very happy to know that I help people to have good dental care. I think that it is a great experience for me, and I can learn the English language very well. I know that it is difficult to start a life in another country, but if we persevere, we can get what we want in our life, without forgetting that God helps us all the time.

At this moment, after almost three years of working, I am happy with my job. And I thank God for the opportunity to be in this country.

-Beatriz M.



Poetry and Personal Thoughts



Sorry

I am sorry I couldn't be the one you love
For ever I love more every day but you
didn't feel the same
I loved you so much that I would die a
thousand times
I would still come back for you because
you were the love of my life
You made me happy when nobody could
Your smile brighten up my day
It was the beautiful smile I ever did see
I feel so sad that I couldn't be the one
you love
It feel like someone rip out my heart and
throw it away
I hope I can live without your beautiful
smile
I will all way be your sunshine.

- Thelma C. McGriff

"Deep into the Book"

The book I am currently reading is titled "You Shouldn't Have To Say Goodbye", written by Patricia Hermes. It's a story about thirteen year old Sarah and how she learns to deal with her mothers' dying with cancer.

I found the book in my bookcase. I was hunting for something different to read for a change of pace. The picture on the cover looked interesting.

While I was reading the story it didn't seem so sad, but when my tutor reads the story you get the true feelings of Sarah's mothers' death. When I read slowly, word by word, I don't feel the emotion of the story. When my tutor reads slowly for me to follow, she brings out the sadness of the book. So I usually don't let my tutor read because I don't want to feel that sadness.

- Goldie Mingo



Alone

Being hurt so many times
I don't know what to say to no one
No one understands how I feel
I am lost with no words and
No feelings and no one to wipe my tears from my eyes
The more I cry my heart cry for love
But there is no one there to hold me and to say
It is OK but one day my soul will fly with the birds
And I can be free.

- Thelma C. McGriff



My dream was to play basketball in school
But I never finish so now I want to finish school.

- Thelma C. McGriff

I never learned to read
on my job I never lerned to read or
write
my job is important to me.

- Everett Andrews



Lost in a world that has no fear,
Lost world that has no love for no body.
I am lost in this world with no friends
and no body to say it's ok this world
make you strong and weak and
it don't show you no love,
it shows how people are not what
they said they are.

- Thelma C. McGriff

I would like to learn more English so I could communicate better, for example at my actual job and with the doctors that assist my family and me.

In the future, I would like to study a technical career like air conditioner or electrician, that way I could have a better job and help the people.

-Wilson Vera





This is the word to describe
Loving strong affection and warm feelings for another
Honest - not lying stealing or cheating
Caring - serious attention or effort
Sweet - easy to love, gentle and kind
Helpful - providing help.

- Thelma C. McGriff

My Goal

My goal is to make a better life for me and my kids. To do this, I need to read better so I can take my GED and take some classes. I am interested in massage therapy, cosmetology or being a pharmacy tech. This program I am in will help me better myself. The teacher I have is a wonderful and understanding person. I actually started in the literacy program to be able to help my kids with their homework. But being in this program has helped me on a day to day basis to feel better about myself and my future, so I am able to set this goal and reach it.

-VM



Hillsborough Literacy Council

Board of Directors

Frank Shideler, President
Bill Hunter, Vice President/ Secretary
Gary Gallagher, Treasurer

Debbie Vomero
Elaine Gibbons
Bill Hill

Office Staff

Carol Bockenek, Literacy Coordinator
Nilda Miller, Executive Secretary

An affiliate of the
Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library System

