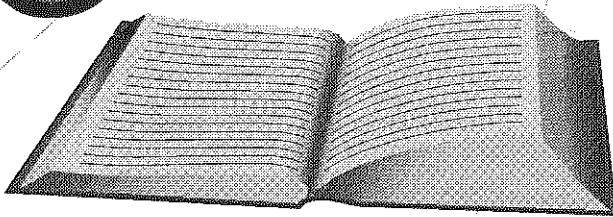
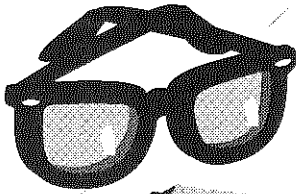




# *Visions*



Created by  
Adult New Readers

of the

Hillsborough Literacy Council, Inc.

sponsors of the

*Authors in Residence Contest*

1997-98

**W**e never know how high we are  
Till we are called to rise,  
And then, if we are true to plan,  
Our statures touch the skies.

- Emily Dickinson

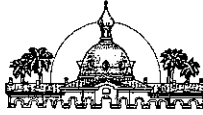
# Table of Contents

Salutation .....	2
<b>Jimmie B. Keel</b> Assistant County Administrator Office of Human Services	
“Love” from .....	3
<b>Jodi Cohen</b> Literacy Coordinator Hillsborough Literacy Council	
Best Wishes from .....	4
<b>Mary Lindsey, Ph.D.</b> Executive Director Hillsborough County Center for Excellence, Inc.	
From the Editor’s Desk .....	5
Essays by .....	7
<b>Hillsborough Literacy Council’s</b> <b>Authors in Residence</b>	
A Glorious Experience .....	23
<b>Kay O’Rourke</b>	
Kudos .....	24

# HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

FLORIDA

Office of the County Administrator  
Daniel A. Kiehan



February 25, 1998

Deputy County Administrator  
Patricia Bean  
Assistant County Administrators  
Edwin Hanneker  
Jimmie Keel

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Ms. Gloria Abrams  
Continuing Education HLC  
The Hillsborough Literacy Council, Inc.  
1505 North Nebraska Avenue  
Tampa, Florida 33605

Dear Ms. Abrams:

It is a tremendous honor for me to have the privilege of saying that Hillsborough County owes each of the new adult readers and tutors a great debt of gratitude that we can never repay.

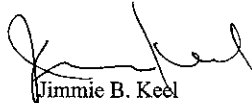
Every time someone learns to read, it affords that individual the opportunity to unlock the pathway to a new idea, a new process, a new invention, and an improved way of life for countless citizens, not only in Hillsborough County or the State of Florida but in the Nation.

The late President John F. Kennedy stated in his inaugural address: "Ask not what my Country can do for me, but rather what can I do for my country!" There is no question in my mind, that the accomplishment you are making falls within this category of doing so much for our community.

As one organization has said, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." Your commitment to helping someone to read certainly ensures that no human minds will be wasted.

Keep up the good work, for you are truly the heroines and heroes of Hillsborough County.

Sincerely,



Jimmie B. Keel  
Assistant County Administrator  
Office of Human Services

JBK:PS

Post Office Box 1110 • Tampa, Florida 33601  
*An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer*



## Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System

900 N. Ashley Drive, Tampa, Florida 33602-3704

March 1998

Love, in all its forms, brings out the best in us. Love nourishes growth and gives us all a sense of deep meaning in our lives.

It is my great honor to prelude the love reflected in this fifth edition of "Visions". I know that each composition reflects hours of thought and effort on the part of a motivated, caring and dedicated adult learner. The booklet is also testament to the many hours of devoted instruction offered by volunteer tutors of the Hillsborough Literacy Council.

I am delighted to be working with the authors of the enclosed writings. The love of learning, the courage to grow and the strength to try are the great gifts that they share with all of us. I know that you, too, will experience the warmth, intensity and effort that these compositions reflect.

They were born in the hearts of truly remarkable individuals and speak of love in its deepest and most vibrant forms.

Most sincerely,

Jodi Cohen,  
Literacy Coordinator, HLC

# Hillsborough County Center of Excellence, Inc.

7406 North Dixon Avenue  
Tampa, Florida 33604  
Phone (813) 238-5873 Fax (813) 237-3729

February 19, 1998

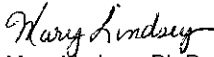
Ms. Gloria Abrams  
Continuing Education HLC  
Hillsborough Literacy Council, Inc.  
1505 North Nebraska Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33612

Dear Ms. Abrams:

Thank you for inviting me to serve as one of the judges for the Hillsborough Literacy Council's Authors in Residence Contest. You are correct, they are all winners. It was a difficult task to select one winner from each category. It was indeed a pleasure as well as a humbling experience to read about love from their perspectives.

I was deeply moved by these expressions of love that came from their hearts. Keep up this most important work and best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

  
Mary Lindsey, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

# From the Editor's Desk

*"I wanted to let you know how important this contest is to the literacy students. I have been working with Nina for several years and her proudest moment was seeing her own words published in last year's Visions. We both look forward to seeing this year's edition."*

**I** quote here the words of one dedicated volunteer tutor, Lisa Reed, to her student's response to the idea behind the Hillsborough Literacy Council's annual Authors in Residence contest. These stories represent the very first time the new readers have been able to put their creativity on paper. The joy of such expression is a powerful tool for motivation.

For this 1997-98 edition, unlike the previous four, the adult new readers were asked to adhere to the suggested theme of LOVE. Free style was encouraged and the students came through, as you will see. Their ideas touched on love of learning, personal attachments, parental love, hobbies, love of family, etc. and each one is as distinctive and identifying as a fingerprint. Each one is a voice that would have remained mute; a celebration of life previously subdued, but for the individual courage and determination of these new authors.

Some are philosophical gems.

Some read like poetry.

*Read on!*

*- Gloria Abrams*



# Love...

**L**ove is very special because it's a beautiful feeling. It's something that you can't see just feel. I'm 16 years old, and I think it will be magnificent because it's something new in my life. I hope to find a good person to love. Like my parents, they always love each other in the good and the bad times.; They have been married for twenty-four years, and they have 5 daughters. They always stay together. Their love is big, and we are a happy family. I would like a love like theirs.

- *Hilda Amezquita*  
Level 1

**I** think love is the most important feeling in life. We can show love in every moment and in each thing that we do. Love is sharing. It's humility. We have the liberty too. Love to God, Love our family, Love nature, and each other.

- *Elizabeth Torres*  
Level 1

**T**he first love in our lives is our parents' love. They give love to their children without expecting anything in return. When we were young, they always gave a helping hand to us and taught us a good way to live. Parents' love is sincere. When children grow up, they leave, and they begin a new life.

- *Rogelio Rodriguez*  
Level 2



## Love...

**T**here are different kinds of love such as the love for your parents, brothers, sisters, spouse, son, daughter and the other family members. For me, the love for my children is the biggest that a person can feel, because the parents take care of them all the time and know what is happening with each of them. Sometimes we need to scold and slap them on the buttocks, but that doesn't change what I feel for them. The love for my parents is so special. They give me my being, so I will feel love all my life for them. I feel love toward my husband because he's the person that I found to live together all my life. There are currently problems and I expect more to follow, but together with love we will find the solutions for them...LOVE IS GREATEST.

- *Gloria Arroyo*  
Level 1

**L**ove is feeling. It means something good happened. People can't exactly describe it. People can say many things about love. There are many different kinds of love, like the love between parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, and friends. No matter what kind, it is always something good because when love is big, people can give themselves to each others. But sometimes it hurts, like when one doesn't feel like the others. Or when somebody dies we think that we can't still live without that person, but life continues. The love of other people helps us to survive and love to shine again. For example, when my father died, I felt that I couldn't stand it, but my love for my children helped me to understand that they need me and I needed to be strong for them. Love helps us to resolve problems. If people always love each other, there would never be war in the world.

- *Olivia Fuentes*  
Level 1

# Love...

**L**ove is the most important thing in the world. With love, people can live better. It is the most beautiful sentiment. All can give a gesture of love. True love can't be egoistic. Love doesn't harm and is honorable. It's the smile of a child. Love can move mountains. With love, all is possible.

- *Araceli Ramirez*

Level 1

**A** mother's love is big because she gives her life for her children with love. For example, when I was a little girl, my mother was always there giving me her understanding. She answered my questions about life. She always tried to teach the best way to live with love. She always understood me when I was wrong about something, and she forgave me because her love was big. Unfortunately, I lost her. I miss her a lot. Now, I am married, and I have children. Now, I understand how big her love was because I feel the same way about my children. I try to teach them the good things that my mother taught me. There are many kinds of love, but the biggest is a mother's love.

- *Laura E. Izaquierre*

Level 1

**L**ove is when you are with someone you care a lot for. It is sadness because you know that sooner or later that person will have to go away. Love is when you are heartbroken because the person you care for is gone. It is something you can never be too sure about. Love is a complicated subject.

- *Yadira Wagner*

Level 1

# Love...

**M**y love toward my daughter is the biggest and the most wonderful feeling that I've ever felt. I've felt and continue feeling this sentiment since she was in my womb and it became deeper as I watched her walk her first steps, say her first words, and many other things that make me love her more and more. Words can't express how much I love my daughter. Now I am expecting another child this September. Although I don't like being pregnant because I'm nauseous and depressed for five months, I enjoy when he or she moves around or when I go to my doctor's appointments and hear his or her heart beat. At that moment I forget all that I've been through, my first months of pregnancy. Again, no words really explain a mother's love toward her child.

*- Maria Amezquita Cabrera*

Level 1

# *Love Helps*

**W**hen I was a little girl, I lived in Shellman, Georgia. I did not understand what love was. I was just going along with life.

As I was growing up, I felt that I was the black sheep of the family. When something needed to be done in our house, I was the one that had to do it.

But I was still the only one who wanted to make a better life. I didn't drink or smoke. I didn't do all the things that my sisters or brothers did. We didn't say much about love, and so I wasn't learning much about it or thinking much about it.

After I grew up, I met some people in Tampa who made me part of their family. They spoke of love a lot in their own home. That taught me that it is O.K. to use the word, and so I do the same thing with my own children. Sometimes they get tired of hearing it. But I like to do this. It's a lot better for all of us than the way it was when I was growing up.

I feel that I have a more loving relationship with my kids than my parents had with me. Love helps.

- *Naomi Perry*  
Level 4

# *I Want to be Like You, Daddy*

**D**addy, I understand how hard it is to be a man.  
You worked so hard, Daddy.  
You raised twelve kids.  
I understand how hard it is to be a man.

You died when I was twelve, Daddy.  
It hurt so bad.  
When I get to heaven, Daddy,  
Is when we'll be together.  
I know you were a lovely man.

You couldn't even read, Daddy.  
You didn't go to school.  
But I know the family rule, Daddy,  
Was for me to go to school.

You had a lovely wife, Daddy.  
You put food on the table.  
You put clothes on my back, Daddy.  
You put shoes on my feet.  
Now I understand how hard it is to be a man.

Now you're with the angels, Daddy.  
I know you're not a stranger.  
I looked in your hands.  
You were a hard working man.  
I want to be like you, Daddy.  
Your love is so true.

*- Goldie Mingo*  
Level 3

# My Dad

**M**y dad bought me a slip  
When I was a little girl  
Silk and very pretty  
Special because he bought it.

First silk slip I ever had.

Ruffles on the tail  
Not fancy but pretty  
Looked at it in the window  
Touched it - feel was nice and soft.

I wanted it and dad said, "Okay."

For a black man it was a lot of money  
But he bought it for me anyway.  
Long after I outgrew the slip  
I kept it.

It meant a lot to me.

*- Johnnie Harris*

Level 4

# *David A. Reeves, Jr. at Bethune Cookman College!*

**M**y feelings as a proud mother: on August 17, 1997, my son David Reeves was accepted at Bethune Cookman College. That was the best experience I ever had in my life. Standing on the ground of Mrs. Harry McLeod Bethune. On that day I felt like I was walking on a cloud with my son walking beside me. God be the glory. He is the reason for it all.

David is the first person in our family to graduate high school and go to college. His sister, Pam, also has graduated and is going to college.

I felt like somebody for the first time in a long time, my nose was in the air, and my head was held high. I felt like a millionaire. I had done it alone. I raised my children by myself. It wasn't easy, but God was right there with us all. He took us through every obstacle. Praise be to God.

*- Gloria Washington*  
Level 3

# What is Love?

**T**o me love is understand and helping people out that need help. The Lord said love one another as yourself. I know it is hard to do something but you can do it. I have never had much love in my life. But now I know people love me because they tell me. And that makes me feel good. I love people. I like to help them out and they help me. I thing she is an angel. Love gives people a reason to live. I hope and pray that everybody will see it before it is to late. I have love in my life now by my tutor being so nice to me. And I love here for that. She does not think I am stupid. So I want to keep going. I pray that everybody gets Love in their life. Because life don't mean much if you don't have it. My brother died of cancer. My Preacher told him to think of Love and to give love. And he did. Everybody that come to see him he would talk of love and it made him feel good. And the nurses love him for he was allway smiling. It helped to go through his pain. I will never forget it. We were sad but my brother allway said why are you crying. So we had to laugh. He allway wanted to pray. He would ask everybody to pray with him. He would pray for love. I will never forget it.

- *Gloria Roberts*

Level 4



# LOVE

**L**ove is a big word to have just four letters in it. It makes me think about so many things. some good and some not so good. I like to think about the good things but I've learned so much about this word Love. I find it hard to talk without telling the bad and the good.

Some things I will be telling you have been in my heart a long time. When I was writing this paper I had to go deep inside myself.

I can see my Mother in my mind as I saw her when I was a little girl. Looking back I know she loved me very much but I didn't think she did for a long time. We lived in Low Income Housing. My Mom raised us by herself. I have one sister and four brothers. My mother made most of our clothes and we had some hand me downs. We did not have much but we did have food to eat and somewhere to live. I didn't know my Dad and don't know him now. I'm older now and can say that my Mom loved me very much. I gave her such a hard time. I ran away so many times. I did not go to school. I moved out of the house at 14 years old. I was looking for Love at that time. I didn't know that it was there all the time.

When I was 21 my Mom got very sick and I going to have a baby. I lived in Florida. I went back home to be at my Mom's side. By this time I was 22 years old and had a baby boy. My Mom saw her grandson before she died. He was 2 months old then. Mom died at 53 years old. My son is 18 years old now and I have a girl too. She will soon be 14 years old. My son moved out of the house at 18. I have not seen my sister or brothers in 19 years. I miss them so much.

I did not tell you but I know God now. He has opened my heart. Now that I'm a mother I know what it is to love. Now I live in Low Income Housing and I am raising my kids by myself. But I can read now and my world is opening up for me and I hope to go back to school and get my GED all because someone cared and loved me.

*- Linda Ross*

Level 4

# *The Love of My Life...*

**T**he love of my life is my husband, George. When I first met my husband, I was 16 years old. He had already met me when I was 14, but I didn't remember him. He was working at the same place I was working. He had an eye for me.

He took me home in a snowstorm and he took me home to the wrong house. He thought I was still living there, but I wasn't, so I stayed for a second in the truck and he wondered why I wouldn't get out. He didn't know I'd moved with my father and sisters out of my aunt's house and so he asked me where I lived. I said, "I can walk the rest of the way." He said, "No, I'll drive you," because he wanted to know where I lived.

Later on, a few months later, he asked me to go to the movies. So we went to the movies but we never used to see the end of the movie because my father wanted me home at a certain time. So we always had to guess how the movies ended. My father had to be both mother and father to me so that's why he was strict and set a good example.

Two years later we got engaged and he went into the Navy. Whenever he had a pass, he would come visit me. About a year later we got married. It was true love. After we were married, I went to live with him in the Navy. My husband was very patient and taught me so many things about life and love. We had a lot of dreams together. We had three sons we love very much. And now we have grandchildren. We'll be married 39 years in May. And we're looking forward to getting together and being more in love than we already are for the rest of our lives.

It's a beautiful love, the only love I've ever had in my whole life. He's an instrument to me. Love is kind. Love is patient. Love is forgiving and love is understanding. We never go to bed angry. Always go to bed happy and say you love each other. You never know when you won't wake up. He is so kind. Every time I fix supper, he says, "Thank you, little darling. Thank you for my supper." He doesn't have to thank me. I enjoy doing this for him. He's so sweet to thank me. He's been everything to me. I wouldn't know what to do without him. I don't know how to express it any more that I've said. This is the love of my life. And God has been with us always.

To my loving husband which I'll always love with all my heart. With love, Nina.

*- Annina Morgan*

Level 4

# *Love and Support to the Stranger*

**A**fter a couple of months of my arrival to the United States, I asked myself what's next and what to do. Dilemma is which I found myself was: "Is it worth it to live in another country far from my homeland, where everything is strange and unknown?" Questions on which I had no answers were popping up every day. The unslept nights and days full of uncertainty were hard to handle. So, I decided to look for job hoping that would take care of the pressure I felt. The not knowing language gave me another set of problems, starting from myself. I felt unsecure so I starting telling myself: "God will help me."

In life I was always in charge, but now all that was changed. That was all new to me. I wasn't young any more, all this was hard for me. New beginning is very hard and painful. I felt as a stranger in a strange country. My caring nature gave me a little hope that I will find love and moral support in a new surroundings. With that decision I started working in John Knox Village as a food server.

The thought that I don't know English enough scared me. I faced the situation where language was a problem, but each time I found someone willing to help. Each time I asked for help from my co-workers I was worried if they will understand. The days were passing by. One day soon after I started working was especially remembered. Ms. Christine Eagan, dining room manager, called me into her office. She stood in front of me and told me: "Repeat after me, "I believe in Ani." In short time I notice that relationship in John Knox Village between tenants and between workers is on high level. The hard evidence is moral support I receive specially from Ms. Katie Gonzales, Juan Martinez, Lashawn, Lita, Marvin, etc. Relationship of Don Despres with workers was warm and every morning he ask how are we, how is job going..., that makes me happy.

After a part time position I started working a full time. All those old tenants happy faces gave me a strength and faith in myself. (They were not so much older than I), plus all smiling faces of people worked with. Each day they asking how am I, if I heard anything from my country. There was a situation where tenants would bring pictures and adds from papers of my country. I learned to share beauty of days with them. I was thinking of Christine's words: "I believe in Ani." It gave me moral support that I needed so much. All the love that they gave me I am able to return now through my job. All those good faces, old faces that still have traces of beauty gave me their love when I most needed. I manage to do my job right so I received award for the Best Worker of March, 1995. That was the most exciting day for me. I was very happy because they believed in me and accept me. Award surprised me because there are so many employees. I couldn't believe they chose me.

Now after two and half years at the same job I can say that I am so happy that I came to John Knox Village and that I met all those lovely faces.

If you come across someone that feels depressed or unhappy as I was, he or she should look for people who are willing to help, there is more of them out there than you think. Believe me. I'm an example. I can say now I have good friends, whom I love and certainly wish for these friendships to last. At the end big thank you one more time for all love and moral support.

*- Enisa Dosen*  
Level 2

# What I Like...Fishing

**O**ne thing I like to do is fishing. I like to catch them and hang them up on my pole. After I catch them. I like to catch them. O how they taste so good. Then when I cook hush puppies, I put lots of onions in them so they very very good. We leave Friday night and come back Sunday.

When my husband was a live, we went every weekend and I love it a lots. But can't go now. We used to go to Kissimmee all the time. We used to go Six Miles Creek and other small lakes near Tampa.

I take my two boys and two girls fishing and we has a good time, fishing, cooking, eating and fishing all along the road. We went from place to place fishing and having a good time.

- *Katherine Cary*  
Level 1

# A Short Story of My Life

**T**he Bible says that there is a reason and a purpose for everything under the sun. Sometimes I wonder what was my reason for not getting a good education, and where I went wrong.

But I have learned to go forward and achieve a better education. It's really hard to get a job or to bring a family up without an education.

When you can't read the world seems like you're in the darkness. Everyone has to read and do everything for you.

That's why an education is important in one's life. I thank God for the Literacy program because it has brought me out of the darkness to the light, where I can read and write, and understand things better.

I have learned that in order to achieve things in life one must pursue a better education in life.

- *Leonard Coleman*  
Level 3

# *My Best Friend*

**I** came to the U.S.A. six years ago. At that time I couldn't speak a word of english, but a friend of mine introduced me to some good friends. One of those friends is now my husband. He did not speak Spanish, and I did not speak English, so we had to communicate with the computer, which had a Spanish, English translator program.

After a few months I started classes with Geri, my best friend and teacher. She started teaching me English two nights a week. It was the best thing that happened to me.

With Geri helping me for almost four years, I finally feel free to talk to anyone. Now I have every thing I need. I have my best friend, a very good and loving husband and a good job. My dreams have come true. I believe Geri and I will be friends forever. I know she has to leave Tampa for a better life, everything she has taught me, I will be forever grateful.

I have a great love for this country, all of my friends and the good life that the hard work has given me. I feel that many people in this great country don't know how lucky they are and all the opportunities that they have!

*- Maria Isabel Tripp*  
Level 4

# *Two Types of Love - Love Hates and Love Loves*

## **L**ove Hates

Love hates when you disrespect your mother. Love hates when you abuse your children. Love hates when you abuse yourself with drugs. Love hates when you mistreat your wife. Love can be so good but it can hurt you so bad and that love hates.

## **L**ove Loves

Love loves when you love everyone and everything. My daughter and I, we have so much love for each other. Ever since she was a little baby we had a real good bond. My daughter is 14 and still runs and greets me just like she was a little baby. Ever day I come home from work, she will come outside and give me a great big hug. She doesn't know how good that makes me feel, that she loves me, and God knows I love all of my children.

I love you all.

**- Goldie Mingo**  
Level 3

February 5, 1998  
Thursday

Gloria Abrams  
c/o Hillsborough Literacy Council, Inc.  
13926 Clubhouse Circle  
Tampa, Fl 33624

Dear Gloria,

I am so tickled you askd me to act as a judge for the Hillsborough Literacy Council's in Residence Contest. This has been such an uplifting experience that tends to leave me with such a deep sense of pure joy. What a treat it has been to feel as though I was able to visit with your authors. My small world has grown with each and every entry - what a glorious experience. I will treasure this for a long time. Thank you so much for allowing me the privilege of being part of this contest.

Have a wonderful day as I know mine will be.

Sincerely,



Kay O'Rourke



# Kudos

**O**ur sincere thanks to the following people...

In their gracious acceptance to act as judges in this contest, each created another link in the chain of community awareness in the campaign to improve the standards of literacy in Hillsborough County.

**Marcee Challener**  
Manager Public Services  
Tampa-Hillsborough  
Public Library

**Tony Morejan**  
Liaison Hispanic Affair  
Hillsborough County

**Jerry Harvey**  
Liaison African-American Affairs  
Hillsborough County

**Kay O'Rourke**  
Chairperson Advisory Board  
Tampa-Hillsborough  
Public Library

**Mary Lindsay, Ph.D.**  
Executive Director  
Center for Excellence

**Dr. Steve Rubin**  
Department of English  
University of South Florida

**Commissioner Ed Turanchik**  
Board of County Commissioners  
Hillsborough County

~ *Finis* ~