



I am sharing here a picture in which I'm holding one of my favorite books: *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi. This smiling picture is one of gratitude for a lot of things, including being able to read. It was after getting involved with the San Diego Council on Literacy that I learned about the state of literacy in San Diego and the work of the affiliated programs to increase access to reading skills, books, and resources across San Diego. I learned that while more than 4 out of 10 third-graders in San Diego county did not meet reading and writing standards, there are a lot of people working daily to improve literacy.

As a result of what I now know, I have a deeper appreciation for reading, for access to books, and access to resources. Reading is a source of joy for me, but most importantly, reading is a skill and a means to success. This appreciation for the power of reading is why I support literacy; it is why I support the San Diego Council on Literacy.

So with this message, I thank you. As a reader, as a parent of readers, and as Chair of the board of directors, I thank you for your support of the cause of literacy. I thank you for your contributions, your partnership, and for your volunteer support which all translate into action towards the goal of making literacy accessible to all.

Idara Inwek Ogunsaju, Board Chair

The 2022 Calendar

August 20
The San Diego Union-Tribune,
"Festival of Books"

September 8
International Literacy Day

November 1
National Family Literacy Day

December 6
Affiliated Programs
Lunch Reception

December 8
Literacy Champions Reception



Dear Partner in Literacy,

Now is the time to roll up our sleeves. We have work to do. Current numbers show that literacy scores of public-school students in California have dropped by 8%. Enrollment in adult basic education programs have dropped by 15%. The main reason for this is...social distancing and heavy reliance on online learning...due to the pandemic.

We call this learning loss, "Covid Slide". And like "summer slide", this interruption of programming did not just affect low-income children. It affected everyone, socially, physically, and educationally. It broke up the classroom and affected individual and collective mental health. It took away some of our greatest assets: Relationship-based learning and interactive learning opportunities.

Public school students are returning to the traditional classroom setting. And the 31 affiliated programs of the San Diego Council on Literacy are returning to the instructional formats that have produced the best results for them. Even then, during the height of the pandemic, these programs provided services to thousands of residents.

Given the circumstances, our work together becomes more important. But this is where we as a community bring our best. Thank you for being there for us...all along. We hope you enjoy this newsletter!

Jose L. Cruz, CEO



SDCOL Achievements Summer 2021 to Spring 2022



- 30,000 new books distributed throughout the region. Thank you to The Molina Foundation and the San Diego County Library (shown above).
- Presentation of first *Financial Literacy Superheroes Competition* with Mission Federal Credit Union, Kaiser Permanente, Comic-Con Museum, Jill Hall, SOFA, and *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. The awards event took place at the Comic-Con Museum on March 26.
- Little Free Library (LFL) replenishments w/SD County Library; 6,000+ books for LFL stations in neighborhoods throughout the region.
- Participation w/*The San Diego Union-Tribune* for the Saturday, August 20, 2022 presentation of "The Festival of Books". The SDCOL is a beneficiary of funds raised.
- Research and Advocacy: Ongoing calculation of the state of literacy in San Diego County; Instilling the importance of literacy in the community.
- Coordination of the Imagination Library program, with books being mailed monthly to the homes of local children. Over 330 children are receiving books through this program.
- Engagement in the Advancing Health Literacy project with UCSD and partners.
- Information and Referral Services.

Coming Soon!

- Launching of *Book Humans of San Diego*: Get ready to send photos of friends/family/you in the act of reading!
- *San Diego Gives*
- SDCOL Volunteer Recruitment Campaign

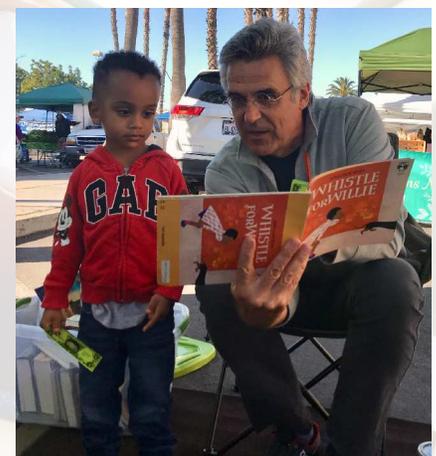
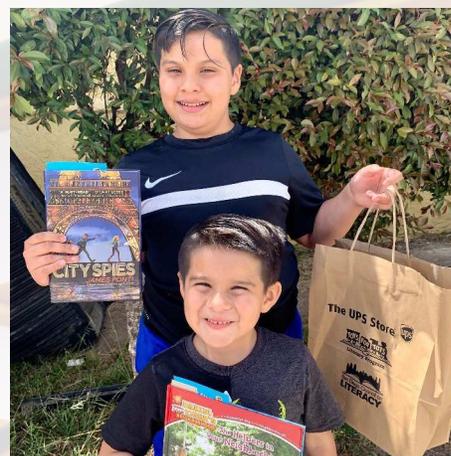
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Literacy in San Diego, real life stories, told by photos!



Literacy By the Numbers



More than
36 million

adults in the U.S. lack basic literacy skills.



Children of parents with low literacy skills have a

72%

chance of being at the lowest reading levels themselves.

Source: National Bureau of Economic Research

28.4%

of adults in California read at the lowest literacy skill levels.

Source: Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy

23%

of San Diego County adults lack basic literacy skills.

Nearly **30%**

of adults with household incomes at or below the federal poverty line do not have a high school credential.



Source: ProLiteracy



Of adults with the lowest literacy levels,

43% live in poverty.

Source: The National Institute for Literacy



Every year, **1 in 6**

young adults drop out of high school. That is more than 1.2 million.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics



75%

of state prison inmates did not complete high school or can be classified as low literate.

Source: ProLiteracy

About **50%** of the 2 million immigrants that come to the U.S. each year lack high school education and proficient English language skills.



This severely limits their access to jobs, college, and citizenship.

Source: Center for Immigration Studies, National Commission on Adult Literacy

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Originally posted by Laura McLoughlin on May 10, 2022 for ProLiteracy.
We have modified the article to be shorter.

This June, Denise O'Neal will watch her son graduate from high school and head off to college. When she watches Brenden mark this milestone it will bring her journey full circle.

When Denise was in school, she spent years working with tutors without much progress. As it turns out, she had a learning disability. "Teachers just didn't recognize it. Everyone just thought I wasn't good at school,"

While she had enough credits to walk in her 1988 high school graduation, California withheld her diploma until she passed the required state proficiency exams. For years, Denise would take the proficiency exam with hopes of getting her diploma. After eight years, Denise passed. And while she finally had her diploma, she considered herself far from proficient in reading. "My husband is the one who said something long ago. He said, 'I think you need to get some help,'"

In her mid-30s, Denise sought help at the San Diego Council on Literacy. She was paired with a literacy tutor and they began working so Denise could read with her son. Not long after Brenden started school, Denise started to notice some of the same things that she had gone through in school. Brenden was tested for and diagnosed with a learning disability.

Denise worked as a receptionist at the California Center for the Arts in Escondido. She wanted to learn more about human resources and back it up with an official certificate, so she enrolled at Cal State San Marcos. She completed the program and got her certificate, all while holding a full-time job and taking care of family obligations.

As Brenden got a little older, Denise left work to raise him. When she decided to go back to work, the gap in her resume made it difficult. She went back to school to get her certificate a second time. "Since I've had such success, I wish more people would reach out or seek help," Denise said. "I know how they're feeling."

She now shares that student perspective back at San Diego Council on Literacy as a member of its board of directors. And between serving on the board and working full time, Denise is helping Brenden prepare for graduation in June and his next steps. Unlike when she graduated from high school, Brenden has a clear plan for a career in criminal justice and law enforcement.

Raising a Child Who Reads: Essential Ingredients

1. Parenting skills/love/security.
2. Prenatal care to reinforce healthy growth and well-being...and to prevent chronic illnesses.
3. Provision of nourishment/food stability, clothing, consistent/stable housing.
4. Providing stimulation/learning opportunities, especially in the first 3-years of any child's life...taking advantage of the child's optimal learning years.
5. Being aware of and controlling the content we send and the environment we create for children: Emotions, language, tone.
6. Limiting exposure to flat screens: No TV or smartphones for the first two years of the child's life. For development, children need to experience the 3-D world.
7. Ongoing wellness checks with attention to hearing. A cause of some children not emerging as readers is related to hearing: "Late to hear, early to fail."
8. Being an adult role model who reads or engages with print. Adult Literacy!
9. Language rich environment: Speaking, hearing, listening...and art and music. Being conversational. A child's vocabulary comes months before they start using words. They are listening and they know what you are saying!
10. Books in the home.
11. Reading to children. Family reading time and siblings sharing stories.
12. Taking children to the library or bookstores to pick books they want. Benefiting from the child's interests and curiosity. Putting the child in the driver's seat of learning.

Once the child is in school...

- Providing a learning space for children.
- Paying attention to the child's achievement in school. Being aware of potential learning differences
- Providing effective instruction as it relates to the child's learning needs.
- Being engaged as a parent. Being an advocate.
- And if needed, let someone else, not mom or dad, be the tutor. Resist saying that a child has problems with reading. Keep it fun. Everyone is different. Be patient and positive.

In San Diego, contact the San Diego Council on Literacy: www.literacysandiego.org



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The Gap Minders

The Gap Minders podcasts, presented by the San Diego Council on Literacy, the United Way of San Diego County, and Cloudcast Media, brings this new online programming! Leaders in the San Diego community join us to talk about their passion for reading and their concern for resource gaps that affect quality of life for all. Below are photos of prominent guests.



Left to right, from top, Cindy Marten, Deputy Secretary of Education; Richard Lederer, the word man; Dr. Shirley Weber, CA Secretary of State; John Corcoran, author & literacy advocate/the teacher who couldn't read; Nora Vargas, County Supervisor; Jeff Light, Editor/Publisher, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*; Dr. Carlos Cortez, Chancellor, San Diego Community College District; Nick Nanton, Emmy award-winning documentarian.



Nancy Sakaski, CEO, United Way of San Diego County, and Jose Cruz, CEO, San Diego Council on Literacy, are the co-hosts of The Gap Minders podcasts.

www.thegapminders.org

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The SDCOL's 2022
Presentation of the
*Financial Literacy
Superheroes Competition*
was a smash!

Go to our website to see the
winning entries!

Thank you to our sponsors!

Please join us next year!



FINANCIAL LITERACY SUPERHEROES COMPETITION!

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COMIC CON MUSEUM

KAISER PERMANENTE

SOFA
THE SOCIETY FOR FINANCIAL AWARENESS

MISSION FED CREDIT UNION

HERO

We invite kids and parents/guardians to enter our comic book themed contest! Entries must include a financial literacy/money management message. The submission can be a comic book cover, a comic book page with panels, or a poster.

WOW!

\$1,250 SCHOLARSHIPS

- (1) Team: Teen Team of two, 11-17.

\$500 PRIZES

- (3) Team: (Child + parent/guardian) Ages 4-6 • Ages 7-10 • Ages 11-17
- (1) Solo: Ages 11-17

SAVE MONEY

CREATE YOUR SUPERHERO

ENTRY COMPONENTS:
Contestants must submit one full-page entry that meet the following criteria:

- Strong financial literacy message
- Original, creative art & superhero concept
- Attractive presentation overall

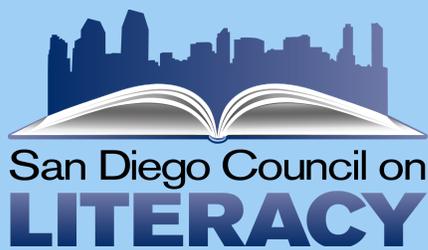
LESSONS TO TEACH:

- Importance of saving money & budgeting
- Repelling predatory lenders
- Borrowing wisely
- Knowing the good & bad about credit
- Building charity into your budget

MORE INFORMATION: LITERACYSANDIEGO.ORG



At the Comic-Con Museum with proud competition winners and their friends and families.



Spring/Summer 2022



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**We're
turning a
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Presented by



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**Grab
a book**

**Tell
a friend**

**and
Join us!**

BOOKMARK THE DATE

SATURDAY, AUG. 20, 2022

ADMISSION IS FREE

Featuring an exciting lineup of authors, poets, activities and entertainment to be announced soon.

SDFestivalofBooks.com

Follow us on social media for giveaways and festival information!

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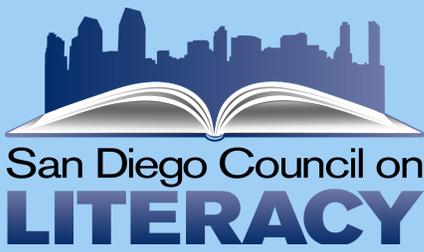
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The 31 Affiliated Programs

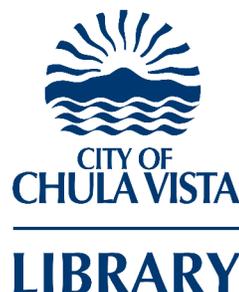
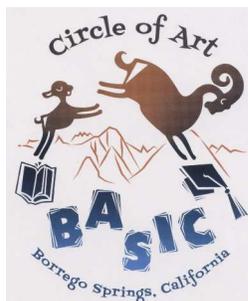
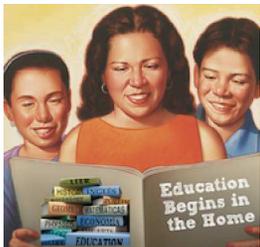
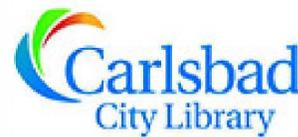
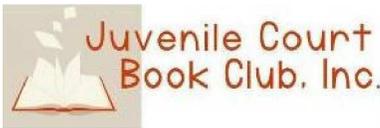
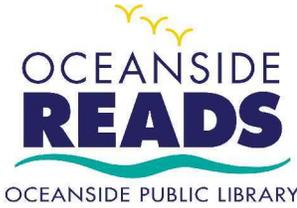
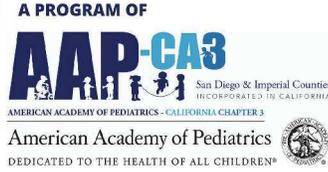
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