



## I couldn't imagine how much they help me

### *Being a student makes me try to be a better person.*

By Rozeta Tosuni

I've been a student of Project Literacy for about two years. My first contact with this program was at an event I was working. At first Mr. Reddin observed that I couldn't speak English. He explained to me that Project Literacy is a free program where tutors volunteer work with students who have basic education needs. I started thinking, maybe for a short time, but I couldn't imagine the great work they do, how much they help me and of course other students.

This program is different than any other type of learning English. Because of we are working one to one

my teacher can focus exactly on my needs. The program is flexible. My teacher allows me to choose the topic, or what I would like to work on. That makes me feel comfortable, no stress doing homework and very interesting type of learning.

My teacher, Mr. Paul Talarico, is very kind and knowledgeable person who is dedicated to helping others. Besides helping me to improve my English, he teaches me about American history, different cultures and customs, and much more. He is my mentor. I feel free to ask him about anything.

Also being a student of Project Literacy makes me try to be a better person. Watching all these people



"Project Literacy has made a big difference in my life," says Rozeta.

who dedicate their knowledge, their time, their money, makes me ask myself: What am I doing for

*Continued on page 2*

## My time has been wisely invested and yielded wonderful dividends.

By Paul Talarico

For a few years after my retirement, my days were filled with a variety of volunteer activities. Like many in my generation, being idle was not an option, and I devoted my time to pro-

jects that interested me. As time went by, I grew increasingly aware that the expenditure of my time was the most precious commodity and greatest expense in my life. I began the search for the right fit, the place where my abilities and

talents would be of the most benefit in an organization that I could passionately embrace. Then I hit on the Project Literacy website and was intrigued by the idea of teaching adults to read.

*Continued on page 3*

### Inside this issue:

Student Story	1
Tutor Story	1
Introducing Chris Stout	2
You Can Help	2
New Board Member	2
Upcoming Events	3
Did You Know?	3

### Who are we helping?

#### Student Demographics

Asia/Pacific 15%

Caribbean 19%

Latin America 23%

**USA 25%**

Women 70%

Men 30%

*Our goal is to provide the gift of literacy to adults who confront life in Bergen County without the skills to easily communicate.*

## Chris Stout Joins Project Literacy



Chris Stout

We are so pleased to introduce Chris Stout as our new Executive Director. Please stop by to meet him when you are in the building.

Chris is a veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve and was named Bergen County American Legion Legionnaire of the year 2011-2012. He studied in Germany and France before earning a B.A. from the

University of Louisville.

Chris is a career banker by profession. He has always been concerned with local community interests and activities, and has been involved with non-profit governance and management since 1989. His contributions are varied: he and his wife are both 10-gallon blood donors; he is an ordained Elder of the Presbyterian Church USA, and has

been active in various youth recreation leagues, coaching baseball and softball for 17 years. He is also a past President of the Rotary Club of Ridgewood A.M.

Chris replaces Scott Reddin who resigned in late 2014. We wish Scott every success in his new endeavors.

## Rozeta Tosuni

*Continued from Page 1*  
helping others?

I try to help others even on everyday simple things. In the future I look forward to volunteering and maybe I can make a difference in someone else's life.

In my opinion Project Literacy is a wonderful program. All the staff are doing

a very great job. I hope in the future they will help more people who need help. I feel thankful to be a student of Project Literacy. I'm grateful that Mr. Talarico is my teacher and I believe that what they do is appreciated. Project Literacy has made a big difference in my life.

*"He is my mentor.*

*I feel free to ask him about anything."*

## Welcome, Dr. Havnurkar

Joining the Project Literacy Board of Trustees is Dr. Medha Havnurkar, Manager of Learning and Performance at the Hackensack University Medical Center. Prior to joining the Board, Dr. Havnurkar attended several Project Literacy events.

Welcome, Dr. Havnurkar.

## You Can Help

Donate at:  
[www.project-literacy.org](http://www.project-literacy.org)

*Is your donation Matching Gift Eligible? If your company participates, your gift could double or triple!*

Please contact:  
Chris Stout at  
201-489-7066 ext. 2 or  
[cstout@project-literacy.org](mailto:cstout@project-literacy.org)  
for more information

### \$50 donation purchases

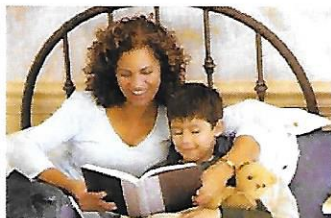
- 1 study guide for the HSE
- 1 ESL text with audio
- 2 texts for volunteer tutors

### \$100 donation purchases

- materials & training for one volunteer tutor
- set of high-interest low-level readers
- ESL text & workbook

### \$500 donation purchases

- materials & training for 5 tutors
- professional development for 1 staff
- tablet computer for tutor as aid





## Did You Know?

*"I am so bad at math. I had a successful business but I always used a calculator to do the math. Even my six year old says I am bad at math."*

Who is a typical student studying for the high school equivalency exam? Nearly one quarter of Project Literacy students are born in the US.

One student, Mrs L grew up in a middle-class town in Westchester County. She dropped out of high school only two years away from graduation in order to work. She had a good job and her own apartment

when her friends were in college. For many years prior to becoming a wife and mother, Mrs L owned and ran a successful business. Now Mrs L is studying to pass the High School Equivalency exam.



## I was deeply moved. Paul Talarico

*Continued from Page 1*

Teaching English to non-English speakers (ESL/ESOL), also a service of Project Literacy, closed the deal for me. I didn't know much about what it involved, but I was hooked on the idea, joined the required training, and launched an adventure that is now part of the fabric of my life.

For the past year and a half, I have been tutoring a student from Albania. When we started, she had a limited English vocabulary, could not understand anything she saw on TV, and had to translate what she did know from English to her own language to comprehend and then again from her own language to English to reply in a conversation. Owing to her tremendous work ethic, intelli-

gence and determination, she has progressed to the point where she enjoys watching TV, even the news (which is the most difficult to understand since there is no context to assist). She now thinks and converses comfortably in English, has obtained a green card, a New Jersey driver's license, and employment. We have had many conversations about American history, culture, politics, and etiquette. She reads the newspaper and especially enjoys a twice weekly humorous feature column. To understand humor in another language is a sure sign of advanced achievement. I must say that I enjoy listening to her read the columns to me as much as she enjoys reading them.

I could tell hundreds of stories about my experience tutoring in Project

Literacy, but I'll close with one.

My student and I were reading a newspaper article that contained the word "score" that was used in the sense of the number 20. I have a habit of using many different explanations, examples, dramatizations to reinforce a concept; I also like to teach my students about America. So I recited Lincoln's Gettysburg Address: "Four score and seven years ago..." and explained the meaning of the word, as well as the context and significance of the speech. The following week, my student, who had grown up under an oppressive dictatorship, announced to me that she loved the speech so much that she had read more about Abraham Lincoln and had mem-

orized the beginning of the speech. I was deeply moved.

At that moment and countless times before and since, I have been privileged to witness results that prove my time has been wisely invested and has yielded wonderful dividends.

## Upcoming Events

*Annual Awards Ceremony*

*September*

*Annual Gala*

*October 16 at Stony Hill Inn  
in Hackensack*

Project Literacy of Greater Bergen County  
355 Main Street  
Hackensack, NJ 07601

Project Literacy of Greater Bergen County  
355 Main Street  
Hackensack, NJ 07601

**Project Literacy Board of Trustees**

Benedict Focarino, President

Emmy Bledsoe, Secretary

Larry Eisen, Treasurer

Ree Adler

Joseph Pandolfi

Medha Havnurkar

Grace Pichardo

Connie Marrero

Arlene Sahraie

Rod McVeigh

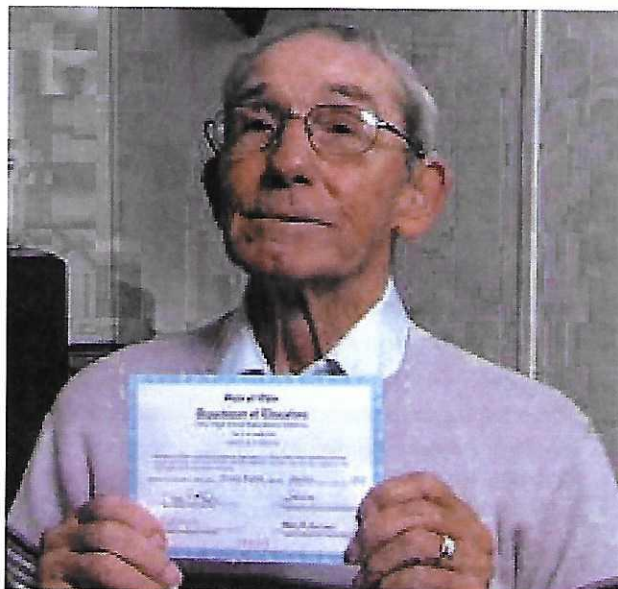
Sandra Sroka

Laszlo Moharita

Ada Lil Torres

Warren Oates

Lillian Whitaker



201-489-7066  
[www.project-literacy.org](http://www.project-literacy.org)

Promoting Literacy Since 1987

