

Student Spotlight: Tatyana

Hello, my name is Tatyana. I have a four-year-old son who is very smart and eager to learn new things every day. He is one of the reasons I came to The Literacy Alliance to get my high school equivalency (HSE) diploma.

I was born in Wabash, Indiana, but grew up in North Manchester. When I was in school, I felt like I struggled but was too embarrassed to speak up and ask for help. I got along with everyone and thought a lot of the time that hanging out with friends was more important than making sure my homework was done. I got into trouble a lot during my freshman year and thought school wasn't very important.

I ended up getting pregnant with my son when I was 18. After the birth of my son, I wanted to go back and get my HSE diploma but felt like I never had time. My son started preschool this year and watching his excitement to learn pushed me. I want to be a good example for him, so I want my HSE diploma to show my son that anything is possible if you set your mind to it.

In addition, I want to be able to further my career. I currently work in a factory, and I feel unappreciated and overworked. The hours are difficult, too. I barely see my son during the week.

I want to go to cosmetology school to learn the ins and outs of doing hair, nails, facials, etc. But I need to get my diploma first. Once I accomplish that, I will continue to move forward toward my goals and set a great example for my son.

“My son started preschool this year and watching his excitement to learn pushed me. I want to be a good example for him...”

Tatyana passed the HiSET exam and obtained her HSE diploma in June. We're so proud of her and know she'll accomplish all of her goals!



Your gifts are helping more of our neighbors like Tatyana. You can read more stories on our blog.

literacyalliance.org/blog

Volunteer Spotlight: Board Member, Isabel Nuñez

What is your name and line of work?
My name is Isabel Nuñez, and I am a professor of educational studies and the dean of the School of Education at Purdue University Fort Wayne.

What is your affiliation with The Literacy Alliance, and how long?
I serve as vice chair of the board of The Literacy Alliance, and I have been a board member for one year. I came to the organization through Project Reads, which became a Literacy Alliance program in 2021. As a former first-grade teacher, I am deeply committed to developing a love of reading in primary-aged children, and I wanted to continue to be part of that work.



Why do you choose to support TLA financially and through board service?
As I learned more about The Literacy Alliance and its programs for adult education and English as a new language, I found myself inspired by their holistic approach to supporting individuals and communities. Education is a personal accomplishment that cannot be taken away. The Literacy Alliance helps students of all ages in ways that are transformative in every area and every stage of life.

Anything else you'd care to add?
The Literacy Alliance is a critically valuable resource for Fort Wayne and the region. The stronger our collective ability to communicate, the more we can accomplish together. Every person who graduates with an additional credential brings not just more earning power, but also more confidence and more cultural capital, back to their families and communities. Every child who starts fourth grade reading at grade level is prepared to succeed in all subjects, because they can learn readily from the classroom texts in the content areas. The Literacy Alliance is changing lives.

Project Reads Summer Program



This summer we tried something new by collaborating with the Allen County Public Library to offer a version of our Project Reads program to students in grades K-3rd grade. Staff read in branches around the community and worked on a bingo sight list to see how many sight words were in their read-aloud story. Students tested their memory with a sequence series-of-events game to see if they remembered how the story progressed. A dice game helped with comprehension details. And for extra fun, participants played the Oops sight-word game.

Project Reads staff is excited to gear up for the 2022-2023 program year. We have doubled the number of Project Reads sites and are looking forward to seeing our volunteer tutors return and to add new volunteer faces! Please join us in helping the students in our community find success and fun with reading!

If you would like to volunteer, please visit our website at literacyalliance.org/volunteer to fill out an application or contact The Literacy Alliance volunteer coordinator, Nicole Phillippe, at 260-423-0008 or Nicole@fwliteracyalliance.org. Volunteers do not need special experience and will be fully trained in advance of their match.



The Literacy Alliance

Do you have time available to make a positive impact in your community? Visit literacyalliance.org/volunteer or call Nicole at (260) 423-0008 if you have any questions!

Advancing Literacy

Fall 2022

Literacy Changes Lives.

Project Graduate Tatyana



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The Literacy Alliance

Mission Statement

Literacy changes lives. Our mission is to empower people and strengthen community through education.

Follow us on social media!

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A Message from Melinda

A new program year has begun! While we look back on the year just ended by checking the numbers that tell one side of our story, we want to keep our eyes on the student successes that exemplify TLA's program. We celebrate 50 high school equivalency (HSE) diplomas earned, as well as increased enrollment in our HSE classes and English language learners (ELL) program. ELL has seen exponential growth to 84 students, from six in the previous year. Yes, you read that right!

And Project Reads finished the year reaching 58 students at nine sites, with programming delivered by 67 volunteer tutors.

We celebrate our students reaching their goals: new jobs, college, improved academic achievement and English language mastery that will enable them to live more independently.

Our board has updated TLA's strategic priorities, and we are rolling out a refreshed mission, logo, and website along with new program names that will enable us to better reach those we serve.

Literacy changes lives. Our mission is to empower people and strengthen community through education.

With this updated mission statement, you will see a new logo and these program names:

- Project Reads, K-3 reading program
- Project Build, adult basic literacy (formerly pre-HSE)
- Project Graduate, high school completion (formerly HSE preparation)
- Project Connect, English language learners (formerly ELL)
- Project Aim, corporate training (formerly fee-for-service)

Watch in the coming months as we introduce our new look and messaging to our stakeholders.

We thank everyone who participated in our collaborative fundraiser with Arena Dinner Theatre. Those who attended one of the performances of *Silent Sky* were treated to an excellent show with a poignant message, along with great desserts! Together, we had net proceeds of more than \$11,000, which have been split equally between both organizations.

Next up: Laughs for Literacy 2022 and Funniest in the Fort in late September. Please share these opportunities with those in your network to get the word out about The Literacy Alliance and how our programs strengthen our community.



Melinda Haines | CEO
melinda.haines@fwliteracyalliance.org
(260) 423-0001



The Funniest Fundraiser in the Fort!

We'll Bring the Funny... You Bring the Money!

Mark your calendar! Last year's *Laughs for Literacy!* was so much fun that we decided to bring back the improvisational comedy of Chicago's *The Second City* for another night of laughs.

Join us to celebrate our students and their successes, look toward the future, and enjoy a night of laughter in the company of friends at the beautiful Embassy Theatre.

VIP Reception 5:30 pm
General Admission Doors Open 6:15 pm
Show Begins 7 pm

Tickets are \$35 for the show and \$75 for the show and VIP reception, which includes appetizers and two drink tickets. There will be additional opportunities to give throughout the evening. We hope you'll join us for this unforgettable evening in support of The Literacy Alliance.

Visit literacyalliance.org/Laughs for tickets!



Congratulations to All of Our 2021-2022 Graduates!

We are extremely proud of our graduates and can't wait to see what they accomplish next!

Abigail Troyer	Elijah Yoder	Oh Shar
Adam Brattain	Faith Wickey	Paul Yoder
Alec Bush	Fernando Reyes	Rebecca Meier
Alex Bradley	Hannah Hilty	Rebecca Troyer
Alex Gookins	Isaac Schwartz	Rob'Meshia Perkins
Alexis Wheeler	Jaqueline Vasquez	Rocio Aguilar
Alyssia Kuntz	Jaxon Kirkwood	Samantha Baumgartner
Armisha Parker	Khin Tint	Savanna McCleese
Barbara Green	Lindsey Fisher	Tanna Lauer
Benjamin Bachman	Lizabeth Tamayo	Tatyana Wimmer
Choummaly Phanhly	Logan Nolan	Thomas Klemm
Cody Coffelt	Madison Roberts	Tony Stevens
Courtney Laster	Matthew Yoder	Trisha Troyer
Damion Tingley	Midashia Mowery	Tyler Meredith
Debbie Heemstra Humbarger	Nicholas Bowers	Vincent Springer
Debbie Lewis	Nicole Bayless	Zachery Magner
Destiny Ingrassia	Nyi Soe	

Staff Updates



Brian Thomas

We have new TLA staff members to introduce! If you call or stop by the office, you'll be greeted by our new administrative coordinator, Brian Thomas. Brian comes to us with two years of experience as a volunteer tutor in one of our high school equivalency (HSE) preparation classes, so he is well versed in the services that we provide to our students. He has a heart for our mission, and he has settled in to his duties guiding students through the process of becoming a student and helping support office functions.

We have a new Project Connect (English language learners) teacher, Anna Galdamez. Anna is a Fort Wayne native and also teaches at Abbott Elementary School. She will be teaching our evening English classes at The Summit, which are held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings. Anna is active in the Hispanic Leadership Coalition of Northeast Indiana and is dedicated to a life of learning.



Anna Galdamez

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Join TLA for Write-a-Will Week

The Literacy Alliance is pleased to again partner with Charitable Gift Planners of Northeast Indiana to present Write-a-Will Week. This is an opportunity for anyone to have a will prepared by an attorney. If an individual chooses a simple will with a charitable gift, there is no charge for the preparation. Write-a-Will Week will take place October 17-21, and appointments will take place at The Literacy Alliance office. If you'd like to make an appointment, please contact development coordinator Laura Weldon at 260-265-1940 or laura.weldon@fwliteracyalliance.org.

Did You Know?

There is no cost to students for our programs! It is one of the many ways you are helping remove barriers for learners in Allen, Adams, and Wells counties. Please consider investing in the future of our communities by visiting our website, literacyalliance.org/donate, or by using the enclosed return envelope to give the gift of literacy.

TLA Staff

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Chief Marketing and Communications Officer
- Francine Liebhauser**
Associate Operations Manager
- Nicole Phillippe**
Volunteer Coordinator
- Laura Weldon**
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- Brian Thomas**
Administrative Coordinator

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Program Director

JC York

Site Coordinator

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- Melanee Neilson**
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- TC Salmons**
Site Coordinator

- Kami Gavilanez**
Teacher

- Amy Mohr**
Teacher

- Nan Wilson**
Teacher

Project Connect

- Anna Galdamez**
Teacher

- Kami Gavilanez**
Teacher