



Generations Achieve Literacy! By Monica Monk Oliver

I walked into a classroom filled with books, real-life toys, with small tables and chairs. Adjacent to the room was a toddler learning area. It was the perfect room to teach Basic English to adults. The older students began each class by greeting one another by name, reviewing the day of the week, month, year, and weather. They also practiced writing their names by signing in and completing their practice books. The students enjoyed computer time, learning tech specific skills, and working through each module.

My most memorable moment was the night a granddaughter watched her grandmother write her own name independently. Night after night, the grandmother struggled to write her name in English. She carried a card with her personal information in a small purse in case of emergencies. Each time the attendance sheet came her way, the grandmother would take out the personal information card and eventually need someone to help her write her name. All of the students were patient and respectful. They allowed her as much time as she needed to write her first name. Finally, one night, she wrote her first name legibly by herself! A few classes later, her adult granddaughter visited the classroom. The grandmother proudly wrote her name on the green enrollment sheet. Immediately, her granddaughter's eyes brightened as she smiled and said, "Oh Grandma, you wrote your name! I'm so proud of you Grandma." The granddaughter turned and thanked me. She also sat and observed the class for a few minutes. That same night, the granddaughter asked about enrollment information for herself.

I specifically wanted to volunteer for an organization that educates, assists, and empowers families to become self-sufficient. Literacy Achieves does that and so much more, in many cases across generational lines!