



Tutoring program: A Teacher's perspective

Sue Buchwalter, a second-grade teacher with the Green Local Elementary Schools, had four ELL students in her class of twenty-two this past academic year. Two of the four ELL students (both girls) had an Open Arms tutor. At the first of the year, these girls only mixed with other ELL students, and one of the girls spoke almost no English.

Due to language barriers and then COVID shut-down, the girls began the year academically behind and did not read. It was hard for the girls to keep up, but their classmates were very generous helpers with Mrs. Buchwalter's guidance. As the year progressed, they started learning words, sounds, numbers and concepts. The girls would share that their tutors were helping them at home, which was a tremendous support. The girls were always so proud to be able to turn in work just like their peers. They also became active class participants, raising their hands in class and speaking only in English. Mrs. Buchwalter made a daily routine of asking the girls to teach the class Spanish words and phrases, which the other students loved as they learned to value another language and culture.

By the end of the year, both girls were reading and definitely catching up to their peers, thanks to this caring teacher and to the tutors, about whom Mrs. Buchwalter says, I really appreciated the help of the tutors. You filled in the gap for them. I emailed with them and shared what we were doing and



the tutors were always willing to help the girls. I appreciated the concerns that we both shared and the love they had for the girls.

Mrs. Buchwalter concludes that her entire class benefitted from the presence of these ELL students by becoming more aware of and sensitive to other cultures through both thoughtful class discussions and through the fun of making friends with the girls. She shares that it was her pleasure to work with the girls and their very sweet families and appreciates our Open Arms' tutors' help in the girls' progress.

From the Desk of the Director

"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves". **Romans 12:9-10**



My sisters and brothers, as I write this article, I do not have words to show my thankfulness to our Creator for all the opportunities that He has given me, as Executive Director of the Open Arms Hispanic Ministries, to advocate for my Hispanic brothers and sisters and to be His instrument to bring His Kingdom to Earth.

First, I continue to be a voice for the needs of the Hispanic community in educating the general public. On June 1, I participated along with the mayor and the Chief of police of Orrville, in a Zoom Seminar entitled **Ohio Agriculture and Immigration: What do we need for a better future?** The Bill Summary for Farm Workforce Modernization Act passed the U.S. House with bipartisan support, and now our hope is that our faith leaders, law enforcement, and business leaders will encourage the Senate to pass the bill and also encourage the Ohio legislature, in partnership with the Ohio Farm Bureau, to support FWMA. A legalization process could benefit our long-time Ohio farm workers and their families by issuing farm-worker visas allowing for legal status. An increase in farm-workers' visas would benefit Ohio growers and Ohio's economy in general. This event was more about the story of our communities. I was able to share a little about my immigration story, and we all shared about the good relationship between Open Arms and the leaders of the Orrville community.

During these past months, I have continued to help many people with different problems they and their families have been experiencing. Raul is helping me with some translation in doctors and dentist's offices, and Kara is assisting with administrative tasks. The ministry is helping a good number of people with health needs, and I have been able to help them with appointments in different specialties. Raber Dental and Eye Care remains as a big partner, and we thank them for their support. In addition, I'm still helping the Health Dept. to educate people and get more Hispanics vaccinated. I'm thankful that our country has enough vaccines for everyone that wishes to be vaccinated. In addition, I'm assisting people in getting their documents with the partnership of the Immigrant Work Project in Canton, Ohio.

It is also a gift to see the Open Arms tutoring program for Hispanic elementary and middle-school students thrive; not only during this past school year, but also now with a small summer camp, meeting once a week with the students we tutored this past year. I have been the liaison between the students' families, tutors, teachers, and administrators of the school districts involved.

The Nunes family is doing well. Paulo is studying an intensive pre-med course and will start medical school the second week of August. We bought a house in Columbus that he will rent to close friends. Gabriela and Ryan have moved to their new house in Wooster. Laura is off school for the summer, and next year she will be a freshman at Central. Esmirna is doing well at her work.

Thanks for your help in the work to help our Hispanic families and please keep Open Arms, my family and me in your prayers. ~ **Haroldo Nunes Executive Director**

My Open Arms Tutoring Experience



It isn't often that one gets a peek into another culture and form a friendship at the same time while sitting in one's own home. That is what exactly happened this past school year when I became part of the Open Arms tutoring program.

Because of COVID many students were doing school from home. Tutoring online provided an opportunity for students to get the extra help they needed. I worked with a bright 5th grader named Lucia. We met on Monday evenings via Zoom. Sessions lasted anywhere from 45 to 90 minutes, depending upon the work. I was able to find out what Lucia's academic needs were by communicating with her teacher in the Orrville City Schools via email.

Most of the learning was student led. Lucia became very proficient with the zoom and Google classroom formats. She pulled up assignments that she needed help with and we worked together filling in the gaps. Lucia was having difficulty meeting deadlines and getting the books she needed to com-

plete writing assignments. We took a field trip to the local library, where the librarian gave us a tour and helped Lucia get a library card. By the end of the school year her teacher reported that Lucia's learning had improved by 67 points! This was something to celebrate.

Perhaps more importantly, I gained a glimpse into Lucia's world. Once, she shared a picture of herself standing proudly in her Guatemalan dress. She told me about some of the food she eats, and cultural aspects of her life. I was amazed with her knowledge of 3 languages. Wherever there was a connection with Hispanic culture in her school work she readily connected.

Finally, a simple explanation about her favorite scary stories gave me a glimpse into some of the struggles she deals with every day. I asked why she likes scary stories. She replied that when she sees the main character in the story do brave things, that shows her that she can be brave too. Each experience of the Open Arms tutors has been different. I am grateful to have had this opportunity and hope to continue.

~**Louisa Pirozzi-Erb** Tutoring Volunteer



Open Arms Hispanic Ministries

Brazos Abiertos

**Sharing God's love by
meeting needs of
Hispanic immigrants in
Wayne Co., Ohio, and
surrounding areas**

Fellowship Fiesta



Free-will offering

Live Music

Ministry Highlights

What: Boxed-Meal Picnic Choice of chicken-bacon wrap
OR cranberry-pecan tossed salad
** meal includes chips & salsa, cookies, and a drink*

When: Saturday July 17, 2021 @ 4:00PM
(Program @ 5:00PM)

Where: Oak Grove Mennonite Church Picnic Area
7843 Smucker Rd. Smithville, OH

RSVP with number attending and meal choice by Tuesday July 13
to 330-765-9955 OR kara@openarmshispanicministry.org
**Questions? Please contact the email or number listed above*



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**Open Arms
Hispanic Ministries**

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