

 $http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/education/library-s-adult-literacy-program-in-need-of-tutors/article_993fe9f8-a120-51a0-abc1-40e6c0702f2d.html[9/12/2014\ 11:19:03\ AM]$

English Language Learners, like Marti, are also paired with a volunteer, if they know



acquainted.

"Now, we're friends," she said.

The pair meet nearly every week for an hour, doing everything from learning synonyms and antonyms to reading passages and answering questions. Sometimes, Marti brings her medical books to Rausch for help understanding them.

enough conversational English to

in March and was paired with Marti.

Suzanne Rausch signed up to become a tutor

Rausch, who has a background in journalism,

said she and Marti started out just getting

communicate with the tutor.

"Suzanne has been wonderful for me," Marti said.

In addition to moving toward her goal of receiving a medical license — her first test is this winter — Marti is noticing a difference socially.

"I feel more confident when I speak with other people," she said.

The service currently has about 120 active volunteer tutors and 160 students, said program coordinator Jennifer Armistead. That means about 40 students are on the waiting list.

A push for more volunteers is being made during September, which is National Literacy Awareness Month. Tutors do not need to have teaching experience.

"We're looking for somebody with patience and a willingness to help," Armistead said.

Volunteers are asked to commit to tutoring for at least one hour a week for a year. Tutors and students usually meet at any public place that is convenient for both, often at a library branch.

Some students stay in the program for six to nine months, while others stay for years, Armistead said.

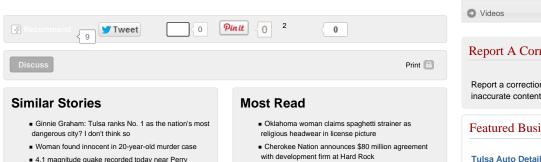
"It all depends on the individual and their goals," she said.

Armistead said about 14 percent of adults living in Tulsa County have below basic literacy levels.

That can make it difficult to fill out job applications, read prescription labels or locate intersections on a map, according to the literacy service's website.

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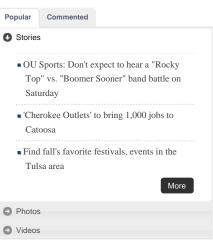
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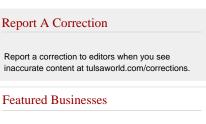
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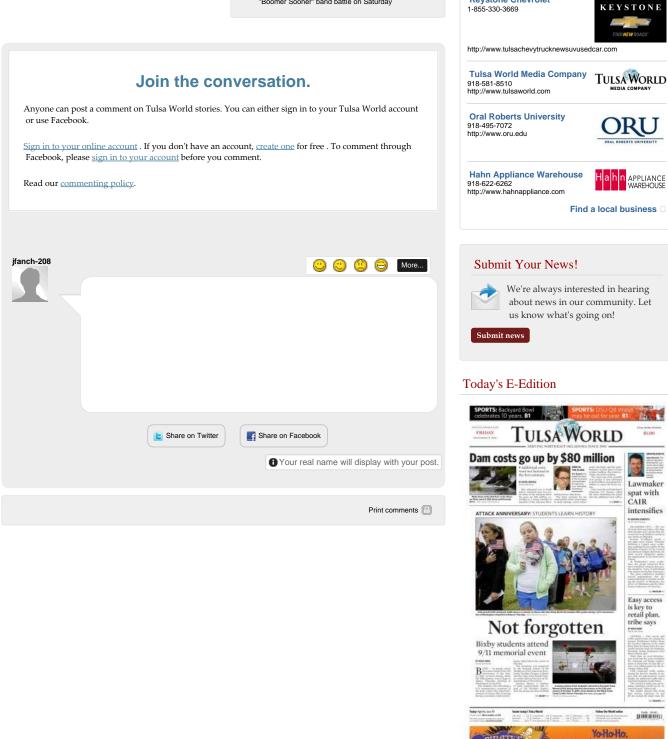
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