

## From Frustrating to Friendly

by Sylvia Garcia

*Sylvia has lived in San José, California, all her life. She is married to Raymond and is the mother of a daughter and twin boys. She came to Partners In Reading to improve her reading and writing skills.*

The first time I went to the library was in elementary school. I remember it was exciting. When I went by myself it was overwhelming and I didn't understand the system. Using the card catalog to look up the location of the books and not finding the book was frustrating. I didn't ask for help from the librarian. It was not a comfortable place for me. The library seemed big and I seemed very small. I really never learned how to use the library and enjoy it.

As time has gone by, I enjoy going. I did not realize there is so much to learn from going to the library. In my early school years, I started noticing I was struggling in reading and writing. I was embarrassed. I would wiggle out of uncomfortable situations. I was ashamed and didn't have confidence. I didn't want to fail. When my kids were younger I could read to them, no problem. When they got older they noticed I was pronouncing the words wrong.

At work I knew I was going to need help in writing and putting my thoughts together. Emails force me to write more at work and in my personal life.

I wanted help and to be successful. I was tired of feeling this way. I wanted to change and make a difference in my life. I didn't want to feel shame and embarrassment and to hide.

One day I decided to take action. I went online and searched for "San Jose Reading Help," and that's how I found PAR (Partners in Reading) at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library of San José, California. I started coming to the library again when I started with PAR. PAR has been a great resource. A one-on-one tutor was important to me. PAR helped me to find a tutor. My tutor helps and believes in me and builds self-confidence to succeed in my spelling, writing, and pronouncing my syllables. It's a blessing to have my tutor in my life. I know if I continue working with my tutor I will believe in myself. The library is a comfortable place to come. It's a friendly and safe place and there is beautiful artwork. If it was not for the library and PAR, I wouldn't have found my wonderful friend, my tutor. PAR and the library are a blessing.

