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DWIGHT EDWARDS: UPGRADE TO JOY  
The Gift of Literacy: A Source of Joy to Learners, Tutors, and Supporters

(Houston) October 29, 2009.... Dwight Edwards, best-selling author was presented with the prestigious Champions of Literacy award for his work as an author and his commitment to the mission of Literacy Advance. Over 200 guests were present to honor Edwards and to hear a compelling case to support a more literate community.

“Happiness and pleasure are dictated by external circumstances, many of which are outside our control. Joy happens when we discover that unique work for which we are hardwired to offer to this broken world,” says Edwards. “The learners, tutors, volunteers, and staff at Literacy Advance have discovered that.” The staff at River Oaks Country Club, where Edwards spends part of his time coaching tennis and life, plans to collaborate with Literacy Advance on a literacy program for their hundreds of workers who struggle with low and limited English literacy.

Before the award was presented, Literacy Advance volunteer tutor Pam Nutt and her learner Sidney Frasier spoke to the audience about their experiences. Pam, a retired school teacher of 32 years thought her teaching days were over until she met Sidney Frasier. For Sidney schooling was cut short as a youngster when he became the primary wage earner for his family. Pam and Sidney met at Literacy Advance and they both found joy. “Sidney was reading little Golden Books when we first met,” said Pam. “I knew he could do better; he knew he could do better.” Sidney agreed but added, “Sometimes I would look at those thick books she would bring from the library and think, ‘Oh no.’” Sidney is now an accomplished reader thanks to his tutor.

Emcee David Gow is CEO of Gow Communications which owns and operates KGOW 1560 The Game. “Dwight Edwards is an inspired communicator. His timely message of realizing our extraordinary dreams synchronizes perfectly with the mission of Literacy Advance. At KGOW, we believe that local media is most effective when used as a platform to impact the local community in a positive way. KGOW plans to continue to support the extraordinary efforts of Literacy Advance.”

The audience included: former champions of literacy honorees including Larry Dierker, William B. “Bill” Stubbs, Valerie Koehler, and Jana Mullins. Lucy Chambers of Bright Sky Press, which published Edwards’ latest book, *A Tale of Three Ships*, and Ellen Elam, immediate past president of the Board of Literacy Advance co-chaired the event.

The Champions of Literacy Series seeks to promote awareness of illiteracy through the presentation of authors who have made a difference through the written word. As Houston’s oldest and largest non-profit 100% volunteer-driven literacy organization, the mission of Literacy Advance is to help adults to read, write, and communicate effectively in English so they can achieve their full potential as parents, workers, citizens and community members. Literacy Advance currently provides over 130 free, volunteer-taught classes per week throughout the Houston area. To volunteer, donate or get involved visit [www.literacyadvance.org](http://www.literacyadvance.org) or call 713-266-8777.

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Photos: (by Connie Loh)

Photo 1: Champions of Literacy Honoree Dwight Edwards and his wife Lauri Edwards.

Photo 2: Literacy Advance Volunteer Tutor Pam Nutt, Adult Basic Education Learner Sidney Frasier and his wife Mary Frasier.

