



IRL Newsletter

Winter 2020 ISSUE 10

Our Mission:

To empower individuals of all abilities to take charge of their own learning and lives, making it possible for them to be competent, caring and contributing members of society; and to provide learning opportunities for families, professionals, and communities to support those efforts.

In the Spotlight! Mary Louise Bunker, Board Member



The Institute for the Redesign of Learning would like to recognize their longest serving Board of Directors' member, Mary Louise Bunker. Mary Louise began serving on our Board in 1976 and has faithfully served for the past 44 years. Mary Louise, an Alhambra resident since 1931, has had an adventuresome life. She received her Master's degree in Nutrition and was in charge of the Dietary Department at St. Luke's Hospital in Pasadena. She also served as Mayor of Alhambra three times during her tenure as City Councilwoman from 1983-1995. She served as a board member at a local Savings and Loan and has extensive banking and accounting experience.

In 1976, Mary Louise toured our original program, the Almansor Education Center, and met our founder, Dr. Nancy J. Lavelle. She was looking for assistance for her son and appreciated that Dr. Lavelle had built a program that helped children with emotional and academic needs. Dr. Lavelle invited her to become a board member shortly after their initial meeting. Mary Louise believes that her background in nutrition and the banking world was helpful to the board of this newly formed non-profit school.

In 1987, Mary Louise and her husband, along with a small group of board members, painted the Almansor Academy to prepare for its' opening when it relocated to South Pasadena. She said it has been a fascinating journey to watch IRL move from a small elementary school to having several branches of services for the community (i.e., two schools, early education, mental health, and adult services).

Due to the needs of her own family members, Mary Louise understands the value in specialized services and IRL's approach of meeting the unique needs of each individual student and client. At 97 years of age, she continues to serve on the Board of Directors because she believes in IRL's philosophy of working with each child and client to create the potential of what they want to become in the future.

Mary Louise feels that her experience was a great help and support to Dr. Lavelle and IRL throughout its' growth over the years... she could not be more correct. IRL is appreciative of her guidance, dedication, and 44 years of service to our board, our students, clients, families, and our staff. A job well done, Mary Louise!!!!

Grants

Westmoreland Academy applied for a grant to support our students with Chromebooks and to support our virtual clubs of Science, Art, Music, Cooking, Theater, and Explorers to increase engagement of our students during distance learning. This project was funded by a grant from the Pasadena Community Foundation with the 2020 Pasadena COVID-19 Response Fund Grant. Our staff are excited to purchase Chromebooks and supplies to enhance their social distance clubs and looking forward to an educational, yet fun new semester of learning with our students. The Institute for the Redesign of Learning and Westmoreland Academy are extremely grateful to Pasadena Community Foundation for their continued support of our work to support our students during this unprecedented time.



Fundraising and Outreach

Westmoreland Academy Online Silent Auction

The online silent auction for Westmoreland Academy raised \$6,738.57. The money raised from the Gala in 2019 and the online auction 2020 will be used to complete additional recreational activity areas for our students. We are currently obtaining bids to remove unused wood structures and to lay artificial turf to create a safe and clean area for recreational play while adding areas for creating chalk artwork and sensory items for more individualized activities. We hope to finish this work by the end of January.

Thanksgiving Meals for our Students and their Families

Thank you to the 57 donors who helped IRL raise \$2,180 to feed 203 families throughout Los Angeles. Your donations allowed us to provide each family with five pounds of potatoes, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, dinner rolls, and pie. And with the assistance of volunteer 8th graders from All Souls World Language Catholic School in Alhambra, we were able to bag all of the groceries in a mere 90 minutes for delivery the following day. What a great example of community!



Ways You Can Help...

Due to Covid-19 our 317 students and adult clients, who all have special needs, have been learning from home since March. Unfortunately, they have missed out on many big celebrations like Halloween and Thanksgiving, which are important events in their school year. The holidays are coming and it breaks our hearts that they will also miss out on decorating their classrooms, being with their friends and teachers, preparing holiday shows for their families, and walking to the local fire and police departments to receive a gift.

Your small donation can make a big difference and bring a smile to all our clients' faces this holiday season.

Donate Here!



"AmazonSmile" is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. All you do is go to smile.amazon.com, login like normal, choose your charity (Institute for the Redesign of Learning) and you start to give with every purchase. Every dollar of support helps!

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