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Business

When a Student Needs a Little Extra



PHOTO BY LINDA SANDSMARK

Jim and Lori Diestel own R.E.A.D. tutoring on Estudillo Avenue, which is celebrating 35 years in business.

By Linda Sandsmark

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R.E.A.D, Inc. (Resources for Education and Discovery) educational and tutorial services is celebrating 35 years of business in San Leandro. Founder Paul Seideman began the business in 1975 after studying learning disabilities and receiving his master's degree from U.C. Berkeley. Over the years it has expanded its tutoring, test preparation and proctoring services.

In 2005, Lori and Jim Diestel bought the company from Seideman, and later moved the business to 500 Estudillo Ave. The couple had raised five children, all of whom are now college grads.

“With my five children, there were some who were gifted and some who had educational delays,” says Lori. “I saw the importance of getting the right support for each child.”

Lori had volunteered in her kids' schools and worked with a company that did test preparation. Jim has worked primarily in marketing for high-tech industries.

R.E.A.D. currently employs three local teachers in its San Leandro office (Ann

Singer, Carolyn Mbeukeu, and Denise Saylor) --- one each from elementary, middle and high school levels. They are knowledgeable about concepts and skills required at each grade level and can help students fill in gaps, study for tests, and gain confidence to participate in class.

“Our location is close to the library, and kids can walk here easily from San Leandro High, Bancroft and Roosevelt schools. We also get many students from Bishop O’Dowd.” says Lori.

The tutorial service is more flexible because it’s not a franchise, she says.

“There are no start-up fees and no contracts,” says Lori. “We do not use an out-of-the-box curriculum here. We work with each student’s teacher and work on whatever the student brings in from school. We never create extra homework during the school year.”

R.E.A.D. tutors work with groups of one to three students in small classrooms to minimize distractions. The company offers sibling and referral discounts. Most of their business comes from word-of-mouth referrals.

Wireless access is available in the building so high school students can do their reports. In addition to academics, R.E.A.D. covers organizational skills (including backpack organization).

Another important service R.E.A.D. can provide is high school credit remediation/recovery and test proctoring through Brigham Young University. Interested individuals should call for more details.

R.E.A.D., Inc. is located at 500 Estudillo Ave., San Leandro, 632-7600. High school tutoring is available from 3:30 to 8 p.m. Elementary and middle school tutoring runs from 4 to 7 p.m. weekdays.