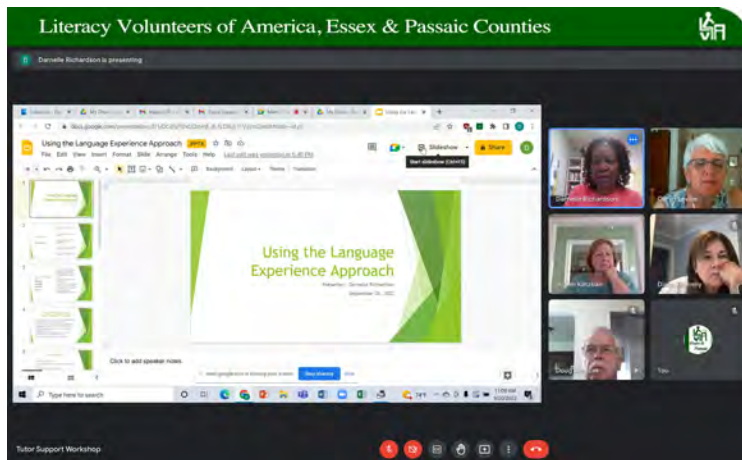




*The Insider*, the monthly newsletter of LVA Essex & Passaic Counties, will keep you in the loop on all of the organization's upcoming events.



*Learning ways to turn language learners into better readers and writers during "Using the Language Experience Approach," a tutor support workshop led by Darnelle Richardson.*

## *The Insider*

Greetings LVA family!

It's that time again, friends. Our annual membership meeting is more than just a time to elect new board members, although that's an important feature of these yearly gatherings, the next of which takes place in just a month. It's usually the only time that all of us - students, tutors, instructors, teachers, staff, and friends – get together in one place, albeit a virtual place this year, as in recent ones. This year's meeting also will include a brief report on the status of our organization provided by our director, Cristhian Barcelos.

So please save the date. LVA's 2022 Annual Membership Virtual Meeting will take place on Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00-7:30 pm, via Google Meet. The video link is <https://meet.google.com/jhs-px-fw-phg> and confirmation of your attendance is greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Darnelle Richardson for a super informative workshop last month on "Using the Language Experience Approach." Darnelle, a leader in the adult education field for more than three decades, demonstrated how to write and share a story with students, using experiences that students provide, an approach used to turn language learners into better readers, as well as writers. Tutors who were unable to attend the session can contact us for information about Darnelle's presentation.

We have some exciting workshops coming up this fall, including presentations by educators Carol Cochi, Catherine Mitch, and Maria Paduano. You can find more information about these offerings on the next page of this newsletter or, for more detailed workshop descriptions, on our website:

<https://www.lvaen.org/workshops.html>

## *In the News*

To view the following story, copy and paste the highlighted website into an internet search bar.

**"No other choice": Immigrants continue to face language barriers in daily lives.** WFTV9. <https://bit.ly/3epLHoz>

**"The right to read: It took a lawsuit against California."** EdSource. <https://tinyurl.com/327dz3a2>

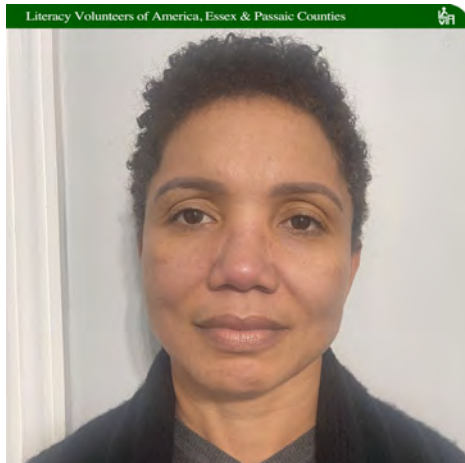
**"U.S. Department of Education launches \$1 million future finder challenge to reimagine career navigation for adult learners."** U.S. Department of Education news release <https://bit.ly/3C4dDX5>

### Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

90 Broad Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Bloomfield, NJ 07003  
(973) 566-6200, ext. 217 or 225

195 Gregory Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Passaic, NJ 07055  
(973) 470-0039

Cristhian Barcelos	-Executive Director <a href="mailto:cbarcelos@lvaep.org">cbarcelos@lvaep.org</a>
Catherine Angus	-Tutor Support Specialist <a href="mailto:cangus@lvaep.org">cangus@lvaep.org</a>
Russell Ben Ali	-Social Media & Newsletter Coordinator <a href="mailto:rbenali@lvaep.org">rbenali@lvaep.org</a>
Jorge Chavez	-Data Processing Coordinator <a href="mailto:jchavez@lvaep.org">jchavez@lvaep.org</a>
Marisol Ramirez	-Student Coordinator <a href="mailto:mramirez@lvaep.org">mramirez@lvaep.org</a>



*Rossi, a student from the Dominican Republic, is anxious to improve her English so that she can resume her career as a pharmacist.*

## Getting to Know Us

### Rossi, LVA student

*Farmacéutica* is not just a word on Rossi's resume; for a quarter of a century it was her life.

"I love to help people," said Rossi, a literacy student from the Dominican Republic, where she worked as a pharmacist.

Pharmacy wasn't her first choice when she considered a field that could help the masses. That was journalism, she said, a profession her mother disapproved of. So Rossi, who was already working as a drug store assistant, opted to learn pharmacy.

After five years of study, she left the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo with a college degree, a pharmacist's license, and a bright future. She would spend the next 25 years working as a pharmacist before leaving for the U.S. in 2017.

Now, she's pining to get back to her old career, but must first conquer her fear of speaking English.

"I would love to work in my area, pharmacy, and I have plans to do that, eventually," said Rossi who, for now, earns a living by shopping for and delivering groceries to clients. "I still have some fear that when people speak to me I won't understand. At times I feel very scared."

One obstacle is that, outside of her library classes, she hasn't found many folks to practice with.

"It's difficult," Rossi explains. "I didn't work at any time with American people. I believe this is my biggest problem because I never worked in an American area."

Still, Rossi was able to understand questions posed in English and able to respond in English, during our telephone interviews. She spent a year studying her new language at Bronx Community College before enrolling in LVA's literacy program. In addition, she said "I read and sometimes I watch TV in English. And sometimes I listen to American music. When I don't understand something, I look it up in a dictionary." She also uses Google for translation help, she added.

Rossi loves spending time with her family, which includes her husband, daughter, 21, and son, 24, as well as her mom and three of her four brothers, who all live nearby.

## Tutor Training Workshops

**Online Training**, by Barbara Hathaway

Platform: Zoom

Tuesdays, 6:00 - 8:15 pm

November 1, 8, 15, 29, & December 6, 2022

## Tutor Support Workshop

**"Teaching Listening Skills,"**

with Carol Cochi, Ph.D.

Platform: Google Meet

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

11:00 am - 12:30 pm

**"Grammar Instruction that Works,"**

with Catherine Mitch

Platform: Zoom

Thursday, November 17, 2022

11:00 am - 1:00 pm

## Monthly Coffee Hour with Tutors

with Catherine Angus

Thursday, November 10, 2022 at 4 pm

Thursday, December 8, 2022 at 4 pm

<http://www.lvaep.org/workshops.html>

***Literacy opens a wide door to life. Help us keep that door open with your donation!***

*Thanks in large part to you, we are able to aid hundreds of students each year. Please continue your efforts to improve the lives of others by giving the gift of literacy. You can contribute by mailing us a check or through our website @:*

**<http://www.lvaep.org/donate.html>**



## ‘Low literacy voters struggle to cast ballots in face of restrictive voting laws.’

### PBS News Hour

By Laura Barrón-López, October 10, 2022

As Americans begin to cast ballots in the midterms, voters who struggle to read will confront an election system that relies on literacy. Experts estimate that roughly one in five Americans, including those with disabilities and those who have not learned English, struggle to read in this country. Laura Barrón-López reports.

#### Laura Barrón-López:

Literacy tests targeting Black voters have long been part of America's history. Though no longer illegal new voting restrictions implemented since 2020 are creating new barriers to the ballot box for voters with low literacy.

Aliyya Swaby is a reporter with ProPublica South unit, whose article entitled "The Fight Against an Age-Old Effort to Block Americans From Voting" dives into these new laws. And she joins me now. Aliyya, requiring literacy tests to vote are illegal now. But are these new laws limiting access to the ballot effectively modern-day literacy tests?

#### Aliyya Swaby:

Yes, that's exactly right. So these new laws are limiting the assistance that voters who struggle to read can receive at the ballot box. And that assistance is really crucial for them to be able to vote and also for them to be able to vote correctly and for the candidate that they actually want to vote for. (cont.)

Reprinted from pbs.org. For full story, paste the following link into your favorite web browser address bar: <https://to.pbs.org/3yztKED>

*Learning a new culture is more than studying a language. Tutoring is more than learning techniques. Our "Resources" webpage covers everything from legal matters, health care, & scholarships for immigrants, to professional development for tutors. Give us a look @: <http://www.lvaep.org/students.html>*

## Getting to Know Us (cont.)

### Renee Porcile, LVA tutor

Making mistakes in Renee Porcile's language classes is entirely permissible. Apologizing for them is not. And she's quick to remind any student who forgets.



"I urged them to stop saying 'I'm sorry' after every mistake they made, and insisted there was nothing to be sorry about," Renee said of her group, which consists of five adult students from Latin America and Africa. And her students get it.

"She's friendly and has created a good atmosphere for a class," said Evangelina, a student from the south of Venezuela, who added that Renee comes to class well-prepared and presents her lessons well. "I think she is not only a good teacher but a good person too."

We chatted with Renee via telephone and email. She's a Bergen County native, we learned, with a Felician University degree and a Cornell University certification in Labor Relations. She has worked in the human resources field for nearly two decades and, when she's not working or tutoring, likes to meditate, travel, and read.

When she is tutoring, which she began doing earlier this year, she seeks to help her students develop their literacy skills while giving them the support they need to speak confidently.

Along the way, her students have logged plenty of hours working on grammar, reading, and comprehension with the help of *English for Everyone* practice books and grammar guides and materials found online.

"My goal was to develop a relationship with each of my students to let them express themselves freely in a safe environment," Renee wrote. "I would always start by opening myself up to be vulnerable with my students as an invitation for them to allow themselves to do the same at every session."

The good news is that her students no longer need much of an invite. "Most of them started volunteering to read or to answer questions without even being called upon," Renee wrote. "To me, that was so rewarding just to know they were not only learning something but becoming comfortable with their new language."