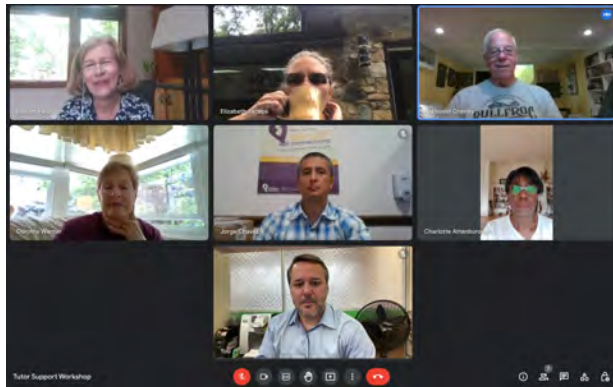




The Insider, the monthly newsletter of LVA Essex & Passaic Counties, will keep you in the loop on all of the organization's upcoming events.



In Lauren Randolph's workshop "Language and Beyond" tutors enjoyed a conversation that explored cultural values, differences and common misunderstandings.

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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The Insider

Greetings LVA family!

It's finally summer. We hope that you're enjoying the weather and the opportunities to enjoy all the outdoor events were likely limited or canceled over the past two years.

It's been quite a year for Qingling Guo, an artist and language student from Shanghai, China. First she became a U.S. citizen, which she called a very important moment in her life. She expressed her gratitude for the support of her tutors, Harry Moskowitz, who met her outside the courthouse at 7 a.m. when she arrived to take the citizenship oath, and Hedda Maleh.

Then, Qingling was awarded a 2022 Lillian Orlowsky and William Freed Foundation Grant, a prestigious grant of up to \$36,000 awarded to artists over the age of 45 whom the foundation feels deserve greater recognition for their work.

Judges from the Provincetown Art Association and Museum, which provides the grant, cited Qingling's "Backgrounds II" series of paintings which they said represent "a kind of feeling of interpersonal alienation between people and highlights the living conditions of women of different racial and cultural identities." Congratulations, Qingling! You're amazing.

One in five Americans struggles to read and ProPublica, an independent, non-profit newsroom that produces investigative journalism in the public interest, wants to know why. The journalism team has made an appeal for educators, literacy advocates and others to help them understand what it calls the root causes of America's literacy crisis: <https://www.propublica.org/getinvolved/literacy> We look forward to its findings.

Congratulations to all of our new tutors who completed training on June 30, 2022. Welcome aboard!

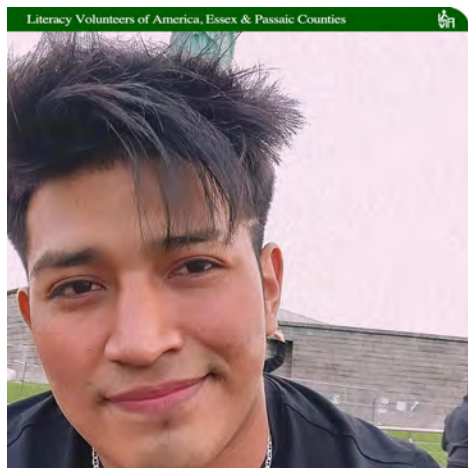
In the News

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

"Never too late: Troy woman earns high school equivalency diploma at age 79." Times Union.
<https://bit.ly/3yzG2T3>

"The language of dreams." Harvard Gazette.
<https://bit.ly/3amBogP>

"Struggling to learn a language? 6 tips on how pop songs can help." The Conversation.
<https://bit.ly/319wum5>



Esdras, a student from Guatemala and a chef at an Italian restaurant, dreams of opening his own eatery one day.

Tutor Training Workshops

Online Training, by Barbara Hathaway

Platform: Zoom

Tuesdays, 6 - 8:15 pm

September 13, 20, 27, October 4 & 11, 2022

Online Training, by Barbara Hathaway

Platform: Zoom

Tuesdays, 6 - 8:15 pm

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

Archived Webinars

NJALL

The New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning offers a series of webinars that are archived online, on everything from vocabulary instruction for English language learners to transitioning to the new reality of adult education, among others. The videos include the latest series of workshops conducted at the organization's annual conference last month, and are available to all via:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDWUWANSq56c9lmd02ir61g>

Getting to Know Us

Esdras, LVA student

Esdras began his restaurant career at the bottom, as a dishwasher in the sweltering kitchen of a bustling suburban eatery. Today, he's the chef.

His rise began only a couple of years after his start, when managers saw something promising in the eager and good-natured young man, a former vegetable farmer from Guatemala. So, they taught him to cook.

Lessons covered traditional Italian fare – preparing everything from spaghetti and meatballs to lasagna, baked ziti, ravioli, and other flavorful dishes. After a three-year apprenticeship, the job was his.

“It was a great time when they told me that,” Esdras said. “I was learning and I enjoyed it. So when they told me ‘Oh, you want to be a chef?’ I said ‘Sure, that is my dream’.”

Well, one of his dreams.

“I have so many plans for my life,” Esdras explained. “The first one is I want to start a small business. I want to open a restaurant, an Italian restaurant.” Or, he added, it could be a breakfast and lunch place that serves American cuisine. Or maybe something else.

“In this county there are so many opportunities we can take to make our lives better and help our families,” Esdras said.

Perfecting his English is an important part of the plans, he added. At LVA he studies the language with two tutors each week.

“He is such a pleasure to work with, always taking the initiative to volunteer to read and answer questions,” said tutor Renee Porcile. “Esdras has boosted his confidence over the 10 weeks that I’ve had the pleasure of tutoring him. He always asks the right questions which assures me that he is grasping the material.”

Esdras was raised with four siblings on a farm in Tecpán, Guatemala. Even though he completed high school and studied agriculture in college for two years, he enrolled in a GED program, as do many immigrants, mainly for the rich English vocabulary and grammar the programs offer.

In his spare time, Esdras enjoys playing soccer as a midfielder, watching Netflix movies in English with English subtitles, and practicing English with neighbors.

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>



How teaching English classes has taught me to live with dignity, tenacity, and courage

KSL.com

By Susie Boyce, June 20, 2022

SALT LAKE CITY — When I walked into the classroom as a volunteer English teacher for the first time, I was unprepared for the examples of courage, determination and grit I would be learning from week after week.

This class, for adult learners with limited proficiency in English, is one of dozens offered by the English Skills Learning Center based in Salt Lake City. The center evaluates learners' English literacy levels and places them in classes according to their learning needs. The center serves people from more than 86 countries; and the class I help teach consists of individuals from Afghanistan, Burma, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Malaysia, Pakistan, Sudan and Ukraine.

The curriculum in our class is for emergent readers, so I was surprised at the variety of educational backgrounds represented.

Some learners are proficient in multiple languages, but are new to this country and want to learn English. Others have little to no literacy in their native languages (often due to limited educational opportunities); and, because some of them are new to formal education, they are learning basic literacy concepts — like letters, words and sentence formation — for the first time. *(cont.)*

Reprinted from KSL.com. For full story, paste the following link into your favorite web browser address bar: <https://bit.ly/3uvSAti>

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.lva.org/students.html>

Getting to Know Us (cont.)

Caryn Levine, LVA tutor

Caryn Levine's students come from different countries, speak different languages and are vastly different in age. But they do have this in common: They love a good challenge.



And that's just fine by Caryn, who enjoys probing their limits with news stories and reading that demonstrate what they know.

"Sometimes I'm really impressed," said Caryn. "For example, last week one of the vocabulary words was *exacerbate* and they knew what that meant. So their vocabulary is pretty advanced."

Caryn is an Essex County native and a former hospital dental hygienist who became a tutor when she retired a little more than a year ago. Volunteering had been on her radar for a while, said Caryn, a professed reading and English language enthusiast who has already read 16 books this year.

"It's just something that was so important to me that I wanted to be able share that with some people who were also interested in it," Caryn said. "It's very fortunate that the students that I have right now really enjoy the idea of being challenged and learning more and, you know, broadening not just their English but their interests."

One of those students, Haeckel, a native of the Brazilian state of Bahia, said Caryn's sessions provide a wealth of cultural and other information.

"She makes it easy to understand how things work in this country," Haeckel said. "Because in my country some things are different from here."

Outside of her online classes, Caryn spends much of her time caring for her elderly mother and visiting her three granddaughters, ages 4-6-years old.

She said she completed tutor training, believing that she would be assigned to a basic literacy student, rather than to speakers of other languages.

"I have found that to be even more interesting," Caryn said of her ESOL group. "I've taken a lot of workshops and I've learned a lot of things. And I've found that to be very rewarding."