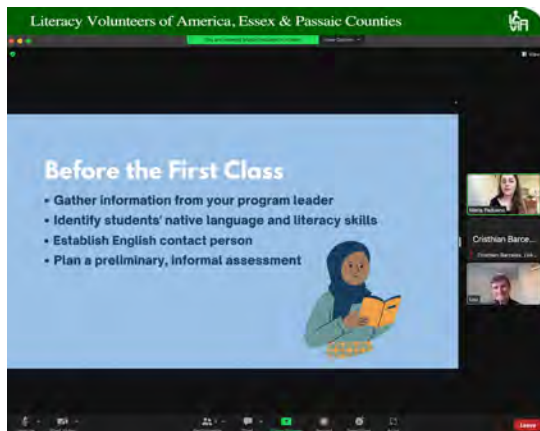




The Insider, the monthly newsletter of LVA Essex & Passaic Counties, will keep you in the loop on all of the organization's upcoming events.



Maria Paduano's workshop, "Teaching Beginner ESL Students Through Ventures," provided tips, tricks and lesson planning strategies to teach students with little prior English knowledge.

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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The Insider

Greetings LVA family!

We at Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex & Passaic Counties, wish all of you a safe, happy, and healthy 2023.

When we look back on 2022, we're astounded by the accomplishments of our students which were gained, naturally, through their enormous drive and efforts but also with the help of you - our tutors, teachers, and workshop presenters.

Sophonie, a student from Haiti, saw her short fiction story, *The Little Old Lady*, published in the NJALL magazine, INSIGHT 2022, and won a cash award after it tied for first place in the organization's Adult Learner Writing Contest.

Then there was Yeimy, a student from Costa Rica, who became a U.S. citizen, passing the test just in time to make a mad dash to grab her first U.S. passport and travel the same day.

Qingling, an English student and artist from Shanghai, China, also became a U.S. citizen last year. On top of that, she won a prestigious 2022 Lillian Orlowsky and William Freed Grant, which comes with an award of up to \$36,000 given to artists over the age of 45 who've shown a commitment to American art.

Student Carlos, a well-known fashion designer from the Dominican Republic, was able to advance his business after a pandemic slowdown and Esdras, from Guatemala, who was once a dishwasher in an Italian restaurant, was promoted to chef after three years of training.

There were many more student accomplishments worth remembering in 2022 but little space to note them here. Congratulations to all of our students and educators.

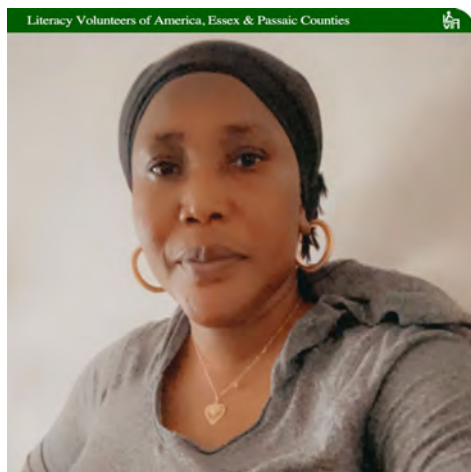
In the News

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

"ProLiteracy Helps Launch ALL IN Initiative for Social Change through Literacy." ProLiteracy.
<https://bit.ly/3IS19H>

"New census estimates show a tepid rise in U.S. population growth, buoyed by immigration." The Brookings Institution. <https://bit.ly/3koDfZA>

"I Can Have a Future." Tarrant County College News.
<http://bit.ly/3CU3D30>



Awa, a student who already speaks some five languages, is studying English to improve her career opportunities.

Tutor Training Workshops

Online Training, by Nancy Lama

Platform: Zoom

Wednesdays, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

January 25, February 1, 8, 15, 22, & March 1, 2023

Online Training

ProLiteracy Distance Education Online Training Series

- Teaching Basic Literacy through Distance Education and
- Teaching English Language Learners through Distance Education

These courses, one for Basic Literacy and another for ESL tutors and teachers, will expand on the lesson planning, teaching strategies, and learning activities found in the basic tutor training program and apply them to a distance learning environment. More info: <http://bit.ly/3QOE1hy>

Coffee Hour with Tutors

with Catherine Angus

Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 4:30pm (Themed meeting)

Thursday, September 7, 2023 at 4:30pm (General meeting)

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

Getting to Know Us

Awa, LVA student

Awa was already multilingual when she left Mali, well-versed in French from elementary school, Mandingo or Mandinka, which she spoke at home, and several African languages she learned as a merchant.

But that proved little help to her in New York City, where she arrived in 2012, at least not when it came to things like navigating the subway system during job searches. For that she depended on her cell phone, her sister, and the kindness of strangers.

“If I wanted to take the train but didn’t know which train, I would say to a stranger, ‘Please, my sister wants to talk to you,’ ” she said, describing with refreshing humor how she’d pass her cell phone to some straphanger she’d just encountered. “And then I would talk to my sister in Mandingo and then my sister would talk to that person. I didn’t know what was uptown or downtown.”

Awa left school early back in Bamako, capital of the West African nation where she was raised, in order to help her mother, a merchant who sold clothing and other products throughout Mali, Senegal, and Liberia.

Learning another language, particularly as an adult, has not been easy but Awa’s progress is evident. She’s passed her written driver’s test and, just months ago, passed the test to become a home health care aide, earning her certification and starting work in the field last November.

She’s been with us for three years and meets with tutors online for several hours each week.

Diana Fennelly, one of Awa’s tutors, said she’s found good results by using a Wordwall program to send material to her student virtually. “She’s hard-working and has a great sense of humor,” Diana said of Awa. “She’s been with me for about a year. She’s wonderful.”

Awa would eventually like to earn a GED, find a job in a nursing home or become an entrepreneur, and gain U.S. citizenship like her Guinea-born husband. Outside of class, Awa said she practices English with a niece and watches English-language movies and television shows.

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>



‘In Their Own Words: Asian Immigrants’ Experiences Navigating Language Barriers in the United States.’

Pew Research Center

By Luis Noe-Bustamante, Lauren Mora, and Neil G. Ruiz,
December 19, 2022

In 2021, Pew Research Center conducted 49 focus groups with Asian immigrants to understand the challenges they faced, if any, after arriving in the country. The focus groups consisted of 18 distinct Asian origins and were conducted in 17 Asian languages. For the full story, as well as the methodology used, please see the link at the end of this column. The following are excerpts from their stories.

“Because my English isn’t that good, I often feel slighted by shopkeepers ... some lose their patience with me.”

– Immigrant woman of Taiwanese origin in her late 30s

“I didn’t know where the bus stops were. I didn’t know how to ask so I walked ... I couldn’t speak the language.”

– Immigrant woman of Burmese origin in her early 50s

“I had hardships once I arrived in the [United States]. Yes, it was very difficult. ... I didn’t know the [English] language yet ... especially [when] I was pregnant. ... Every time I went to see doctors ... there were no interpreters. So it was difficult to talk to them.”

– Immigrant woman of Cambodian origin in her mid-40s

Reprinted from [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org) For full story, paste the following link into your favorite web browser address bar:

<http://bit.ly/3HfCY4d>

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.)

Wendy Sobelman, LVA tutor

Almost as soon as they’d met, tutor Wendy Sobelman came up with the perfect solution to supplement her literacy students’ education: computer-based learning.

But getting it to her students would take a family-sized effort.



First, a license to use the computer program she had in mind, which is built on the science of reading, is costly. Secondly, it requires a computer, and only one of her three students owned one. And lastly, it would take some training to operate both the computer and the program.

So Wendy, with help from her family, went to work.

The retired special education teacher, who’d used the program for years, contacted its parent company and asked it to grant her students free access. Permission was granted.

For the hardware, her daughter-in-law appealed for help online and, through a web page designed for working moms, came up with two high-quality laptops donated within days.

Wendy’s husband taught the group to use their computers while she demonstrated the program.

Wendy is a Philadelphia native. She has a bachelor’s degree in speech pathology and audiology from Penn State University; a master’s degree in deaf education from Temple University; and a doctorate in applied psycholinguistics from Boston University. In addition, she earned a certificate in special education from Southern Connecticut State University.

She has taught at the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf in Philadelphia and was an assistant professor, teaching deaf education, at Trenton State College, which is now The College of New Jersey. She later taught special education to grades K-3.

She and her husband moved to New Jersey from Connecticut two years ago, to be closer to their grandchildren. In retirement she opted to tutor in order to put her teaching skills to productive use.

“It’s been very rewarding,” Wendy said. “I’ve learned a lot from my students about teaching adults. It’s different from teaching children.”