



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



Mary O'Connor, shares her list of useful websites for tutors at a recent tutor support workshop. The next workshop, on Dec. 10, will show how to use song lyrics as literacy teaching tools.

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Welcome to *The Insider*

The newsletter of
Literacy Volunteers of America,
Essex & Passaic Counties

We're pleased to introduce a brand new way to stay on top of all that LVA Essex & Passaic Counties offers. Our newsletter, *The Insider*, will help keep you informed about everything from tutor support workshops to inside stories from students and tutors, interesting websites, textbooks and teaching techniques, news from the world of literacy and how it affects us all.

Have a story you'd like to write or something you'd like to see covered in *The Insider*? Email your ideas to Mr. Russell Ben Ali at lvaessex@verizon.net

Tutor Support Workshops

Join us for our next monthly tutor support workshop, "Using Lyrics as Text."

Amy Blake, an Essex County public school teacher who uses the lyrics of folk songs to teach reading and comprehension, will show our tutors how the same techniques she uses for children can be applied to adult literacy and ESOL students in the LVA community.

Participants will receive a copy of the "Using Lyrics as Text" handouts and a free CD of songs performed by musicians who have taken an interest in Amy's work.

The "Using Lyrics as Text" tutor support workshop will be held Tuesday, Dec. 10, from 6-7:30 pm, at The Library Theater, Bloomfield Public Library, 90 Broad Street, Bloomfield. The Library Theater is located beneath the Children's Library. The entrance is on Broad Street, adjacent to the library entry plaza.

Support workshops are designed to provide teaching tools and tips, as well as networking opportunities, for our tutors. Past sessions have included "Useful Websites" for veteran tutors and "Getting Started," for new ones. Workshops planned for 2014 include "Tips for Helping Students with Learning Disabilities" and "Technology as an Aid to Tutors."

LVA's new Executive Director! Story on Page 2



LVA Essex & Passaic selects a new Executive Director

LVA Essex & Passaic Counties has named Cristhian Barcelos as its new executive director.

Cristhian joined the LVA team 12 years ago and, prior to his appointment last month as Executive Director, served as the organization's IT Specialist and as Program Coordinator. He brings to LVA a strong commitment to technology and nearly 20 years of management experience.

As Executive Director, Cristhian will oversee state and federal reports for more than 1,000 students a year within Essex & Passaic Counties. His immediate goals include developing LVA Essex & Passaic into a more cohesive organization through increased participation from tutors and students.

He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Labor University of Uruguay in Montevideo and an associate's degree in graphic and web design.

HAVE YOU CHECKED US OUT ON FACEBOOK?

Don't forget to visit our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/LVAEssexPassaicCounty>

for up to date info on local LVA events. While there, give the page a "Like," won't you?

Getting to Know Us

Nyuma

It was the kind of phone call literacy tutors live for. The weekend call came from a student, and it had nothing to do with homework help or canceling a session.

The caller, Nyuma, had just passed her US citizenship exam. "She was so excited," explained Dr. Lauren Harrison, who tutors a small class of Gambian students, including Nyuma, at the East Orange Public Library. "She's been studying at least four years."

Nearly everyone in the class is trying to gain citizenship, Lauren said. Nyuma, her student since 2009, is the first to check the accomplishment on her attendance sheet. "We were both thrilled," Lauren said.

Daniela

Citizenship can be a huge accomplishment in the life of an immigrant who once struggled to learn the language of her adopted country. But there are other gains, smaller but still meaningful, that many LVA students accomplish. For Daniela, a Peruvian-born LVA student, joy comes simply from sitting in the park and being able to hold her own in an English conversation. "We are both delighted with that accomplishment," said her tutor, Judy Tabs.

Clifford

Clifford, a basic literacy student who works as a cook in a Bayonne restaurant, said he wants to earn a GED and go to college. And then become a tutor.

"This has been a blessing to me to be in this program," Clifford said of LVA and his tutor Joan Scher in East Orange.

"Even when I finish, I want to help someone else who could use the program," he added.

Dofi

Dofi, a student from Togo, is a first year education major at Essex County College. Still she takes time to attend an LVA English Conversation Group class at the East Orange Public Library.

"Even if I'm going to school, it's a good thing to meet with Nora (Devine) and Nina (Peyser) and improve my English," Dofi said. "You never stop studying."

Want to share a story about your student's progress? Email it to Mr. Ali at lvaessex@verizon.net

Annual Awards Ceremony

The LVA annual awards ceremony in October is more than an annual opportunity to pat one another on the back for the jobs we do everyday. It's become one of the rare times that students and tutors get together and describe, in a public forum and often emotional terms, the positive quality of life changes they've witnessed through the efforts of hard-working tutors and students.

The October 28 ceremony was hosted by Sally Rice, President of the Board of Directors of LVA Essex & Passaic Counties. Special recognition was awarded to Donald Daborn, LVA's Educator of the Year, and to Students of the Year Roma Robinson in Essex County, Roman Jagielka of Passaic County and Victor Zuniga at Northern State Prison.

Tutor of the Year awards were given to Amanda Carrington in Essex County, Thomas Conlon in Passaic County and Robert Armour at Northern State Prison.

English Conversation Group of the Year awards were given to Behnaz Ashtari, Ayawovi Koulihouen, Nelli Oleneva and Yue Zhang in Essex County, as well as to Tulia Arrieta, Lilliana Chao, Roman Jagielka and Otilia Rivera in Passaic.



Sally Rice, President of the Board of Directors, Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex & Passaic Counties, presents Donald Daborn with the Educator of the Year award.

*"Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope."
— Kofi Annan*

TUTOR TRAINING WORKSHOP

The next tutor training workshop series will be held at the Montclair Public Library on Saturdays, January 11, 18 and February 1, 8, 2014.

Know someone who might make a good tutor? Refer them to our website www.lvanewark.org or the Bloomfield office at lvaessex@verizon.net (973) 566-6200, ext. 217.

"Once you learn to read, you will be forever free." — Frederick Douglass



The over 50-hour club: Tutor and LVA board member Marleen Grabowsky, with Passaic student Heba Daghestani