



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



Sarita Wilson, Allie Willhard and Russell Ben Ali chat with Dustin Dumas-Weeks about LVA and its remote tutoring trials on an episode of the SOMAtv show, "Dustin's Kaleidoscope."
The cable TV show will air later this month and be posted to YouTube.

The Insider

Greetings LVA family and other Friends of Literacy.

It's almost over. The winter of 2013-2014 ends March 20, with the onset of spring. Thanks to all tutors, students and others who hung in there despite severe snowstorms, library closures and electrical outages during one of the worst winter seasons in recent memory.

On March 9th we turned our clocks ahead one hour, which we know is a move designed to conserve energy. Daylight Saving Time (DST) increases evening sunlight and thus reduces electricity usage. But did you know that not everyone follows DST? Arizona hasn't used it since 1973, when it applied for and received a federal exception on the grounds that an extra hour of sunlight led to more deadly desert heat. Hawaii has never used it; neither have some US territories. Did you know a Michigan University study blasted the practice, saying DST leads to a loss of sleep, increased fatigue, increased workplace injuries caused by fatigue and increased sick days due to those workplace injuries?

If your student has a hard time grasping the concept, try these "Free Technology for Teachers" and "Teacher Vision" links for tips on teaching about DST:

<http://www.freetech4teachers.com/2009/03/explaining-daylight-saving-time.htm> (video)

<https://www.teachervision.com/tv/printables/Mout25.pdf>

Time for the U.S. to Reskill?

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently presented the results of its survey of world literacy. It showed that the United States fell below the international average: One in six US adults, about 36 million people, have low literacy skills, compared to one in 20 in Japan.

The US Department of Education asked the OECD to take a closer look at the low-skilled adult US population and offer recommendations to reverse the trend. Here's a link to the full report, entitled "Time for the U.S. to Reskill?"

http://skills.oecd.org/Survey_of_Adult_Skills_US.pdf

"The greatest indicator of a child's future academic success is still a mother's reading skill." Story on Page 3.

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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

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

Cristhian Barcelos	-Executive Director cristhian_barcelos@verizon.net
Russell Ben Ali	-Recruitment & Training Coordinator lvaessex@verizon.net
Monica Celedonio	-Student Coordinator lvapassaic@verizon.net
Jorge Chavez	-Data Processing
Debbie Graham	-Education Coordinator lvanewark@verizon.net

Getting to Know Us

Amanda Carrington, tutor

A day in the life of LVA tutor Amanda Carrington often starts like this: Rise at 5 am, tend to her dog, cat and home, then hustle out the door to meet Roma, her first literacy student of the day. They meet at 7 am, hours before any area library opens. It's the only time Roma can attend lessons and keep her job as a housekeeper.

But Amanda's day doesn't end there. She tutors two other women for Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex and Passaic Counties. They meet in the afternoon in the offices of the same Orange, NJ after school program where Amanda tutors Roma.

It makes for a long day but Amanda, a 77-year-old LVA tutor, does not complain. "I start a little bit early but that's okay," Amanda explained. "It's not really hard. I just like doing what I do."

Amanda is passionate about volunteer work and her passion stretches beyond LVA. Once a month, she, Roma and another of her students, Aviance, gather in the kitchen of Episcopal Church of the Epiphany in Orange, where the trio cooks hot food for the homeless and others in need.

On a recent Saturday, Amanda, Roma and Aviance cooked five turkeys, a ham, string beans and macaroni and cheese. They cooked two large boxes of chicken, in curried and Jamaican-jerk styles, and they prepared salads and desserts.

"Her favorite thing is cooking, feeding the hungry," Amanda said of Roma. "She likes doing that."

And the all shopping and recipe reading can amount to good practice for a couple of literacy students.

The women are well known around the church, where Amanda was the sole cook for at least two years, said Joseph Grant, head of the Epiphany's outreach program. "Amanda ran the hot food ministry by herself," Joseph said. "Later, the others joined her."

The outreach provides hot meals to about 230 people on weekends and doles out bags of pantry food items, toys for children and clothing for families. But it's perhaps best known for the hot food, much of which is cooked by Amanda and her LVA students.

William V. Johnson, who also volunteers at the church, said of Amanda: "She's a blessing. She doesn't have to do it; she's not getting paid. She does it by the grace of God."



Amanda Carrington (center) and her students, Roma and Aviance, help feed the homeless and others at the Episcopal Church of Epiphany in Orange, NJ.

In the News

Poor implementation of Common Core State Standards leads AFT to reject Gates Foundation funds

The American Federation of Teachers, which has won millions of dollars in grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, will no longer accept Gates Foundation money for its Innovation Fund, the labor union announced. Union members have expressed concern about the poor implementation in many states of the Common Core State Standards, one of the initiatives in which the Gates Fund invests.

Washington Post

<http://wapo.st/1fnfEcX>

Using Skype to Build A Tutoring Business

In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Parliament Tutors used Skype to continue its for-profit tutoring business. It worked so well, they used it to grow the company's business.

New York Times blog: <http://nyti.ms/1grS6oi>

Teen activist Malala Yousafzai and telephone giant to provide mobile-based literacy help to millions of women and girls

Malala Yousafzai, the 16-year-old Nobel Peace Prize-nominee who survived a shooting attack by the Taliban in her hometown of Mingora, Pakistan, will team up with an international telephone company to provide "mobile-based literacy learning" to 569 million women and girls around the world who can't read or write, her foundation, the Malala Fund, said. The Fund's collaboration with Vidafone is expected to "pull 5.3 million out of illiteracy" by 2020.



Improving mothers' literacy skills may be best way to boost children's achievement

Researchers funded by the National Institutes of Health concluded that programs to boost the academic achievement of children from low-income neighborhoods might be more successful if they also provided adult literacy education to parents.

The researchers based this conclusion on their finding that a mother's reading skill is the greatest determinant of her children's future academic success, outweighing other factors, such as neighborhood and family income.

The analysis, performed by Narayan Sastry, Ph.D., of the University of Michigan, and Anne R. Pebley, Ph.D., of the University of California, Los Angeles, examined data on more than 3,000 families.

The study, appearing in *Demography*, was supported by NIH's Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

"The findings indicate that programs to improve maternal literacy skills may provide an effective means to overcome the disparity in academic achievement between children in poor and affluent neighborhoods," said Rebecca Clark, Ph.D., chief of the Demographic and Behavioral Sciences Branch at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the NIH institute that funded the study.

After mother's reading level, neighborhood income level was the largest determinant of children's academic achievement.

The researchers undertook the study to isolate factors contributing to the disparity in academic achievement that other studies have found between children in low income and affluent neighborhoods.

Sastry and Pebley's analysis was based on data collected between April 2000 and December 2001 as part of the Los Angeles Family and Neighborhood Survey, an ongoing examination of families in 65 LA county communities. The information included the results of reading and math assessments of 2,350 children ages 3 to 17, their mothers' education level, census records of neighborhood income, and family income and assets. The participants in the study were representative of the larger Los Angeles community.

Sastry and Pebley noted that neighborhood income had the largest impact on achievement for children ages 8 to 17, who are at the middle and higher end of the age range. This is consistent with the idea that the environment outside the home becomes more important as children grow older, they said.

"This analysis gives us a chance to isolate the different factors that affect children's achievement," Dr. Sastry said. "Policy measures to encourage mixed-income neighborhoods, improve early childhood education, and build mothers' reading skills each could have positive effects on children's achievement scores."

The NICHD sponsors research on development, before and after birth; maternal, child, and family health; reproductive biology and population issues; and medical rehabilitation.



Amanda Carrington received the Essex County 'Tutor of the Year' award last October from LVA Board of Directors President Sally Rice.

Upcoming Events

Tutor Support Workshop

"Five Steps" with Maxine McCormick

McGraw-Hill education specialist Maxine McCormick will show us how to help students go from low literacy to a fourth-grade reading level in five steps: Maxine McCormick.

Bloomfield Public Library
90 Broad St
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
March 24, 2014

3:00-4:30 pm, 2nd floor Conference Room
Offered again 6:00-7:30 pm
The Library Theater

Tutor Training Workshops

West Orange Public Library
46 Mt. Pleasant Ave
West Orange, NJ 07052
Wednesdays and Fridays, 1-4 pm
Apr 16, 23, 25, 30, May 7, 9, 2014

Clifton City Hall
900 Clifton Avenue
Clifton, NJ Clifton NJ 07013
Saturdays, 12-4 pm
May 3, 10, 17, 24, 2014