



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



*LVA tutors and students work together in libraries all over Essex and Passaic Counties, including the Bloomfield Public Library which provides space for an LVA office and many of our tutor training sessions and workshops. Above tutor Debbie Bloomer and student Emmanuel work on literacy drills in Bloomfield.*

### *The Insider*

There are few things in life as satisfying as meeting an adult who speaks little or no English, or one who studied English in school but left without fully learning to read and write, and helping as you watch the student progress.

Adults learn more slowly than young people, particularly when it comes to language acquisition, so patience is a key requirement of any good tutor. It's enlightening to see so many good, patient tutors at work in our local libraries. You are improving lives!

### Literacy and US Citizenship

Goals reported by our students often include helping their children with schoolwork, getting, keeping and advancing in a job, earning a GED and becoming a US citizen.

Several LVA students have obtained citizenship recently, including Nuray, who is profiled on the next page, and many more are preparing for the citizenship test. There's good reason: Citizenship offers the chance to participate in our society like few other opportunities.

Citizens can vote, hold public office, sponsor immediate relatives for legal permanent resident status, possess a US passport, travel and even live abroad without fear of losing legal US status, obtain government jobs that are restricted to citizens, receive Social Security and Medicare benefits that are not available to many non-citizens.

Citizens cannot be deported from the US.

Want to help a student apply and prepare for the test? Here are a couple of useful websites:

US Immigration:

<http://www.us-immigration.com/index.html?referrer=adwords&gelid=CMntslbUj8ACFSpp7Aod5WMAzw>

Paul Kim's blog on this LINC Community discussion board explains the citizenship process: <http://1.usa.gov/1akMoZ>

And, while you're at it, why not pass the student's name on to us. A library in our network hopes to obtain a grant that will enable it to offer citizenship classes next month. If successful they'll need students. Quickly.

### Help us stay connected

Please let us know if you change your telephone number, street address or email address, or if you know a student who has done the same. Help us stay connected. Many thanks!

#### 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

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*Nuray, the latest LVA student to become a US citizen.*

### *In the News*

To read the stories below, just copy and paste the link into an internet search.

#### **Break illiteracy cycle that sends kids to U.S. Border**

An opinion piece by the president of the board of directors of Reading Village in Dallas, a non-profit that helps thousands of Guatemalans achieve literacy. She writes that investing in international programs that increase access to education for Latin American youth can slow their exodus to the US.

<http://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/latest-columns/20140811-break-illiteracy-cycle-that-sends-kids-to-u.s.-border.ece>

#### **Education and Immigration: Why keeping international students is a good thing for the economy.**

They pay higher tuition prices, with little financial aid, and increase competition in science, technology, engineering and math classes. So why aren't we recruiting more of them, asks author Lauren Harris.

<http://t.co/IFKTEj8rP2>

#### **Adult students with poor literacy skills getting short shrift.**

New York City Department of Education is sending their lowest-scoring adult students to free classes at the public library, instead of department classes. The practice has longtime adult educators worried that the department is shortchanging its neediest adults.

<http://ny.chalkbeat.org/2014/07/22/adult-students-with-poor-literacy-getting-short-shrift-teachers-say/#.Up8zihv9td>

### *Getting to Know Us*

#### **Nuray, LVA student**

For Nuray, the 12 years since she'd left her native Turkey are best described as a time of isolation, with few opportunities to take part in the English-speaking world around her.

Turkish is spoken in her New Jersey home, where she lives with her husband and two grown sons. Her inability to speak, understand, read or write English made it difficult to find work and, when she finally did, she took a part-time job as an au pair for a Turkish family.

So after a dozen years in the states, Nuray could speak little English. She sought help from Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex & Passaic Counties, and was assigned to Debbie Graham, a tutor and, eventually, an education coordinator for the non-profit organization.

The pair spent long hours on conversation, reading and writing drills. Nuray's confidence grew to a point where she felt she was ready to take on one of her goals: She applied for US citizenship. For four months, Nuray and Debbie prepared for the test, writing questions on one side of index cards, the answers on the other. They piled the cards in two stacks: One for questions that Nuray answered incorrectly, another for the questions she aced. In time, Debbie said she could see the size of the piles reverse, with Nuray correctly answering most of the prep questions. Her hard work and progress were evident.

But at home there were obstacles. Nuray's eldest son was seriously injured in a construction work site accident, from which he has not fully recovered, and he required lots of her time and care. To compensate she slept less, staying up late at night to listen to citizenship questions on CD's. And she and Debbie practiced role-play techniques, with the tutor cast in the part of the examiner and Nuray as the examinee.

The citizenship examination and interview are usually conducted quickly, in order to accommodate scores of immigrants who take it on any given test date. But the questions aren't easy. There are the standard queries - a candidate has to know there are 27 amendments to the US Constitution and 435 members of the House of Representatives - and the not-so-standard, like naming at least one author of the long-forgotten Federalist Papers, a series of essays and articles written to promote the Constitution's ratification. You'll have to come up with the name of Alexander Hamilton, James Madison or John Jay to score on that one.

About 91-percent of immigrants pass the citizenship test, according to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, which administers it. US citizens would probably not fare as well, not without preparation. A survey conducted two years ago by Xavier University found that about a third of US citizens would fail, were they to take the test without prep. Two-thirds of respondents did not say "the Constitution" when asked to name "the law of the land" of the US. More than half didn't know what an amendment was.

It can be stressful for test-takers. Nuray's youngest son drove her to the federal building in Newark and begged to join her in the test room. She politely refused, knowing that it would only take one wrong answer to fail the exam and see disappointment in his eyes. "To see my son sad would make me sad," Nuray said. "He knew how badly I wanted to pass the test."

But there were no wrong answers that day. Not from Nuray. She left the room elated her examiner said, "Congratulations, you are now an American citizen."

## Send Your Child to College, Live Longer

A college education has long been considered one of the greatest investments a parent can make in a child. The median annual earnings of college graduates are nearly \$20,000 higher than those of high school grads, according to Pew Research Center surveys. College graduates have lower unemployment rates and are far less likely to live in poverty as high school graduates who didn't go to college.

But research now suggests that the benefits of a college education extend both ways. Parents of college graduates tend to live a bit longer than parents of high school grads, according to research published this month in the journal *Demography*.

The study, led by sociologists Esther M. Friedman of the RAND Corporation and Robert D. Mare of UCLA, found that parents of college graduates live two years longer than the parents of high school graduates. Even the parents of children who attend college but don't graduate, live longer than the parents of high school graduates who never attend college. Parents of college graduates live longer than both, according to the data.

The researchers analyzed data from the University of Michigan's Health and Retirement Study. Every two years, the university study collects information from more than 26,000 adults over the age of 51. This study involves data collected from 1992 to 2006.

They also found that gender plays a role in longevity. The parents of female college students tend to live longer than the parents of males and mothers usually live longer than fathers, according to the study.

Friedman and Mare wrote that the relationship between parents' lifespan and death is more pronounced in cases linked to preventable illnesses, for instance lung cancer, suggesting that better-educated offspring are better able to convince parents to change behavior and improve health.

College-educated adults are often better able to provide care for their parents in old age. "Offspring who themselves need assistance because of poor health or limited financial resources are less likely to provide for their parents," the researchers wrote. "Those with more education, on the other hand, have more resources and more flexible jobs, both of which make them more likely to provide care."

<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/07/29/paa-journal-parents-of-better-educated-kids-live-longer/>

## Help us fight illiteracy

Thanks in large part to you, we were able to aid hundreds of students last year. Please continue your efforts to improve the lives of others by giving the gift of literacy. You can contribute through our website – <http://www.lvanewark.org/donatetolva/> - or by simply sending a check to our address above. All contributions are tax deductible. Thank you for joining us in the fight against illiteracy.



*Maxine McCormick of McGraw-Hill, will lead our next tutor support workshop on August 26. Details are included under "Upcoming Events" below.*

## Upcoming Events

### Tutor Support Workshops

Please RSVP

#### "Reading Across the Curriculum" with Maxine McCormick

Maxine, a McGraw-Hill education specialist, will demonstrate how to apply reading techniques to different academic fields, including civics.

Bloomfield Public Library  
90 Broad St, Bloomfield, NJ 07003, 2<sup>nd</sup> fl Boardroom  
Tuesday, Aug. 26, 2014  
3:00-4:30 and 6:00-7:30 pm

#### "Teaching Vocabulary to the English Language Learner," with Nora Devine,

LVA tutor and reading specialist- master's degree candidate

Bloomfield Public Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> fl Boardroom  
Tues. Sep 9, 1:00-2:30 pm

### Tutor Training Workshops

Clifton City Hall  
900 Clifton Ave, Clifton, NJ 07013  
Saturdays, 12-4 pm  
September 6, 13, 20, 27, 2014

Bloomfield Public Library  
90 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ 07003  
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1-4 pm  
October 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 2014