



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



We just wrapped up two 10-week sessions of ESL classes at Berkeley College in Clifton and have started new classes in Paterson. See our Berkeley College photos on Page 3.

The Insider

Greetings LVA family.

It's almost that time. On Tuesday, October 20th, we'll gather for our **Annual Awards Ceremony**, the once-per-year opportunity to meet and hear the stories of a large number of students, tutors, teachers, advocates, board members, staff and others who work hard to improve adult literacy. We invite you to celebrate with us. Light refreshments served. Details attached to this e-newsletter and also available at <http://www.lvaep.org/lvaawardsandrec/>

The New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning, (NJALL) is holding its second annual adult learner writing contest and we're hoping that you encourage our many talented students to enter. Three awards will be granted in each category: fiction, non-fiction, memoir writing, poetry and photography. Winners receive cash prizes, the opportunity to have their work published in NJALL's online magazine and a chance to read their selections at the organization's annual conference in April. Details at www.njall.org/

It was a pleasure to work this year with Berkeley College and Sussex Educational Foundation, who joined us in offering two 10-week programs of ESL classes in Clifton. The sessions wrapped up last month ('final day photos' are posted on Page 3). We'll continue to offer similar classes at the Passaic Public Library and, for the first time, a beginner-level class at the Paterson Public Library, which started October 5.

We are both proud and humbled to learn that Literacy New Jersey has selected us to receive two annual awards. Andrea Mego, a student at our program at Berkeley College and a coordinator of LVA's English-Spanish language exchange, is slated to receive the 2015 Award for Student Excellence. And LVA Essex and Passaic Counties will receive the Alice M. Leppert Award for Outstanding Affiliate Achievement for the Tutor Support Workshop program launched two years ago.

We encourage our tutors to meet with students in small groups. It's not only easier for tutors, it helps meet the huge demand for literacy help in Essex and Passaic Counties. If you'd like to learn more about the dynamics of small group instruction, please call the office and we'll arrange for you to sit in on a training workshop when group instruction is covered. Thank you for being awesome volunteers!

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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Andrea Mego is an LVA student, office volunteer, Spanish language coordinator of our English-Spanish Language Exchange, and now an award winner.

Getting to Know Us

**Andrea Mego, LVA student,
Berkeley College, Clifton**

Ordering a cup of coffee, a simple task, becomes a daunting task for someone with no English speaking skills. This proved to be the last straw for Peruvian-born and raised Andrea Mego; it led her to learn English.

There were certainly more critical reasons too. "I was brought to the United States with my family because I did not want to leave my mother and sister alone in a new country," Andrea said. "Now, I am the head of my family. This situation has made me stronger and I know I have to depend on myself."

Neither relative spoke English; it was all on Andrea's shoulders. A shy young woman, embarrassed to ask a stranger for a bus schedule when she first arrived in the United States, Andrea has become a confident individual. "At first I was worried about people noticing my broken English, but now I am proud of it because it means I know two languages," Andrea said.

She became a role model for her younger sister and was able to help her mother make the difficult transition to their new home. She assisted with everything from filling out forms at the doctor's office to guiding her mother through the complicated application process that leads to US permanent residence. "I am helping my mother challenge herself to learn English," Andrea said.

Last June, Andrea began her ESL studies with Literacy Volunteers of America in our satellite program with Berkeley College in Clifton. Her skills have advanced so well that she has become an LVA office volunteer and the Spanish language coordinator for the English-Spanish Language Exchange, a pilot project she helped launched for LVA, Essex and Passaic counties.

Later this month, Andrea will receive the 2015 Award for Student Excellence from Literacy New Jersey at the organization's annual conference.

Having become proficient in English, she has set many new goals for herself. She is now enrolled in college and plans to study journalism. Andrea remarked, "I see writing as a way to get a positive message out to other immigrants who are trying to find their way in a new country."

"There are hundreds of languages in the world, but a smile speaks them all."

Tutor Support Workshops

Please RSVP

**"The Graphic Novel: A Valuable Source for Readers,"
with Erik Jacobson**

Bloomfield Public Library Theater

90 Broad St, Bloomfield, NJ 07003

Tuesday, November 10, 2015, 2:00-3:30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

Please spread the word!

Montclair Public Library

50 South Fullerton Ave, Montclair, NJ 07042

Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

October 19, 21, 26, 28, November 2, 5,* 2015

*Final class meets 1-4 pm on Thurs, Nov. 5

In the News

To view the following story, copy and paste the highlighted websites into an internet search

Bob Laubach, pioneer in adult literacy education, has died
'Dr. Bob,' 96, founder of 'New Readers Press' and 'News for You,' is credited with helping millions of adults learn to read and write in 200 languages. <http://bit.ly/1MkXwWk>

***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 through our website – <http://www.lvanewark.org/donate2olva/> or by mailing us a check.



Sussex Educational Foundation, Berkeley College, & LVA Essex and Passaic Counties Adult Education Program

A successful ESL program depends on a bunch of factors, including but not limited to the experience of administrators, the expertise of teachers and the commitment of students who often have to wrestle with childcare and job demands in order to attend class. One often-overlooked factor in keeping a student enrolled in school is the support and encouragement of classmates.

That was one reason cited by students who last month completed ESOL classes at Berkeley College in Clifton. Students attended class for two hours per day, four days per week, for 10 weeks. The program was run by Berkeley, LVA, Essex and Passaic Counties, and Sussex Educational Foundation.

"We have people in my class from Mexico, Peru, Colombia, India, the Dominican Republic and Turkey," said Kevin, 21, a Mexican immigrant who completed the beginning-level course. *"I like that. They help me practice English."*

It was the second 10-week ESOL session offered at the school. Some students said they enrolled, or re-enrolled, to better obtain jobs or obtain better jobs, to continue in school or to become citizens.

"Doors open for you when you are a citizen," said Mariella, a student from Ecuador who completed the advanced ESL class. She studied law in Ecuador and hopes to study social work in a U.S. college. For now, she works as a captain in a banquet hall. *"We came to this country to work and we work hard,"* Mariella said.