



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



Students Gabriela (left) and Derynnet (right) shown with their tutor Mary Hughes. Don't miss our workshop next month on working with multiple students in small groups. Details on Page 2. Photo by Greg Johnson, Stefan Photo.

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The Insider

Greetings LVA family.

It's been an incredible winter! If you managed to get through it without too much anxiety you're one of the lucky ones. With an average temperature of 22-degrees, February 2015 was the 6th coldest month in New Jersey since 1895, according to the state climatologist. Special thanks to all the volunteers and students who did their best to meet despite severe weather challenges. You're a hearty bunch.

The March tutor support workshop, "Grammar Basics for You and Your Student," which was postponed due to a weather-related library closing, has been rescheduled for Tuesday. Details are posted on the next page and on our website, which lists upcoming workshops through June 2015.

WIOA: There are signs everywhere that the economy is improving, according to published reports: 2014 was a record-breaking year for US stock markets, the rate of unemployment fell, and jobs were added at a pace not seen since the Clinton years. Even Walmart, the nation's largest private employer, hiked wages for workers. But not everyone is benefitting. Among those left out of the surge in the economy are low-skilled adults, including adults with low literacy skills, like those served by LVA, as well as adults whose technology skills have not kept pace with today's job market. Last July, Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) which refocuses efforts on workforce development, adult education, ESOL, and vocational rehabilitation with an aim to better prepare adults for the 21st century workplace. Exactly how these efforts will affect local adult education programs – whether they do or don't prepare learners to get started in careers – is not yet known. New Jersey, for example, will submit a state plan in March 2016 to the US Department of Labor for approval. In the meantime, we can keep up via the sites below:

New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning (NJALL):
<http://njallwioa.blogspot.com/>

US Department of Education: <http://1.usa.gov/1ErW14e>

National Skills Coalition report: <http://bit.ly/18JTdmD>

World Education/U.S. "WIOA, What Now?" March 20 webinar:
<http://www.collegetransition.org/resources/webinars.wioa.html>



Getting to Know Us

Lissent, LVA student
Jalaire Craver, tutor

Lissent's star shined brightly at LVA's annual awards ceremony last October, where he was honored as Essex County's top student. And his star hasn't dimmed since.

Two months ago, Lissent added another achievement to his long list of literacy goals, one he has pursued vigorously for about a year: He became a US citizen.

Now he can vote, he can bring family members to the US and he can qualify for a federal job - - privileges generally granted only to citizens. And one more thing, an item of particular importance to Lissent: He can bypass lines for immigrants at US Customs when traveling home from his native Jamaica.

"I went to Jamaica one time and, when I got back, the line at Customs was so long, about two hours or more," Lissent recalled. "I said 'I'm not going through this.' The citizens, they just scan their cards and they go through."

Lissent had little opportunity for formal schooling in Jamaica. But he always realized the importance of education for his children. Lissent raised three children who are all college-educated, and have gone on to successful careers. Their emotional support of their father is unwavering.

Lissent is a dedicated learner who meets with his tutor at least four hours per week. "He'd meet every night if he could," said his tutor, Jalaire Craver. His dedication led him to win LVA's Essex County Student of the Year award last year. Although he's been an LVA student for more than five years, Lissent only recently decided to study for his citizenship test.

Jalaire said she was surprised when he came to her and said, "I am going to apply for citizenship in a few weeks." She scrambled to pull resources together to help him study.

"Writing was a huge challenge for him, and we worked very hard on that," she said. Their efforts paid off.

"They asked me six questions," Lissent said of his January 21 citizenship test. "After I got them right, he asked me to read, asked me where I was from and he asked me to write. Then he said 'You got it!'"

The next challenge Lissent set for himself was to read a novel. Because he had become fascinated with American history, through studying for his citizenship test, he chose a historical novel. He and his book have become inseparable as he reads it on the bus, in route to his to his job as a welder.

Goooooal! Another goal achieved by Lissent, LVA's 2014 Student of the Year for Essex County, who recently passed the US citizenship test. Lissent (right), meets about four hours each week with tutor Jalaire Craver.

Tutor Support Workshops

Please RSVP

"Grammar Basics for You and Your Student,"

with Elizabeth Salerno

Bloomfield Public Library

90 Broad St, Bloomfield, NJ 07003

Library Theater

Tuesday, March 24, 2015, 1:00-2:30 pm

"Tips on Tutoring Multiple Students in a Small Group,"

with Mary O'Connor

Bloomfield Public Library

90 Broad St, Bloomfield, NJ 07003

2nd floor Boardroom

Tuesday, April 7, 2015, 1:00-2:30 pm

"Using Age Appropriate Books in Adult Literacy,"

with Perrine Robinson-Geller

Bloomfield Public Library

90 Broad St, Bloomfield, NJ 07003

2nd floor Boardroom

Thursday, May 14, 2015, 1:00-2:30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

Spread the word!

West Orange Public Library

46 Mount Pleasant Avenue

Wednesdays and Fridays, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

April 15, 22, 24, 29, May 6, 8, 2015

Literacy opens a wide door to life. Help us keep that door open with your donation!

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