



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



"Grammar Basics for You and Your Student" was an extremely popular tutor support workshop offered by Elizabeth Salerno last month. So popular, in fact, that we are "in negotiations" for a possible Part Two. Stay tuned.

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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The Insider

Greetings LVA family.

We've been incredibly fortunate to have some of the brightest lights in New Jersey's adult education community give up their time to present monthly professional development workshops that support the efforts of our tutors. They include Elizabeth Salerno, who in March showed us ways to teach grammar basics; and Mary O'Conner, who last week shared her insights on tutoring multiple students in small groups. Two more very interesting workshops are coming this spring: Literacy New Jersey President Perrine Robinson-Geller on using age appropriate books in adult education; and our chief trainer Nina Peyser on pronunciation and accent reduction. Don't miss these opportunities to learn, share and network. Details on Page 2.

Have a student who wants to attend college and could use some help with the costs? The New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning (NJALL) awards two scholarships per year to adults who have earned a high school diploma or equivalency through a NJ adult education program. Apply by April 30 for a scholarship that provides up to \$600 per semester for full-time enrollment in higher education, to a maximum of \$4,800. Details at: <http://bit.ly/1CUU7pz>

In the News

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

"The dollars and cents of a basic education."

Huffington Post

Ralph da Costa Nunez, president of the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, makes the case for offering adult basic education programs in NYC homeless shelters. The initiative would cost \$9 million but save \$804 million in wasted human potential, he writes. "It's unrealistic to expect someone lacking literacy skills to wade into a grim job market and succeed." <http://huff.to/1buSasq>

"Could your teen pass a foreign language test?"

Lafayette Journal and Courier

Indiana legislature considers a bill to add a special certificate to the diplomas of high school graduates who pass foreign language fluency tests. Legislators hope the bill, if passed, would encourage secondary schools to invest more in foreign language education. Still, doubts exist whether students who don't speak a foreign language at home would pass such a test. <http://on.jconline.com/1aToCV6>



Congrats to Lidia, a mother of four and grandmother of 13, who passed the US citizenship test in February. Lidia is shown here with her tutor, Susan Bogda.

Tutor Support Workshops

Please RSVP

“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

“Pronunciation and Accent Reduction,” with Nina Peyser

Bloomfield Public Library
90 Broad St, Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Library Theater
Tuesday, June 9, 2015, 1:00-2:30 pm
Please bring a small hand mirror and an audio recorder
(smart phone, tape recorder, etc.; we will share devices)

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

Maplewood Memorial Library, Hilton Branch
1688 Springfield Avenue
Saturdays, 10 am – 1:00 pm
May 9, 16, 30, June 6, 13, 20, 2015

Getting to Know Us

**Lidia, LVA student
Susan Bogda, tutor**

In a federal building in Newark, Lidia waited nervously for the results of her US citizenship test. She'd studied vigorously with her tutor. She answered each of the examiner's questions. There was nothing left to do but remain in the examination room and sweat it out.

It took forever, or so it seemed, but when the results were in, Lidia, one of LVA's newest US citizens, was elated. "I am so excited," she said after passing the test in February. As soon as she could, she called her tutor. "I was so thrilled but not at all surprised," said Susan Bogda, who tutors Lidia and two other LVA students. "Lidia is very dedicated, loves to learn and is using her newly-acquired language skills to help her grandchildren."

The test requires that applicants demonstrate an ability to read, write, and speak words commonly used in the English language. And there's a civics portion: Applicants must have an understanding of U.S. history and government.

With the test done, Susan and Lidia now focus on grammar, particularly prepositions and verb tenses. They enjoy working together on Language Experience Stories, accounts that students usually write about their lives and experiences.

Lidia has plenty to write about. She came to the United States 16 years ago from Ecuador; a move she said has been "very, very good for my family." The mother of four lives with her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren. Her son is a policeman in Ecuador, where Lidia was born and worked as a first-grade teacher. She works at Stop and Shop supermarket and plans to land a position in a school as a teaching assistant. She enjoys music and is teaching herself to play the guitar and sing in English.

As for her education, Lidia takes things a step further than most English language students and works on mastering "Voices of Freedom," a civics textbook. "She knows how important it is to have a complete understanding of how the government works," said Susan.

To practice conversation, they often discuss the daily routines of childcare and parenting. Lidia said these exercises would help her prepare for her future job. "If I am going to live and teach in the United States, I want to learn as much as I can," Lidia said.

Donate and 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/donateolva/>