



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



Andrea, standing, an LVA office volunteer from Peru, and Cecibel, a student from Ecuador, lead a conversation in Spanish for our English-Spanish Language Exchange pilot program.

The Insider

Greetings LVA family.

We love to try new things here at Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex and Passaic Counties. Admittedly, they don't always work as well as we'd planned, at first. Fortunately, we have the support of a large community of tutors and other volunteers, teachers, students, and literacy advocates to help fine-tune them. Your support keeps us going.

Here are two pilot programs we're developing:

The English-Spanish Language Exchange: This pilot project is a meetup where Spanish-speaking LVA students become instructors who, for a half-hour, speak Spanish with LVA tutors who desperately try to keep up. For the next half-hour, the conversation continues in English. We've spent the last two or three months ironing out some of the glitches and have a bunch more to work out. But if you have a bit of patience, possess some knowledge of Spanish, or have a Spanish-speaking LVA student who might benefit from a conversation exchange, why not give us a ring? We generally meet Thursday afternoons at the Bloomfield Public Library.

Tutor mentorship program: Remember the anxiety you felt before meeting your students for the first time? Well, we're training new volunteers who may experience the same unease about getting started. If you're able to field a few questions from a new tutor or trainee and, if possible, allow one to sit in on one session with you and your students, that could mean a lot to a new volunteer. Experienced tutors needed.

In the News

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

"As immigration reshapes Indianapolis, schools struggle to keep up," IndyStar

When Pakistan-born Mariam Khan was studying to teach English as a new language, she imagined herself teaching children in other countries. Now, roughly a month into her first job, Khan instructs kids from around the world, but she does it from an Indianapolis elementary school where students speak dozens of languages other than English. Her school faces the same dilemma as other schools around the state, and some parts of the country. Amid rapid growth in English language learners, Indiana legislators have cut funding for teaching them. <http://bit.ly/1Ozpta6>

In the News is continued on Page 2.

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
lvassesex@verizon.net
- Jorge Chavez -Data Processing Coordinator
lvanewark@verizon.net
- Debbie Graham -Education Coordinator
lvapassaic@verizon.net
- Marisol Ramirez -Student Coordinator
lvapassaic@verizon.net



Nancy hopes her studies will help her become a teacher in the US, as she was in her native Peru. The LVA student and her tutor often use music lyrics as a literacy tool.

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, 2:00-3:30 pm

Please bring a small hand mirror and an audio recorder (smart phone, tape recorder, etc; we’ll share devices)

Tutor Training Workshops

Maplewood Memorial Library, Hilton Branch

1688 Springfield Avenue

Saturdays, 10 am – 1:00 pm

May 9, 16, 30, June 6, 13, 20, 2015

Free NJALL Webinars

The New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning will offer five free webinars this spring, including “Exploring Digital Resources in Adult and Family Literacy Programs” on May 12, and “Teaching Writing Using Authentic Contexts,” on May 18. Webinar descriptions and registration information available at: www.njall.org

Getting to Know Us

Nancy, LVA student

Phyllis Lager, tutor

Put “Man of La Mancha” on your lesson plan lately? Probably not. But what may seem unusual to you and me is common fare for Phyllis Lager and her student, Nancy, who regularly turn to music to study grammar, vocabulary, and idioms.

You see, Phyllis has a background in theater management and has worked productions on Broadway, off-Broadway, and in summer stock. Nancy loves music and, after a long night shift at work, finds music and lyrics to be an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon in class.

So what could be more natural for this team, which includes student Dasia from Honduras, than to make music lyrics a part of the weekly lesson plan? They’ve reviewed everything from “How Deep is the Ocean,” a song written by Irving Berlin in 1932, to “Hello,” (“Is it me you’re looking for?”), released in 1984 by Lionel Richie.

And they may be on to something. Some studies suggest that song lyrics can play an important role in literacy development.

Outside of music, Nancy’s life is filled with family – her husband and two sons – as well as work and studies. Her boys were in grade school when the family emigrated from Peru 12 years ago. Today each is a high school graduate. Her youngest, Gianth, recently gained a much sought after apprenticeship in an electrician’s union.

The transition to a new country is often hardest for adults in immigrant families. Nancy, for example, was a teacher of first and second-grades in Peru. In New Jersey, she works nights as a home health aide. When her shift ends, she takes afternoon GED classes at New Community Corporation in Newark, and makes time to meet with her LVA tutor. “I am tired, but I love to study English,” Nancy said. That love will likely lead to literacy.

In the News

(continued from Page 1)

“What’s a teacher to do when a complex text is too difficult for some readers?” Literacy Daily (2 parts)

In 2007 US governors and education chiefs concluded high school graduates did not have the literacy or math skills needed for college or workplace success. This lack of proficiency meant many students had to take as much as a year’s worth of remedial work before they could start a genuine curriculum or assume their rightful place in the workplace. <http://bit.ly/1IyJv2t>

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/donate/lva/> or by mailing us a check.