



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



The final day of ESL classes last month at the Hilton Branch of the Maplewood Memorial Library, was a celebration and sharing of cultures through music, dance, and food. Above, ESL teacher Jasmeet Kaur performs a traditional Indian dance. Student dances followed.

The Insider

Greetings LVA Family.

Indian classical dance is one of the world's oldest dance forms, dating back 3,000 years and featuring dancers in colorful costumes who use rhythmic foot work, abstract body movements, facial expressions and hand gestures to convey stories of faith and folklore. It's not something you see in the typical ESL class but there's nothing typical about the ESL classes at the Hilton Branch, Maplewood Memorial Library.

Last month we wrapped up 10-week-long, state-funded ESL classes with our hosts in Maplewood, and at the Bellevue Avenue Branch of the Montclair Public Library. We also completed three levels of classes at Berkeley College in Newark, funded by the school. Congrats to our graduates!

At Hilton Branch, LVA instructor Jasmeet Kaur, encouraged students to share something from their cultures on the final day of class. It quickly became a dance party! Students from around the world celebrated their traditions with native culinary dishes, music and dance, using a beginning level of English, the only language that many have in common, to share a joke, a story and a few friendly jibes.

Traditional dance demonstrations were given by Jasmeet, a teacher who has lived in several countries, speaks five languages, and is a skilled traditional Indian dancer, and students from Costa Rica and Haiti. Photos on Page 4.

We're about to throw a party of our own when, on Wednesday, October 19, we recognize the hard work and achievements of our students, tutors, teachers, and other adult literacy advocates at LVA's Annual Awards Ceremony. Join us at the East Orange Public Library from 6:00-8:00 pm, hear some heart-warming life stories from students, have a few refreshments, and help us celebrate. Details on Page 2.

The New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning (NJALL) seeks submissions for its 2017 annual adult learner writing contest. Several LVA students won last year so please encourage your students to enter. Details at: goo.gl/G3UIZp

In the News

To view the following stories, copy and paste the highlighted website into an internet search bar.

The ABCs of boosting adult literacy, The Virginian-Pilot, Good snapshot of what we do, told through the story of a 57-year man learning to write the alphabet. goo.gl/Aa2JOJ

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 cbarcelos@lvaep.org
Russell Ben Ali	-Recruitment & Training Coordinator rbenali@lvaep.org
Jorge Chavez	-Data Processing Coordinator jchavez@lvaep.org
Debbie Graham	-Education Coordinator dgraham@lvaep.org
Mary O'Connor	-Trainer & Tutor Support Specialist moconnor@lvaep.org
Marisol Ramirez	-Student Coordinator mramirez@lvaep.org



Getting to Know Us

Cemal, LVA student

It was the start of an exciting summer for Cemal (pronounced “Jemal”), a Turkish language scholar and university professor from Istanbul. First he traveled to Boston for his first educational conference abroad. Then he headed to New Jersey to enroll in LVA’s intermediate ESL class at Berkeley College in Newark that started on July 5th.

Then all hell broke out back home.

On July 15, a rouge faction within the Turkish military staged an attempted coup which left about 245 people dead and more than 2,000 were wounded. The government quickly regained power and imposed a state emergency. It fired or suspended more than 100,000 civil servants, including judges, prosecutors, and teachers. Another 70,000 people were arrested, including soldiers and journalists.

It’s not unusual for foreign students to be seriously affected by events at home but, even as those cases go, Cemal’s is unusual. His passport, a special document issued to educators, was declared invalid and he was ordered home.

“All people who stay or live abroad have to go back,” explained Cemal who hopes to one day teach Turkish in the U.S. “But I want to improve my English, and this was the first time I studied English abroad. It was a very important chance for my future academic life.”

The scenario is also bleak for his wife, a psychologist, and their two sons, ages 17 and 11. As the spouse of an educator, Cemal’s wife had the same special issue passport as he. When she sought a new one, the police told her that her husband had not returned to Turkey after the coup and that she was suspected of trying to flee the country.

“Anyone suspected of ‘escape’ is suspected of being involved in the coup,” Cemal added. “She was very upset, she was worried. She said ‘If I want to escape why would I come to the police?’ She cried and cried and cried. Every day she’s afraid.”

Midway through Turkey’s state of emergency, Cemal remains in the U.S. He continues to study English but is unsure of his next move. His wife refuses to leave their Istanbul apartment and finds little feeling of safety there. “There is a chance they will arrest her for trying to escape,” Cemal said. “She is afraid that the police will come to our apartment looking for her, looking for anything.”

Cemal, a student at LVA’s evening ESL class, part of a joint program with Berkeley College, Newark, aims to become fluent in English.

LVA Annual Awards Ceremony

Wednesday, October 19, 2016, 6:00-8:00 pm

East Orange Public Library
21 South Arlington Avenue, 2nd floor
East Orange, NJ 07018

Family and friends invited. **Please RSVP**

Tutor Support Workshops

“Overcoming the Fear Factor in Writing,”

with Catherine Mitch

Bloomfield Public Library, 2nd floor Boardroom
90 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Monday, October 17, 2016, 1:00-2:30 pm

“Getting Started,”

with Mary O’Connor, for beginning tutors.

Bloomfield Public Library, 2nd floor Boardroom
90 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Tuesday, November 1, 2016, 1:00-2:30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

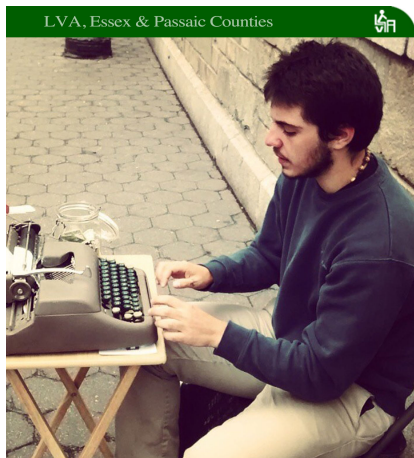
Bloomfield Public Library

By Nina Peyser

Bloomfield Public Library, 2nd floor Boardroom
90 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Mondays & Thursdays, 1:00-4:00 pm
November 17. 21. 28. December 1. 5. & 8. 2016

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/donatetolva/> or by mailing us a check.



Pierce Logan, 22, at his street side poetry store, where he produces on-the-spot poetry and ballads for paying customers. He's also a 24-hours per month LVA tutor.

Low English skills at school start linked to behavioral difficulties. *Science Daily*

Children who enter reception with poor English language skills - whether it's their first language or an additional language -- are more likely to have social, emotional and behavioral difficulties in later years, finds a new study co-authored by UCL and Royal Holloway and funded by Wellcome.

The research, published in *Child Development*, found the cognitive advantages of bilingualism tend to help with academic achievement only if English skills are sufficient at school entry for the child to be fully engaged.

The authors compared children speaking English as a second language with monolingual peers with comparable English language proficiency. Academic achievement was similar in reception, while those speaking English as an additional language displayed fewer emotional, social and behavioral difficulties, and were more likely to meet academic targets by Year 2.

But the researchers caution that many children speaking English as an additional language still fell short of class averages in Year 2, particularly those with weaker English skills at reception.

"We anticipated that kids who had poor English skills at the start due to a lack of exposure at home would be doing well by Year 2, but actually, their poor outcomes persisted. They didn't just grow out of it with more time in the English school system," said Professor Courtenay Norbury (UCL Psychology & Language Sciences), the senior author of the paper.

Reprinted from Science Daily. For full story, copy and paste the following link into an Internet search: goo.gl/pc5061

Getting to Know Us (cont.)

Pierce Logan, LVA tutor

Pierce Logan is not your typical 22-year-old. He's a teacher, an LVA tutor and a poet-entrepreneur with a unique sideline: He cranks out on-the-spot poetry and ballads for paying customers at a street side poetry store.

Whenever time permits, when he's not tutoring ESL students for LVA or teaching them at a Newark school that is, Pierce can be found at his portable poetry shop, set up anywhere from New York's Central Park to the sidewalk outside the Starbucks in South Orange. And he still manages to put in 24 hours per month as a tutor.

His novel idea of sidewalk rhymes-for-sale began three years ago. "In October 2013, I got the idea of a poetry store. I first set up shop in Central Park and it has blossomed," Pierce said.

This modern day bard sets up his 1950 Smith-Corona typewriter on a weathered table and takes requests for poems from passersby. Customers choose the topic for their poem. "They tend to request poems about the people they are with, a special occasion, or something very relevant in their lives," Pierce said. "It is a very unique interaction." Satisfied customers walk away with a personalized, autographed poem, and he adds some cash to his donation jar. Pierce's poetry can be found at his website: qwertypoetry.com

Pierce began his love of the written word at a boarding school in rural Vermont. "I learned a lot about myself there," he said. Pierce was inspired by an English teacher that became interested in him when she found out they shared a love for poetry.

Pierce was also inspired by Bob Dylan, although he would have never admitted that to his parents at the time. "I grew up listening to Dylan. That is all that my father played. When you are a teenager, you don't want to have anything to do with your parents' music."

Upon graduating from high school, Pierce attended community college with a concentration in international studies. Here, he became interested in other cultures. Growing up, he had a lot of friends from diverse backgrounds and that curiosity prompted him to travel to Brazil and learn Portuguese.

Pierce's initial goal was to teach abroad, but for now he has put that on hold. Tutoring students from diverse backgrounds with LVA has temporarily satisfied that need to visit other countries. He is also a teacher at Cultural Center for Language Studies in Newark. As for the future, Pierce said, "I really want to work with different communities. I am interested in language and I want to be able to help in different places. I see the Peace Corps in the future at some point."

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

From July to September 2016, dozens of students entered ESL classes at Berkeley College in Newark, in a joint program run with LVA. Congrats to all who stuck it out for 10-weeks of four night classes each week. Many of them expressed a desire to further their careers. Here's what a few of them told us.

Alberto, an intermediate level ESL student and a native of Puebla, Mexico, hopes the Berkeley College ESL class would help him get started on the road to a new career. "This is a big opportunity for me," said Alberto, a Passaic resident who works 12-hours per day operating a machine that carves out heavy sidewalk stones. "My goal is to start a career," he added. "Maybe I can become an electrician. But first I have to improve my English. It's hard; the language is different, very different. But I'm committed. I have to look for new opportunities for me and for my family."

Martha, an intermediate level student from Riobamba, Ecuador, prepares sandwiches and coffee in a restaurant during the day. But her ambition is to become a nurse, a field she studied for in her country, and she's willing to go to school at night and work hard to realize her dream. "When you don't speak English in this country, finding the work you want to do is hard. It's hard but it's not impossible. I try to rise. In this country, I'm pursuing my dream."

Amy, of Lima, Peru, worked her way up from a fast food McDonald's cook of fries and burgers to a swing shift manager at the same restaurant. She wants to use her experience to study business in college and open a store, much like her sister has done with a deli in Bloomfield. Learning English during the past five years has been a struggle, she said, and she finally decided to augment her online English studies through Rosetta Stone and Englishcourse.com with a real class. "I prefer a class," Amy said. "I can talk with other people, I can practice my English with them. The teacher helped us to speak, to read, and to write. I learned more here."

Edder, a student in Berkeley's beginning level class, has a career goal different than most. "I would like to join the army," Edder. "Defending this country and myself is my passion and I can only do this through this English class, In order for me to achieve my dreams, I have to improve my English. I am feeling proud of myself because in a very few weeks I felt improvement."



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Adult Literacy & Community Library Partnership Pilot Program

Last month we wrapped up 10-week-long, state-funded ESL classes with our hosts at the Hilton Branch of the Maplewood Memorial Library, and the Bellevue Avenue Branch of the Montclair Public Library. The last day of our classes is typically marked by a celebration of the diverse backgrounds of our students. At the Hilton Branch the celebration included culinary dishes from China to Haiti, prepared by our students, and plenty of dancing. **Congratulations to all our graduates!**

