



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



Stephanie Mazzeo-Caputo, a career coach, LVA tutor, and retired Human Resources recruiter, led "Resume Readiness for the Adult Learner," a tutor support workshop last month.

The Insider

Greetings LVA Family.

The State of Literacy: It's certainly a challenging time for anyone involved with adult education in New Jersey, where new state requirements and budget cuts can seem to complicate the task of teaching adults to speak, read, and write English. Many of us have questions, grievances, ideas, or simply want more information about our roles in adult education. If you're in this group, please don't miss "***The State of Literacy in New Jersey***," an informational session and open discussion on August 4th for tutors, students, trainers, and others. Details appear on the next page.

New Saturday location: With the Bloomfield Public Library closed on Saturdays in summer, the town's department of parks and recreation has granted us space to tutor on Saturdays, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. If you're a tutor in need of Saturday morning space, or can adjust your schedule to use the location, please contact our office.

New workshop for students: Many of you know that students in adult education programs in New Jersey are required to increase their instruction time from eight to 16 hours per month, beginning July 1. While we look for ways to comply with the new rules, we welcome your ideas. Tara Murphy, an LVA tutor and school librarian, came up with this beauty: A story time hour that would teach English to adults and their young children through stories, songs, and other activities. Sessions start July 25; details on next page.

In the News

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

"A teacher mispronouncing a student's name can have a lasting impact." PBS.org

Despite a national increase in the overall graduation rate, the dropout rate for foreign-born and immigrant students remains above 30-percent, three times that of U.S.-born white students. Some experts attribute the high dropout rate to a divide between the immigrants and their English-speaking teachers, one that often starts when a teacher won't take the time to learn the correct pronunciation of a student's name. In an extreme case, a teacher in Wayne Township, NJ lost her tenure status and her job in 2015 for mocking a student's name on Facebook. <http://to.pbs.org/27w0KzH>

"Growing Number Of Seniors Need ESL Skills."

A Monmouth County senior center tackles the issue of teaching ESL to a surging population of senior citizens. <http://bit.ly/29CPw7d>

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 mr Ramirez@lvaep.org



Maribel, center, relies on her daughter, Yaritza, for the inspiration to improve her English. She is shown here with Yaritza, left, and tutor Laura McLean.

*New: Student Support Workshop

“Learning English Together with Stories” with Tara Murphy

A unique opportunity for LVA students with children to learn English, from a beginner-to-intermediate level, through children's stories, songs, and activities. Designed for adults with children in pre-school and kindergarten, but children through 3rd-grade are welcome.

Bloomfield Public Library, Children's Library
90 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Mondays, 1:00-2:00 pm, July 25-August 15, 2016

The State of Literacy in New Jersey

Informational session & open discussion to provide an overall look at the state of literacy in NJ and how we fit into it.

Bloomfield Public Library, Library Theater
90 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Thursday, August 4, 1:00-2:30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

Bloomfield Public Library
90 Broad Street, 2nd fl Boardroom
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Mondays & Wednesdays, 10:30 am – 1:30 pm
September 12-28, 2016

Montclair Public Library
50 South Fullerton Avenue
Montclair, NJ 07042
Saturdays, 12:15-3:45 pm, October 1-29, 2016

Getting to Know Us

Maribel, LVA student

When it comes to her studies, Maribel is an avid learner who, like most students, could sometimes use a helping hand. And, for this childcare worker from Puerto Rico who struggles to express herself in English, that hand often comes from her adult daughter, Yaritza.

Yaritza encourages her mom to attend weekly sessions with a tutor at the Bloomfield Public Library. She rides with her mom to every session, after Maribel lifts Yaritza's small frame into a seat in the family car.

Yaritza was born with arthrogryposis multiplex congenital (AMC), a disease of newborns that results in decreased flexibility of the joints. She was not expected to live more than four months. But, under Maribel's care, Yaritza thrived. She eventually finished high school and, with her mom's encouragement, earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in social work at Rutgers-University Newark. Maribel often accompanied her to classes.

“Mom dedicated herself to me,” Yaritza said. “It is my turn to give back.” Their partnership is unique and beneficial to both.

“The daughter is the one who makes sure the mother gets here,” said Laura McLean, a retired banker and Maribel's tutor. “She's made slow but steady progress,” she said of Maribel.

Maribel came to LVA so she could communicate in English with Yaritza's doctors. She has a good ear for English but struggles to speak it. Maribel and Laura engage in role-play scenarios that mimic everyday life, such as calling her daughter's doctors. They practice identifying words and using them in sentences. They also work on leisurely tasks, like calling theatres to learn when shows start and restaurants to make dinner reservations.

When it comes to dinner, Maribel favors foods from her native Puerto Rico. There she helped her father run a farm that produced yams, batatas, yucca, and mangos. Maribel arranged and collected the fees when they delivered their produce. Her favorite dishes are rice and pigeon peas and pasteles. “We enjoy cooking together,” Maribel said, as she beamed at her smiling daughter during a recent interview.

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.



Susan Craig knows first-hand what it takes to succeed in a country where you are not a fluent speaker. She's shown here with students Fabiola (center) and Hema (right)

Everybody has a story: Tutoring Miguel taught his teacher something about life

By Ed Beck
The Columbian, June 22, 2016

Many years ago when I was living in Los Angeles, I had the opportunity to teach English as a Second Language classes to the many groups of recently arrived immigrants from Central America. These students came to class with little formal education — many of them unable to read or write their native language.

They quickly learned that some knowledge of English was a great advantage in getting a decent job, and also needed to just cope with daily living among a mostly English-speaking community. Many came to class shortly after crossing the border from Mexico. Many were young men fleeing the horrendous civil wars in Central America. Many were like Miguel.

Miguel was a teenage boy from El Salvador forced to leave that country by his family to avoid a certain death. Young men and boys in El Salvador were forced into fighting for one side or the other in that civil war. With most of the fathers already killed in the war, mothers of the remaining boys faced the heartbreaking decision to send their sons out of the country in hopes that they could live out a normal life in the United States.

Most ESL students came to evening classes at a local church school. We reviewed some basic English grammar and vocabulary — comparing English words and phrases to the Spanish equivalents. Because time in the evening classes was limited, many students, like Miguel, wanted more practice and attention.

For full story, copy and paste the following website into a Google search.

<http://bit.ly/29HK2cv>

Getting to Know Us (cont.)

Susan Craig, LVA tutor

When Susan Craig started her second stint as a volunteer tutor for Literacy Volunteers of America she was given one student. It wasn't enough. She asked for another, then another and then more. Susan wants to reach as many students as she can and, at LVA, that means using her teaching skills not for one student but a classroom full. "I can't imagine a more satisfying volunteer occupation than watching students learn and grow. Teaching is akin to parenting and watching a child ride off on their two wheeled bicycle for the first time."

She finds that helping her students learn to speak English can be a real confidence-booster for them as they begin to navigate their way in a new country. Susan, who has spent considerable time abroad, grew more understanding of peoples' needs from her own personal experiences in a non-English speaking country.

"One sees themselves as a fully responsible adult in the United States and then finds themselves as a child in their new environment," she said. "I can't tell you how diminishing it is to not be able to understand your surroundings."

Susan began her professional career as a social worker and later became an ESOL teacher in San Francisco. In England, where her husband's job assignment led the couple, she taught ESL and accent reduction. "When I returned from England, I wanted to put my experience to use."

She started volunteering with LVA in Passaic in 2006. She divided her time between LVA and working at Jewish Vocational Services where she worked as an ESL teacher. She recently retired from JVS and jumped into LVA where she meets a group of students every week, without fail.

Susan states her most valuable teaching technique is "show, don't tell." She uses lots of gestures (Total Physical Response) and draws simple stick figures on a whiteboard to convey her ideas. "I guide them," she said, "but they have to transform their ideas into English."

That's all part of the teaching process, which Susan sees as a privilege, not an obligation.

"I get more out of tutoring than I can possibly enumerate," she said. "There's that special, special kick you get when you see a student really getting it."



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

We're so proud of the many students who completed our intensive ESL classes offered at the Passaic Public Library and Berkeley College in Newark. The courses, offered in three levels to beginners, intermediate and advanced students, met four days per week for two hours each day. The last day of class was marked with small celebrations. At Berkeley College, students met in a basement cafeteria and celebrated the end of classes with a potluck dinner of dishes common to their countries of Egypt, Colombia, Pakistan, Russia, the Dominican Republic, and others. Music was provided by a student's cell phone and a Berkeley College administrator was on hand to explain other college options for students.

The intensive classes are popular with students who want to advance their English knowledge in a short time period. Alpaben Rana, a native of India who has a master's degree in mathematics, said that meeting students from many other countries in her Level 1 class at the Passaic Public Library was also beneficial. "I learned more English than ever before," she told her instructor, with instructor Belitza Lopez-Callegari. "The experience is good."

Several students said the classes increased their level of confidence.

"Teacher, my aunt says my English is getting better and better all the time but I thought she was just saying that until I got a cashier's job," student Laribel Rosario, who arrived in the U.S. less than a year ago from the Dominican Republic, told her Level 2 instructor Maureen Cooper. "It gets crazy sometimes but I love having my own money."

Edilma Moreno, a student in Jerry Daniel's Level 3 class at Berkeley College, said the class helped her pass the U.S. citizenship test. "This past May 12 was the most exciting day of the process because I had my final citizenship interview," Edilma said. "I became a U.S. citizen on this day. I feel very proud of the U.S.A. and all the rights I now have because I am a citizen."