



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



Erik Jacobson, of Montclair State University and NJALL, shared practical ideas for encouraging students to write in last month's tutor support workshop "Writing Prompts for the Classroom."

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

The Insider

Greetings LVA Family,

It was a night like few others. The Annual Awards Ceremony saw more than 300 people – students with their families, tutors, teachers, and adult literacy advocates - celebrate the accomplishments of all those who work tirelessly to make LVA Essex & Passaic Counties a viable and affordable educational option for adults. Some in the room freely shared their words of inspiration in speeches that were often moving. "I just want to say 'Read, read and continue literacy,' " said LVA tutor Sherri Smith who, like her students Magali and Maria, was recognized for her achievements. "Thank you for allowing me to make a difference in peoples' lives."

Not long ago three LVA volunteers from the English-Spanish Language Exchange began working on an idea to better connect our community of tutors - - something in addition to, but not covered by other LVA support programs. Partnering with Park United Methodist Church in Bloomfield, tutor Robin Sherman, tutor-trainer Carolyn Van Doren, and tutor Artie Hymowitz last month founded the Tutor Support Group, to provide a chance for volunteers to come together to share experiences and concerns, provide resources and suggestions, and develop ways to best serve students and LVA. The first meeting drew about 15 enthusiastic tutors last month. The group plans to meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month, from 12:30-2:00 pm at Park United, 12 Park Street, at the corner of Broad Street in Bloomfield. The next meeting is scheduled for November 28th. Free parking is available and all LVA tutors are welcome. Bring your lunch.

Thank you Erik Jacobson for last month's wonderful tutor support workshop "Writing Prompts for the Classroom." It was well-received and well-attended. Don't miss Emily Frisch's presentation "Teaching With Technology (Not Just for Millennials)," on Thursday, November 9th. Details on Page 2.

In the News

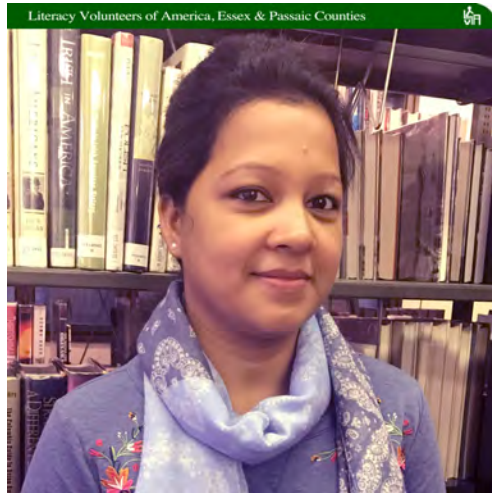
To view the following stories, copy and paste the highlighted website into an internet search bar.

'Let's Waste College on the Old,' The New York Times.
<https://goo.gl/7ZQwvd>

'What 65.5 Million Non-English Speakers Means for America,' The Greenville Sun. <https://goo.gl/pZgze6>

'Erie Otters Redefining the Language Barrier,' The Hockey Writers. <https://goo.gl/gu7s5f>

'Pennsylvania Dutch: A language that persisted,' swissinfo.ch <https://goo.gl/rWpXA1>



After only a few months in the U.S. Sharmin, a student from Bangladesh, has found work as a store cashier and feels comfortable speaking to strangers in English.

Tutor Training Workshops

West Orange Public Library
-by Darnelle Richardson
46 Mount Pleasant Avenue
West Orange, NJ 07052
Mondays, Nov 6, 13, 20, 27 and
Thursday, November 30, 2017, 6:00-9:00 pm

Tutor Support Workshops

'Teaching with Technology (Not just for Millennials)'
with Emily Frisch
Bloomfield Public Library
90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom
Thursday, November 9, 2017, 1:00-2:30 pm

"Understanding Adult Education"
with Cristhian Barcelos
Bloomfield Public Library
90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Thursday, December 7, 2017, 1:00-2:30 pm

Getting to Know Us

Sharmin, LVA student

Sharmin moved to the United States less than a year ago, leaving behind a comfortable life in Bangladesh.

The youngest of 10 children, all professionals in their respective fields, Sharmin had just completed her master's degree in history in the city of Habiganj.

Then she made a life-changing decision. Sharmin married a man that lived in the United States, an accountant who works long hours, and she relocated. "I have lived in New Jersey for 10 months," she said. "My husband has a busy job, and I am alone in the house. I feel very bad, so I want to do something. That is why I have to learn English."

Isolation is not uncommon among new immigrants, particularly those with few English skills. Many Literacy Volunteers of America students report that they are uncomfortable asking for directions, ordering in a restaurant, or shopping in a supermarket.

This was Sharmin only a few months ago. Since she began working with her tutor, Robin, and taking classes in one of the LVA satellite programs, Sharmin has gained tremendous self-confidence. She said, "When I go to a restaurant, it feels comfortable for me."

She now has a job as a cashier in a store. During her first few days as a trainee, Sharmin walked around the store and memorized the location of every single item. "She is a sponge," Robin said. "She will learn something and use it immediately."

Robin said she likes to work on conversation and life skills with Sharmin. "I want to work in areas that she will need in the world, things you might not learn in a textbook."

Sharmin said she plans to continue her weekly tutoring sessions and daily classes.

"My goal is to go back to school, get a better job, raise a family, and be able to communicate with my children's teachers," she said. "You just have to be interested in something so your dreams can come true."

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.



“Literacy Builds Life Skills as Well as Language Skills.”

The New York Times

By Perri Klass, M.D. October 16, 2017

Schoolchildren who read and write at home with their parents may build not only their academic literacy skills, but also other important life and learning skills, a recent study found.

The project, a study by researchers at the University of Washington, followed children for five years, either grades one through five or three through seven. It looked at their reading and writing activities at home, their school progress and their skills, both according to their parents’ reports and according to annual assessments.

In the study, published in May in the *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* by Nicole Alston-Abel and Virginia W. Berninger, parents were asked to rate their children’s ability to pay attention, set goals, control impulses and regulate their level of activity. Dr. Berninger, who is professor emerita of educational psychology at the University of Washington, said, “It’s not just the skills the parents teach at home, it’s also how they help their children’s self-regulation, sometimes called executive function.” Writing, she said, was just as important as reading, and the children in the study tended to struggle harder with writing, and to get more help with those assignments from their parents.

Well over 20 years ago, when we started using books at pediatric checkups, we called it literacy promotion. Then for a while, “school readiness” was the buzzword and the byword, so, not unreasonably, we talked about school readiness. And as more and more attention was drawn to early brain development, it seemed clear, as we talked about getting books into children’s hands and children’s homes, that what we were really trying to do was help foster the language-rich parent-child interactions that build children’s brains.

Reprinted from The New York Times. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search: <https://goo.gl/52H65u>

Learning a new culture is more than studying a language. Tutoring is more than learning techniques. Our ‘Resources’ page covers everything from legal matters, health care, & scholarships for immigrants, to professional development for tutors. Give us a look @:

<http://www.lvaep.org/students.html>

Getting to Know Us

Robin Sherman, LVA tutor

When Robin Sherman was growing up in New York, she had no idea what an impact her grandmother, affectionately known as “Nanny Frances,” would have on the rest of her life.

Nanny Frances was a worldly woman with a vision that reached far beyond her life of a few city blocks in the projects. “She had a heart that embraced people of all colors and creeds,” Robin said. “She loved everyone and didn’t fear anyone.”

Nanny Frances was also, as Robin described, “an original women’s libber.” Robin followed in her grandmother’s footsteps.

Robin graduated from college with a degree in education during the height of the Vietnam War. Teaching jobs were hard to get, as many men were going into the field to avoid the draft, Robin said. “Men got the jobs because it was a way out, so I went into sales,” she explained. “Not many women were in that field.”

After a successful 20-year career selling pre-K through high school textbooks to schools, Robin decided it was time to retire and pursue other interests. “I was looking for volunteer opportunities that would be meaningful to me,” she said. “The culture of the world being the way it was and still is, LVA seemed to be the right fit.”

Robin enjoys the diversity of the students and is currently tutoring Sharmin, a young woman from Bangladesh. “I love her. She is amazing,” Robin said. “She is very appreciative of everything you teach her.”

Robin has taken her role as a tutor to another level. She and two other LVA volunteers recently started a new tutor support group that will meet once per month.

When she is not tutoring, Robin finds time to pursue her other passion...guitar, which she began playing at 14 years old. One of her biggest influences is Eric Clapton. Robin is currently working on playing blues guitar and hopes to perform at her mother’s 90th birthday party.

With Nanny Frances’s influence and Robin’s drive and determination, her mom’s birthday party is guaranteed to be a heck of a jam.



2017 Annual Awards Ceremony Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex & Passaic Counties

At our Annual Awards Ceremony at the East Orange Public Library last month, students, tutors, instructors, and teachers were recognized for the time they'd devoted to their sessions and for their personal goals and achievements. Award winners came from programs and libraries in both counties, including programs with our partners at Northern State Prison, Sussex Educational Foundation & Berkeley College, and the NCC-Adult Learning Center.



Abby Kane and Robert Bounczek, were named Tutors of the Year for Essex and Passaic Counties, respectively. Each also received the President's Volunteer Service Award, the first time the U.S. government medal was issued to our tutors. Sausan Mughrabi was named Student of the Year for Passaic County. Julio Ramirez who, at age 73, is one of our oldest ESOL students, was recognized as Student of the Year for Essex County.



"In today's world we have to do our best to be successful," Julio told the standing-room-only crowd. "I believe everybody can benefit greatly from what all of you do every day to make the community move forward and to achieve higher standards of living. Keep up the good work."



2017 Annual Awards Ceremony *Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex & Passaic Counties*

Abby Kane came to the Annual Awards Ceremony last month, in part because she was scheduled to receive recognition as Tutor of the Year for Essex County and the President's Volunteer Service Award, a medal issued by the federal government.



"I know I should be grateful for this award but mostly, I feel silly," Abby said, adding that she felt she'd already been awarded, not by a medal or a certificate, but by the relationships she'd formed with students from all over the world.



"I'm not a very good traveler, so I love getting to explore the world each week as I listen to the stories of my students," Abby added. "I made a list of all the countries I've learned about, through them. Just to make you all jealous, I'm going to read it to you."



And she did. They'd come from more than a dozen countries, from Albania to Vietnam, from five of the world's seven continents.

"Some of the students, I only spent a very short time with," she said. "Others have taught me a great deal more, over a longer time. It is for this wonderful opportunity, that I will be forever grateful."

Congratulations to all of our students, tutors, instructors, teachers, and affiliate organizations!