



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



Emily Frisch, of Pearson ELT, demonstrated the ins and outs of using electronic text effectively with students, in last month's workshop "Teaching with Technology (Not Just for Millennials)."

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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The Insider

Greetings LVA Family,

We at LVA Essex & Passaic Counties wish you a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season and new year. Enjoy!

Can the life of an adult, newly-arrived in the U.S. and enrolled in a literacy program, be told through dance? The staff at coLAB Arts think so. Using interpretive dance, coLAB choreographer and tap dance artist Hillary-Marie will tell the story of LVA Essex & Passaic Counties and our students at Friday and Saturday performances at Rutgers University. Her work is part of the "MOTION: New Dance Works" project, a joint effort between CoLAB Arts, which connects artists and community partners to create new works, and the dance department at Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts. For more information on times, location, and ticket prices:

<http://www.colab-arts.org/calendar/2017/12/8/motion-new-dance-works>

Thank you Emily Frisch for a fantastic tutor support workshop last month on "Teaching with Technology (Not Just for Millennials)." Thursday's workshop, "Understanding Adult Education," with Cristhian Barcelos, Executive Director of LVA Essex & Passaic Counties, is open to students and tutors.

The tutor support group meeting, normally held the 4th Tuesday of each month, is canceled for December 2017. The next meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2018.

In the News

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

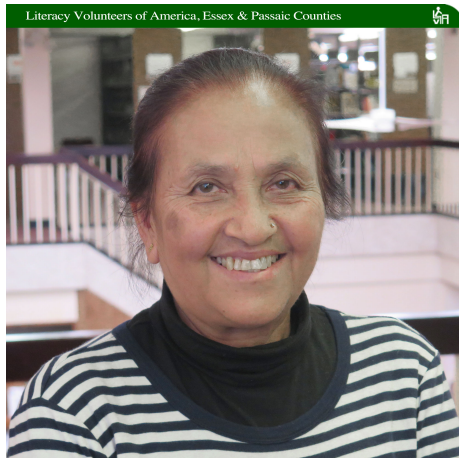
"Defining who is 'American' by the language they speak," The Inquirer (Phila) <https://goo.gl/VJeb9p>

"Illiteracy a spiral that feeds itself," Times Record News/USA Today <https://goo.gl/PahxY3>

"Lack of literacy progress 'appalling,' says adult tutoring group," CBCNews <https://goo.gl/RHHsiV>

"Maplewood Library receives Department of Labor ESOL grant for 2nd Year," The Village Green <https://goo.gl/gW5Laa>

"Research proves learning is a lifelong process," Medical Xpress
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-12-lifelong.html>



Sushila, who was unable to attend school as a young child in Nepal due to health issues, has made amazing progress in the past two years as an ESOL student.

Getting to Know Us

Sushila, LVA student

It's not easy to hear the story of Sushila's life in Nepal and remain unmoved.

There was the severe early childhood injury that left her hospitalized for years and living far from her mother and father; there was no opportunity to attend school until she was well into her teen years; and there was the wrangling with Nepal's caste system and social class structure in order to overcome differences and hard feelings between her family and her husband's. But she never gave up.

"I am strong in my life because I have always been a fighter," said Sushila, an English as a Second Language student in Essex County. "I am fighting in my disease, I am fighting in society, so I am strong. I wake up at 6 o'clock, make breakfast for my son and daughter and think it is going to be a good day."

She's fearless - - unafraid to take risks or make mistakes, said Susan Craig who, along with Ellen Martin, comprise Sushila's two tutors.

"She is willing to get into an uncomfortable zone and struggle with it and she comes out with the ability to use and to understand English," Susan said.

In Nepal, Sushila's family and her future husband's family managed to work out their differences and the couple was married. They have a son and a daughter. In 2001, Sushila's son won a green card through the Diversity Visa Lottery, a program designed to help residents of countries that are underrepresented in U.S. immigration to become permanent residents. He joined the U.S. Army and, during his second tour of duty in Iraq, sponsored Sushila for U.S. residence.

Two years ago, while visiting a local children's library with her grandchild, Sushila asked about English classes for adults; she was directed to our program and is an eager student.

"My life is very changed," Sushila said. "I understand so many words and I speak so many words. I am happy."

It's not unusual to find her outside the Bloomfield Public Library most mornings, waiting for the building to open, and chatting up other library patrons in English. "She is always in conversation with someone," said Susan. "She seems to attract people."

Tutor Support Workshop

"Understanding Adult Education,"

with Crisithian Barcelos
(for students and tutors)

Bloomfield Public Library

90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom

Bloomfield, NJ 07003

Thursday, December 7, 2017, 1:00-2:30 pm

"Strategies for Teaching Decoding and Word Analysis Skills to Adult Literacy Students,"

with Nora Devine

Bloomfield Public Library (see address above)

Wednesday, January 24, 2018, 1:00-2:30 pm

"How to Address Reading Needs for Your Students and Lead Them to Success,"

with Bethany Blankenbeckler

Bloomfield Public Library (see address above)

Tuesday, February 27, 2018, 1:00-2:30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

Montclair Public Library

by Mary Kao

50 South Fullerton Avenue

Montclair, NJ 07042

Saturdays, 12:15-3:45 pm

January 27, February 3, 10, 17, & 24, 2018

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.



“The bottom rung of American education: Stories from an adult literacy class.” *whyy.org* (Philadelphia)

By Avi Wolfman-Arent, November 20, 2017

At the bottom rung of America’s education system, you will find someone like Sandie Knuth.

Knuth teaches English for adult learners on the 10th floor of a Center City office building, in a room of carpeted plainness that suits the invisibility of its inhabitants. The students in Knuth’s class are varying levels of illiterate — placed here because an entrance test found they read below a third-grade level.

They’re here because they think — despite years of setbacks and stacked odds — they can earn the basic education promised to all Americans. Knuth’s task is to set them on the journey toward that distant goal. Class begins on a Wednesday in April at 5:30 p.m.

At least that’s when it’s supposed to begin. There’s a 10-minute grace period for students to arrive — and about a 10-minute grace period informally tacked onto that grace period for those who straggle in even later. As the 25-year-old Knuth waits for everyone to show, she scribbles a question on the whiteboard. *What do you hope to get out of class?*

By 6 p.m., five students have arrived. The last of them is 41-year-old Katrina Williams, who swaggers in with sunglasses on, earbuds in, and a large plastic cup full of Dunkin’ Donuts coffee. After a boisterous hello, she pulls out her pencil.

“I Just want to learn how to read and write and spell fill out papers and don’t have to ask for help

I really enjoy being back in School It hard but im going to try my best I want to get it done This time. Homework is hard for me cuz I really can spell but Im trying my best.”

Reprinted from *whyy.org* For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search: <https://goo.gl/VXwoRz>

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

Yolanda McBride, LVA tutor

You’d think that pouring over news copy all day would be enough to send one scurrying from the printed page in one’s free time.



Not so for Yolanda McBride, a news editor for one of the nation’s largest financial news publishers. She often can be found at a local library, long after her stories have been edited and filed, reviewing vocabulary and grammar with ESOL students from Ecuador and Peru. “I enjoy working with them,” explained Yolanda, an LVA tutor in Essex County for four years. “I have to look for things that are challenging for them and also know how to teach it. It is one thing to know how to do something and another to teach it. It’s made me want to become a better tutor.”

Yolanda’s love of literature began early. Growing up, she read poetry, plays, and novels, both fiction and non-fiction. And she loved to spend time browsing through libraries.

But she also knows that not everyone shares her passion; some simply can’t.

“I have an uncle that could not read or write,” Yolanda said. “I knew there were programs for that.” But her uncle refused to enroll in a literacy program and, instead, relied on a cousin to make sure he understood the papers he signed.

Yolanda majored in journalism in college and started her career as a reporter at a local New Jersey newspaper. Within two years she was the paper’s managing editor. She was hired by her current employer 20 years ago, working first as an editorial assistant, then as a copy editor, and later as an editor on the news desk. She is still an avid reader and has become something of a theater buff.

Her editorial experience comes in handy when it comes to her students, who demand to learn more than just the basics. They have gone on to achieve goals like U.S. citizenship and, in at least one case, a job. They are working with a book that deals with “how to speak like an American,” she said, a book that’s laden with idioms and opportunities for role play.

“We take turns and we laugh about it,” Yolanda said.