



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



Our ESL classes offer a unique opportunity to study English while learning about the cultures of students from around the world. Congratulations to all of our students who recently completed classes in Maplewood, Montclair, Passaic, and Paterson.

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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The Insider

Greetings LVA Family,

The Trump Administration last week released its “America First” budget, a blueprint for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, marking what could be, for advocates of adult education and literacy, a long period of watching, waiting, and hoping.

What’s clear is that the draft budget makes steep cuts in nonmilitary spending, including a \$9 billion reduction to the Department of Education, slashing its discretionary spending by 13-percent. But there is a lot that is not so clear.

“The budget does not mention adult education but that does not mean that the administration does not support cuts in the program,” the Coalition on Adult Basic Education, or COABE, said in a statement.

The international non-profit ProLiteracy wrote that the blueprint’s proposed cuts and program eliminations “will result in a significant reduction in resources for many local programs and their students.”

While we wait for news, it’s a good time to stay connected and fortify our network of adult literacy supporters. So if you haven’t yet registered for the Literacy New Jersey “Literacy for Life Conference” on Saturday, April 22, (<https://goo.gl/dkrJdf>) or NJALL’s annual conference, “We Can Do Difficult Things,” on Friday, May 19 (<https://goo.gl/g5ojt6>), there is still time. Each features a day full of interactive workshops, seminars, and networking.

We’re hiring! Yes, we’re looking for teachers and instructors to lead our ESL classes in Essex and Passaic Counties. For more information, contact our director, Cristhian Barcelos, via cbarcelos@lvaep.org

In the News

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

‘Language Study as a National Imperative,’ Inside Higher Education. <https://goo.gl/sKsBUh>

‘Filling the Adult Education Vacuum: Charters offer students over the age of 18 an alternative path to graduating high school,’ US News & World Report. <https://goo.gl/1OcJlc>

‘Woman who struggled with illiteracy all her life learns to read at 87,’ SWNS.com goo.gl/dK4bc7



Lily, right, a student from China, knew little English when she joined LVA. She's now an advanced student, thanks to her drive and the help of her tutor, Mary Kao, left.

Getting to Know Us

Lily, LVA student

If it's worth having, it's worth waiting for and no one knows that better than Lily, an LVA student from China who waited two years for help learning English.

That was five years ago. Since then, she's crossed off every goal on her literacy to-do-list and developed a wonderful working relationship with her tutor, a trainer whose mother was never taught to read and write because she was a woman.

"When I first came to Mary Kao, I could not speak any English," Lily said of her tutor. "It is as if my teacher knew what I was thinking and she helped me to find the words. And, when I speak wrong, she corrects me."

Lily came to the United States from Shanghai, China, nine years ago with her daughter and her husband, an American with whom she practices English.

Soon after her arrival, she became a businesswoman, opening her home music studio to young piano students. Lily teaches about 15 of them, ages 5-12, and they study the music of Beethoven, Chopin, and Liszt, which they in turn perform in recitals twice each year.

Her love and appreciation of the arts is deeply rooted in her childhood in China, where it was likely sparked by her nanny, a woman who loved to sing and take Lily, then just a toddler, to shows. Years later, Lily would study classical ballet and Chinese traditional dancing, but she's no stranger to other forms of dance, including folk dances from India.

Lily, a recently-converted vegan, no longer studies dance but uses it to stay fit, along with swimming, tennis, and taking long walks. "I like to keep my body flexible," she said.

Lily started at LVA as an ESL student with no knowledge of English, and worked her way up to study Basic Literacy, which shifts emphasis from speaking to reading and writing. She's now an advanced student, and she's not done.

"It is important for immigrants to learn English," was how she explained her dedication. "Speaking the language shows respect to the American people. And, I love this country."

Tutor Support Workshops

"Teaching Vocabulary With Pictures,"

with Mary Kao
Bloomfield Public Library
90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Tuesday, March 21, 2017
1:00-2:30 pm

Please bring a pair of paper-cutting scissors

Tutor Training Workshops

Hilton Branch, Maplewood Memorial Library

1688 Springfield Avenue
Maplewood, NJ 07040
Mondays and Thursdays
April 3-20, 2017
1:00-4:00 pm

COABE Webinar

Coalition on Adult Basic Education webinar

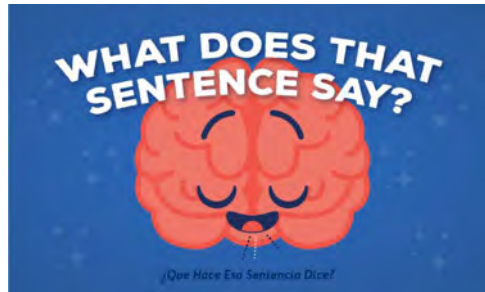
"Pathways to Citizenship: Teaching Civics to English Language Learners"

Subject matter includes how to design an ESL civics course and what topics to include in the curriculum; and the skills and vocabulary required to pass the U.S. Citizenship reading, writing, and civics exams.

Friday, March 24, 2017, 2:00 pm
www.coabe.org/pdwebinars1/

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.



“New Research shows late bilinguals are sensitive to unique aspects of second language,” *MedicalXpress.com*

By Mojgan Sherkat, March 17, 2017

Results of the new study suggest that adults are capable of learning and processing a new language

Imagine coming across a sentence in English that reads like this: "Mary apple eats her delicious." For most native-English speakers, the sentence would likely strike you as odd because it doesn't seem to be structured in an order that immediately gets the message across.

It has always been thought that, when adults learn a second language, they face this problem because the grammar of other languages doesn't necessarily match their native language. But, a new study reveals that adults are capable of learning and processing a new language in a way that resembles native speaker language use.

"Learning a second language as an adult is a difficult task," said UCR affiliate psychology professor Elenora Rossi, who was on the research team. "For years, scientists have believed that only the brains of very young children were pliable enough to allow for successful learning of a second language, while that was thought to be impossible for adults."

In the past two decades, the advance of testing methodologies and revolutionary neuroimaging methods have allowed language processing to be studied in real-time in a non-invasive way, opening the doors to a better understanding of how our brains process linguistic information in two languages. In the study, the team looked at how native English speakers, who learned Spanish as a second language as adults, understood sentences in Spanish that contained subtle aspects of Spanish grammar that do not exist in English.

Reprinted from MedicalXpress.com. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search: goo.gl/9M8QXc

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.lvacp.org/students.html>

Getting to Know Us (cont.)

Ted Furrey, LVA tutor



Ted Furrey welcomes adventure. And he has for years, since earning an English degree from Boston College at age 22. After school, he labored as a construction worker on demolition projects in Paterson and Newark, saved his money, and traveled the world.

In Italy he bought a car, drove through Yugoslavia and into Greece, where he left it. He took trains and buses through Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan. But when he and a travel mate landed in Lahore, West Pakistan, they were trapped. In December 1971, East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, was fully engaged in a war for independence with its government partner to the west and Ted found himself in the middle of it. "From the hotel, you could see the bombs exploding," he said.

Another trip Ted vividly remembers came 11 years later. After studying computer programming, he took a job in the IT department of a Bloomfield engineering firm. In 1982, he and his wife, Robin, another programmer with the firm and now an LVA tutor, volunteered for a long overseas assignment in Venezuela. While traveling to a conference on the Venezuelan coast, Ted mistakenly drove through a police checkpoint on a darkening rainforest road and was pulled over. Robin remained in the car as machine-gun toting police took Ted to a hut in the bush. They accused him of speeding, failure to stop, and demanded that he pay hundreds of dollars in cash or give up his car. As Ted struggled to negotiate in Spanish, a Colombian co-worker enroute to the same conference pulled up and helped interpret. The fine was reduced from \$700 to \$70.

Ted later worked in IT departments on Wall Street. He's retired and today his adventures are more than likely to come from marathon bicycle rides with friends. And the English major-turned programmer, who once did a stint as a Paterson substitute teacher, never lost his love of language. He learned of LVA from a former tutor, joined and has a small group of students. "I like the challenge and the sense of helping somebody," Ted explained. "Each student learns at a different pace. The students can help one another. It is interesting to see the different types of students and how determined they are to learn English."