



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



*Help us celebrate the achievements of our students, tutors, and teachers at the Annual Awards Ceremony, East Orange Public Library, on Tuesday, October 17, 2017, from 6:00-8:00 pm.*

### Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

90 Broad Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Bloomfield, NJ 07003  
(973) 566-6200, ext. 217 or 225

195 Gregory Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Passaic, NJ 07055  
(973) 470-0039

Cristhian Barcelos -Executive Director  
[cbarcelos@lvaep.org](mailto:cbarcelos@lvaep.org)  
Russell Ben Ali -Recruitment & Training Coordinator  
[rbenali@lvaep.org](mailto:rbenali@lvaep.org)  
Jorge Chavez -Data Processing Coordinator  
[jchavez@lvaep.org](mailto:jchavez@lvaep.org)  
Debbie Graham -Education Coordinator  
[dgraham@lvaep.org](mailto:dgraham@lvaep.org)  
Mary O'Connor -Trainer & Tutor Support Specialist  
[moconnor@lvaep.org](mailto:moconnor@lvaep.org)  
Marisol Ramirez -Student Coordinator  
[mramirez@lvaep.org](mailto:mramirez@lvaep.org)

## *The Insider*

Greetings LVA Family,

With everything else that's going on this week, please take a moment to remember all those who perished in the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 16 years ago this week, and please remember as well all those who died due to illnesses related to the rescue and recovery efforts.

Save the date: On Tuesday, October 17, 2017, from 6-8 pm, we'll celebrate our students, tutors, and teachers at Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex & Passaic Counties' Annual Awards Ceremony. Come hear our students and tutors share their stories of struggle and triumph at the East Orange Public Library, 21 South Arlington Avenue, East Orange, NJ 07018.

Tutors, have a student who deserves to be recognized for their accomplishments at our annual award ceremony? Let us know who and why and we'll do the rest.

The Coalition on Adult Basic Education, or COABE, will offer several free adult education webinars this fall. The next, "Preparing Yourself and Your Adult Students for Success in WIOA: Teaching Best Career Practices with WorkWise!" takes place Wednesday, Sep 13, 2017, at 2 pm. The webinar will teach ways to build your learners' reading, writing, and critical skills while learning key job readiness principles. To register: [goo.gl/5Hwrrp](http://goo.gl/5Hwrrp)

The Jewish Vocational Service of MetroWest NJ (JVS) will hold free U.S. Citizenship classes at the Bloomfield Public Library, Saturdays, from 9 am to 1 pm. For more information contact Inna Kramers at [ikramers@jvsnj.org](mailto:ikramers@jvsnj.org) 862-704-2283.

## *In the News*

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

**NJ DACA Immigrants to Trump: We're living in limbo,** Asbury Park Press [goo.gl/9nhTKh](http://goo.gl/9nhTKh)

**'8 effective and creative ways to learn a new language as an adult,'** Insider Picks <https://goo.gl/ZKSp5C>

**'6 Benefits of Learning a Language for Seniors,'** SeniorHomes.com <https://goo.gl/cmEV86>

**'Springfield Cardinals Learn English as a Second Language,'** ky3.com <https://goo.gl/TfLRx8>



*Arianny, a basic literacy student who advanced several levels in a single year, enjoys studying Shakespeare with her tutor, David Baumbach.*

## Getting to Know Us

### Arianny, LVA student

William Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 is laden with metaphors and personification in just 14 lines of text. sUnlocking its meaning is enough to give a novice literacy student a migraine, but Arianny sees only beauty in this poem, one of Shakespeare's best known works.

And it doesn't hurt to have a tutor who shares her love of literature.

"Now I have somebody that can explain its deeper meaning to me," Arianny, an LVA student, said of her tutor, David Baumbach, and the sonnet.

In only a year of study, "Ari," as she is known by friends and family, has advanced several stages, progressing from the level of an ESOL student to that of a basic literacy learner. David and Ari work on standard educational materials that review vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, but David has also added materials that he believes have "an intellectual bent." They include "A Small, Good Thing" a short story by Raymond Carver, as well as Sonnet 18.

On a recent weekday, Ari sat down with us at the Bloomfield Public Library, and spoke about her hometown of Sosua, a small beachfront city and tourist haven on the north coast of the Dominican Republic, and her new life in New Jersey.

"I think Sosua beaches are the best," said Ari, flashing a brilliant smile as she described her hometown. "It is warm, has beautiful trees, and there is always a breeze. I love to stroll along the shore. I think the special connection that I have with the beach is that it was close by and we could grow there."

She was also something of a star gazer at home, she acknowledged, taking time to appreciate the stars in the sky during nightly walks home from a technical college, where she studied psychology. "Here in New Jersey it is difficult because the sky doesn't get that dark," Ari noted.

When she's not studying hard, you might find Ari in her own yard, celebrating summer with family and friends.

"We play music like bachata, merengue and reggaeton," she said. "We dance in the backyard and dancing spills out into the living room also. Everybody likes to dance and have fun."

## Tutor Support Workshop

### "How Understanding Personality Can Improve Your Tutoring,"

with Stephanie Mazzeo-Caputo  
Bloomfield Public Library  
90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom  
Bloomfield, NJ 07003  
Monday, September 18, 2017, 1:00-2:30 pm

### "Writing Prompts for the Classroom"

with Erik Jacobson

Bloomfield Public Library (see address above)  
Tuesday, October 17, 2017, 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  
October 7, 14, 21, 28, & November 4, 2017

### Hilton Branch, Maplewood Memorial Library

by Mary O'Connor  
1688 Springfield Avenue  
Maplewood, NJ 07040  
Mondays and Thursdays, 1:00-4:00 pm  
October 23, 26, 30, November 2, 6, & 9, 2017

*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 amazing fertility of the older mind; It’s never too late to learn - if you go about it the right way,” BBC.com**

By David Robson, August 28, 2017

If you ever fear that you are already too old to learn a new skill, remember Priscilla Sitienei, a midwife from Ndalat in rural Kenya. Having grown up without free primary school education, she had never learnt to read or write. As she approached her twilight years, however, she wanted to note down her experiences and knowledge to pass down to the next generation. And so, she started to attend lessons at the local school – along with six of her great-great-grandchildren. She was 90 at the time.

The latest studies from psychology and neuroscience show that these extraordinary achievements need not be the exception. Although you may face some extra difficulties at 30, 50 – or 90 – your brain still has an astonishing ability to learn and master many new skills, whatever your age. And the effort to master a new discipline may be more than repaid in maintaining and enhancing your overall cognitive health.

We are often told that “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks” – that the grizzled adult brain simply can’t absorb as much information as an impressionable young child’s. Many people would assume that you simply couldn’t pick up a complex skill like reading or writing, at the age of 90, after a lifetime of being illiterate.

## Wax tablets

But there hasn’t always been such an optimistic view of learning brand new skills from scratch as a grown adult.

The prevailing, pessimistic, view of the ageing mind can be traced back to the Ancient Greeks. In his treatise *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, Aristotle compared human memory to a wax tablet.

Reprinted from BBC.com. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search: <https://goo.by/hQPso>

*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 (cont.)

Rachel Tomosieski, LVA tutor

Were Rachel not a tutor, one who helps adults improve their lives by teaching them English, she’d likely be doing something just as noble.



As long as she’s around people and has the opportunity to help, as she did her entire working life as a nurse, she is well within her element. “I have worked with people all my life,” said Rachel Tomosieski, an LVA tutor who spent nearly 50 years as a medical, surgical and oncology nurse. “I love people. I think our differences make us stronger. We need to find out what goes on behind those differences and be able to establish communication.”

That’s not just talk. It’s something Rachel works at twice each week, when she tutors a group of four students, all from different countries, at the Bloomfield Public Library. “It is interesting to learn their traditions and their memories of their homeland,” she said of her diverse group of students. “I always enjoy new things.”

Rachel has other interests too, of course. The New England native has a penchant for cooking, particularly Polish food, from kielbasa sausage to pierogi dumplings, and even kruschiki, a sugar-dusted fritter. These are skills she learned years ago from her Polish mother-in-law.

Back at the library, Rachel regularly mixes the skills she picked up during her LVA training with techniques she’s developed on her own. For one, she finds that having a copy of *Reader’s Digest* handy is sure to spark a conversation among her students.

“The stories are relevant,” she said., recalling her students’ reaction after reading an account of one man’s personal tragedy. “The students were very thoughtful and started speaking about their own experiences.” Rachel said. “They were speaking in English and communicating effectively and that brought the real world to them.”

That’s a win-win for any tutor and Rachel is not one to hold back when a student gets it. “When something goes extremely well for one of my students, I get very excited, jump around the table, and let my students know we are sharing an ‘aha! moment together,” she said.