



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



*Coffee and Friends
are the Perfect Blend*

Join us Wednesday, October 3rd for a tutor appreciation get together at the Bloomfield Public Library, 1:00 -3:00 pm in the auditorium.

The Insider

Greetings LVA Family,

Osgen's story about leaving Turkey and finding LVA gave her ESL conversation class at Berkley College in Newark goosebumps. "I always wanted to fair life, a life that gives me an opportunity to grow and make myself better," she told the class. "I have only been in the U.S. a month and I was lucky enough to get to know LVA. LVA paved the way to a brighter future."

Please join us we celebrate students like Osgen who have worked hard to achieve literacy and the tutors and others who have helped them. Our Annual Awards Ceremony will be held Tuesday, October 16th, at the East Orange Public Library from 6:00-8:00 pm. There will be light refreshments and parking is available in the library lot. Family and friends are invited too, just let us know whether you plan to attend and how many guests you'll bring.

In this issue you'll meet LVA student Martha, a CPA in her native Colombia who had an interest in music and photography. That's how she met her husband and moved to New Jersey. You'll also meet tutor Daniel Mevs, who has found a way to connect with his students and continue his work as a hospice liaison. Before that he was on front lines of the AIDS crisis working in the pharmaceutical industry.

Matt Ford gave a fun and enlightening presentation on 'Using Mindfulness in Tutoring' earlier this week. Mark your calendars, next month we are hosting Coffee and Friends for tutors and students on Wednesday, October 3rd, 1:00-2:30 p.m. in the Bloomfield Public Library Auditorium.

In the News

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

'Volunteer literacy tutors help student move on to better lives. New Jersey Herald. <https://bit.ly/2QjzK33>

'Transforming the world one person at a time' Chicago Tribune. <https://trib.in/2oXgPvn>

'I never knew how to spell my name' Refinery29.com. <https://r29.co/2oYFRNG>

'Assessing literacy efficiently' Language Magazine <https://bit.ly/2O9ne4K>

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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Martha had no idea that her photography and music hobby would change her life and eventually lead her to learning English with LVA.

Tutor Support Workshop

"A Single Step: Putting Yourself in the Shoes of Learners," with Faleeha Hassan

Bloomfield Public Library

90 Broad St., 2nd Floor Boardroom

Bloomfield, NJ 07003

Monday, October 29, 2018, 1:00 -2::30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

Montclair Public Library -by Mary Kao

50 South Fullerton Avenue, Literacy Room

Montclair, NJ 07042

Saturdays, 12:15-3:45 pm

September 8, 15, 22, 29, and October 6, 2018

Bloomfield Public Library -by Sable Lomax

90 Broad Street

Bloomfield, NJ 07003

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:00- 3:00 pm

October 2, 4, 9, 11, 16, & 18, 2018

West Orange Public Library -by Mary Kao

46 Mount Pleasant Avenue

West Orange, NJ 07052

October 17, 22, 24, 29, 31 & Nov. 7 & 14, 2018

Getting to Know Us

Martha, LVA student

Before finding LVA, Martha was struggling.

When Martha was interviewing and taking pictures of musicians, little did she know it would change her life.

Martha, a native of Colombia, a trained CPA, worked at a treasurer and enjoyed interviewing and photographing Latin musicians in her spare time. "My family always liked music," Martha said. "My aunts were singers. My family was playing instruments. I always enjoyed percussion."

During one of her interviews, she met a Cuban recording engineer who was traveling from New Jersey to Bogota on business. After two years of long-distance dating, Martha married him and they moved to New Jersey four years ago.

The move proved to be culture shock for Martha. She lived for 39 years in the same house in Colombia with her mom and twin brothers. Her first introduction to the United States was Newark airport. "The transition from my country was not so good. I did not know English. I loved my life in Colombia. It was hard to leave my professional life. When I came here, I tried to focus on the best things," Martha said.

The best things were her husband and Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties. Martha began with LVA as an ESL student. Almost two years later her speaking, writing, and reading English are as high as our native English-speaking students.

"When I came here, I wanted to learn English. It was very important to me. I wanted to get better opportunities in the United States," Martha said. "It is nice when you can communicate with other people." Martha works with two tutors and is active in the English/Spanish Language Exchange on Thursday at the Bloomfield Library.

"I improved my English because I work hard every day. I listen to English news, watch English television, and practice speaking with my 17-year-old son. He likes to teach me. Both my son and my husband help me a lot," Martha said.

Little did she know that interviewing musicians would lead to her husband and learning English, after all she just thought it was a hobby.

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.



“To Restore A Civil Society, Start With the Library”

The New York Times

By Eric Klinenberg, September 8, 2018

Is the public library obsolete?

A lot of powerful forces in society seem to think so. In recent years, declines in the circulation of bound books in some parts of the country have led prominent critics to argue that libraries are no longer serving their historical function. Countless elected officials insist that in the 21st century — when so many books are digitized, so much public culture exists online and so often people interact virtually — libraries no longer need the support they once commanded.

Libraries are already starved for resources. In some cities, even affluent ones like Atlanta, entire branches are being shut down. In San Jose, Calif., just down the road from Facebook, Google and Apple, the public library budget is so tight that users with overdue fees above \$10 aren’t allowed to borrow books or use computers.

But the problem that libraries face today isn’t irrelevance. Indeed, in New York and many other cities, library circulation, program attendance and average hours spent visiting are up. The real problem that libraries face is that so many people are using them, and for such a wide variety of purposes, that library systems and their employees are overwhelmed. According to a 2016 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, about half of all Americans ages 16 and over used a public library in the past year, and two-thirds say that closing their local branch would have a “major impact on their community.”

Reprinted from The New York Times. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search: <https://nyti.ms/2QhorZ1>

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.)

Daniel Mevs LVA tutor

Daniel Mevs has made a career of improving lives. Now he does it in his spare time too.

Daniel joined Literacy Volunteers of America, Essex & Passaic Counties almost a year ago and has already made a difference in his students’ lives. One of his students has gained more stable employment. The other is ready to tackle the workforce head-on.



His tutoring technique has been using successfully using sight words. Each week one can find Daniel in the Bloomfield Library carefully going over his list of words before his two Jamaican students arrive. He prepares flashcards for them and every two weeks the students receive a new list.

Of course, Daniel is evaluating their progress during the entire lesson to determine if they are ready for a new list. He said, “It works very well and gives my students something on which they can really focus. They are pleasantly surprised that they know more than they think they know.”

Daniel began his professional life in pharmaceutical and medical services. He worked for Bristol Myers Squibb and worked for 10 years. Daniel’s real passion for pharma and its life saving properties began when he moved to New York City in 2003.

At this time, HIV patients were looked upon as pariahs. Upon his entrance, to a clinic, Daniel saw chairs being scrubbed and sprayed down with Lysol. Daniel was infuriated. He sought out the opportunity to promote HIV medications. He was quickly promoted to district manager. “New therapies were constantly emerging,” Daniel said. “I have seen HIV go from being a death sentence to an asymptomatic chronic condition. People are more likely to die from a heart attack or cancer than HIV.”

Daniel is currently employed as a hospice liaison. He also wants people to know that hospice care is a benefit of Medicare. He emphasizes the importance of quality end of life care. “It helps individuals to be more comfortable at the end of their lives by providing nursing care, pain management, and social services. I enjoy this position because it brings me closer to the patients.”