



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



Nora Devine offered an excellent workshop last month on teaching decoding and word analysis skills. Information on this month's workshop is found on the next page.

The Insider

Greetings LVA Family,

Looking for a way to update your teaching skills while networking with others in the field of adult education? Consider the day-long, annual conferences of Literacy New Jersey and the New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning.

"Literacy for Life Conference," Literacy New Jersey's event on April 21, will feature unique workshops such as "Math Literacy in the Kitchen," "Understanding Dyslexia," "Teaching American Culture through Current Events," as well as sessions on building writing skills, digital learning, and successful job search strategies for students.

NJALL's conference on May 11 offers workshops such as "Mobile Resources for Teaching and Learning," "Students Developing Web Pages as Career Education," and "Learning Circles for Students on Waiting Lists," in addition to seminars on community organizing, advocacy strategies, and blended learning programs. Space is limited so don't wait to sign up. For more information:

Literacy New Jersey: <https://literacynj.org/literacy-life-2018>
NJALL: goo.gl/bU37q2

Keep an eye out for an upcoming segment of the award-winning PBS television program "The Success Files" hosted by Rob Lowe, which will highlight the adult education campaign of 'Educate and Elevate.' We'll keep you posted.

Thank you Nora Devine for your helpful decoding strategies tutor support workshop presented last month. We enjoyed learning new techniques and comparing notes with tutors from LVA and Project Literacy of Greater Bergen County.

In the News

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

"First language attrition in bilinguals is more common than you think," The Varsity. <https://goo.gl/LsKwVH>

"What do you do with a life's work in literacy? Give it all away," The Dispatch. <https://goo.gl/egH4j4>

"Why babies can learn 2 languages at one time," The Sumter Item. <https://goo.gl/Lza8bS>

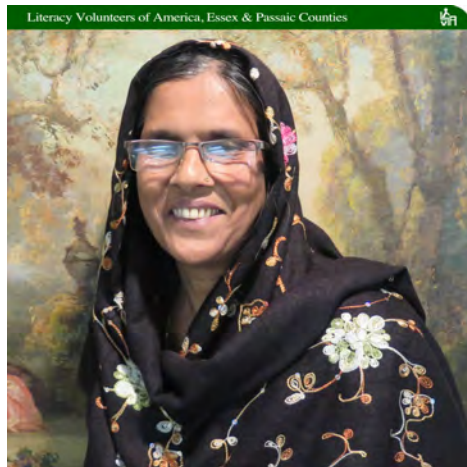
"Language utilizes ancient brain circuits that predate humans," Psychology Today. <https://goo.gl/KRqNCN>

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
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Marisol Ramirez	-Student Coordinator mramirez@lvaep.org



Rokeya, an ESOL student from Bangladesh, has overcome her fear of speaking English in public, thanks to friendships she's developed with tutors and students at LVA.

Tutor Support Workshop

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

with Bethany Blankenbeckler
Bloomfield Public Library

90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom
Bloomfield, NJ 07003

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

Tutor Training Workshops

Belleville Public Library

by Nina Peyser
221 Washington Avenue
Belleville, NJ 07109

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:00-3:00 pm
March 13, 15, 20, 22, 27, & 29, 2018

Clifton Public Library

by Darnelle Richardson
292 Piaget Avenue
Clifton, NJ 07011

Saturdays, 1:00-4:15 pm
April 7, 14, 28, May 5 & 12, 2018

Next Tutor Support Group meeting:

Tuesday, February 20, 2018, 12:30-2:00 pm
Park United Methodist Church, 12 Park St, Bloomfield, NJ

Getting to Know Us

Rokeya, LVA student

By Ellen Rooney Martin

Rokeya was a primary school teacher in Bangladesh for 35 years before moving to the United States. Now she is on the other side of the desk as a student with LVA where she is learning English.

It was a tough transition, but she now says she is comfortable and happy living in America. Still, she misses running into her former students who are now bankers, doctors and business people she taught in Bangladesh.

"I would see my students in town and it made me very happy," Rokeya said. "Now we connect on Facebook. 'Madame, after many, many years we are very happy to see you.'"

She began teaching in Sylhet, Bangladesh when she was 18 years-old and moved a couple hours away when she got married at 21. Her husband worked for The Bangladesh Tea Research Institute as an administrative officer and their home was set among the beautiful tea gardens there. The institute is responsible for solving various problems growing and manufacturing tea and represents the industry as a whole.

Rokeya and her husband raised their three children before he retired in 2011 from the institute. Now part of the family lives in Bloomfield and one daughter and her family remain at the family home in Bangladesh. Rokeya stays close to her daughter and granddaughter in Bangladesh by using her tablet for talking or Facetime every night.

Moving to the U.S. was very difficult for Rokeya. "When I came to this country I could not speak English and not understand English," she said. "I did not feel good, there was darkness everywhere."

She initially began learning ESL with Sister Catherine and recalls her fondly. "She started to help me learning English, she was like my mother," Rokeya said. Rokeya goes to the bank, shows and the library by herself. "Now I am not scared at all. I am very comfortable, now," she said.

She has also made a good friend in another student, Sushila, from Nepal. They speak regularly on the phone and visit each other's homes. "Now I am happy, I am not afraid," Rokeya says with pride. "People help me with directions, everybody is good."

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.



“Report: Dramatic decline in high school equivalency test takers after changes.” NJBIZ

February 5, 2018

The number of New Jersey adults taking the high school equivalency test plunged from nearly 17,000 in 2013 to fewer than 9,000, both in 2015 and 2016, after changes made the exam harder and pricier.

The passing rate also dropped markedly, from nearly 70 percent to roughly 55 percent following the changes.

Those are the findings of a report released Monday by the Center for Women and Work at the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations.

“This does not bode well for the state’s poorest residents,” said Karen White, director of policy analysis and community engagement at the Rutgers Center for Women and Work, in a statement. “For adults who do not complete high school, passing a high school equivalency test is the only way to receive a diploma — the bare minimum requirement for most New Jersey jobs and military admission. Those who manage to find work earn almost 60 percent less on average than workers with a diploma.”

The non-profit American Council on Education administered New Jersey’s only high school equivalency test—the General Education Development or GED test—for more than 50 years before entering a public-private partnership with Pearson VUE. A new exam was unveiled in March 2014 with major changes:

-The test became more difficult, aligning with Common Core State Standards.

-A computer-based test, requiring basic computer skills, replaced pencil and paper.

Reprinted from NJBIZ. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search: <https://goo.gl/A99ikx>

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.lvaen.org/students.html>

Getting to Know Us

Charles Bateman, LVA tutor

By Ellen Rooney Martin

If Charles Bateman were a character in a novel, he’d definitely be the hero. He’s spent his life learning, teaching, and seeking new opportunities to help others. His latest efforts have led him to LVA where, as a volunteer tutor, he helps adults learn English.



As a child, his mother sent him to summer school, not because he needed help, but to keep him off the streets in Newark. It continued on weekends too, when his mother sent Charles and his siblings to the library so she could clean the house. By the time he was 13, he had developed a love for reading which he shared with others throughout his life.

After high school he went into the military, got married and had a daughter. When she was four, Charles became chairman of the Parent Advisory Committee in her Head Start program. Because of his exemplary work, the principal recommended that Charles become a teacher. At the time he was working at the post office, but realized he wanted more. He attended Newark State Teachers College, now Kean University, and was on the Dean’s List all four years. He was offered a scholarship to Columbia University Teachers College and earned a master’s degree there.

He taught high school and, later, taught English and drama for 23 years at Essex County College. Along the way, Charles earned a second master’s degree, this one in liberal studies, and, in the wake of the Newark riots of 1967, worked through a local organization to unite residents and fight for Newark school funding.

So how did this learned and spirited man end up at LVA? It was the idea of his wife, who suggested that, in his retirement, Charles become a substitute teacher and volunteer tutor. At LVA he has two ESOL students, one from South Korea and another from India, who never miss a lesson.

Of his LVA experience, Charles said he often thinks about a quote he heard long ago at Newark State Teachers College: “Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.”

“I am still learning because of my experience with LVA,” Charles said. “It’s exciting.”