



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



LVA's own Tutor Support Specialist and trainer, Mary O'Connor, helped tutors with all things grammar at her recent information packed Tutor Support Workshop.

The Insider

Greetings LVA Family,

Happy New Year! 2019 is off to a fast start with Tutor Training Workshops starting at the end of this month. Do you know anyone who might be interested in tutoring? Please tell your friends we'd love them to be part of the great LVA community.

Last year students and tutors met for hundreds of hours, countless lessons and achieved many milestones. Here at LVA, we held our first Coffee with Friends, a relaxed and social afternoon of shared stories and a few treats. Tutors started receiving their id badges, and the office has iPads loaded with useful apps to use learning tools. This year we hope to keep improving on everything we do and we are always looking for new ideas.

In this issue of *The Insider*, you'll meet student Giovanna from Uruguay who spends her days learning English with LVA and beyond. She recently got her driver's license, also volunteers in our office, and she expects to graduate less than a year after getting to LVA. Impressive! Tutor Starr Baum brings her good cheer to and incredible educational expertise to her LVA students her students. She's a great advocate for the program.

In the news, a writer argues that adult literacy education improves a student's potential in all areas across their lifetime. Find this and other stories in the links below.

In the News

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

'Reducing the language barrier' The Gazette,
<https://bit.ly/2S8nsuN>

'Survey: More than half of US teachers are concerned about language barriers with ESL parents' Education Dive
<https://bit.ly/2QC154J>

'English on the go' World Magazine
<https://bit.ly/2SW3Gik>

'Fill the gap in literacy skills' The Star Phoenix,
<https://bit.ly/2TM6djc>

'The mystery of people who speak dozens of languages,' The New Yorker,
<https://bit.ly/2o8yva3>

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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Getting to Know Us *Giovanna, LVA student*

LVA student, Giovanna, came to the United States from Uruguay, knowing little to no English in August, 2018. In just 10 months, she will be graduating from our program.

How do you get from a beginning ESL student to an advanced Basic Literacy student in such a short time? Practice. Practice. Practice.

World-renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma immigrated to the United States when he was 7 years old, and, with lots of practice, landed on the stages of Carnegie Hall and other venerable concert halls. 34-year-old Giovanna has that same work ethic. She takes English classes for 28 hours a week. And, in her “spare time,” she practices English.

When asked about her passion for learning, Giovanna said, “English is important for me because I need to communicate with other people. It is good for me to practice English because I can understand people better.”

In addition to her formal English classes, Giovanna is taking CPR through the Red Cross. Again, that class is taught in English. “It is a good course. I think everyone should take it,” she said. It is good information. When someone is eating and choking, it is good to know the proper way to help.”

And help, she does. Giovanna volunteers in our office two hours a week. Unfortunately for LVA, she had to cut back from volunteering four hours per week due to her Monday-Thursday morning English classes at New Community Corporation and weekend classes at ASA College in New York City.

In the LVA office, Giovanna embraces the opportunity to make phone calls, greet students and tutors, and also organize endless amounts of paperwork. She is always ready to help out where the need is greatest at any given time. “I like to help everyone,” Giovanna said. “I learn from everyone how to improve my English. They help me to use the correct words in speaking and writing.”

Giovanna is a young star on the rise whose hard work and dedication are to be admired.

Giovanna is very friendly and even more hardworking, both have helped her learn English with LVA.

Tutor Support Workshop

“Taking the Fear out of Speaking,” with Darnelle Richardson
Bloomfield Public Library
90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Thursday, February 21, 2019, 1:00-2:30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

Clifton Memorial Library -by Darnelle Richardson
292 Piaget Avenue
Clifton, NJ 07011
Saturdays, 1:00-4:30 pm
March 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30, 2019

Bloomfield Public Library – by Sable Lomax
90 Broad Street, Second Floor Boardroom
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Tuesdays, 10:00 am–1:00 pm
February 5, 12, 19, 26, March 5, & 12, 2019

Montclair Public Library – by Mary Kao
50 South Fullerton Avenue, Literacy Room
Montclair, NJ 07042
Saturdays, 12:15-3:45 pm
January 26, February 2, 9, 16, & 23, 2019

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.



“Adult Literacy Efforts Make a Real Difference in Impoverished Areas of USA”

Spectrum, Woub Digital PBS
December 12, 2018

Although much of this country’s educational focus is on P-12 grades, adult education cannot be ignored and adult literacy education is proven to be valuable in breaking links to poverty and improving job possibilities for those who participate.

Adult literacy education improves a student’s abilities and possibilities across a lifespan.

Recently, the Patton College of Education at Ohio University became the first four-year institution in Ohio to receive a special Aspire Grant from the Ohio Department of Higher Education to address adult literacy needs.

It has been called the first “GED to Ph.D. program” by John Carey, Chancellor of the Department of Higher Education.

The new program provides research opportunities for faculty and student engagement opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students as well as educational opportunities for a large part of the region’s citizenry.

The new program “will show the power of adult instruction in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving and have a positive impact on people’s lives in our region,” says Julie Barnhart Frances, the director of the Stevens Literacy Center within the Patton College of Education.

Reprinted from Spectrum, Woub digital PBS. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search: <https://goo.gl/7j2T9m>

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 @: <https://www.lvacp.org/students.html>

Getting to Know Us (cont.)

Starr Baum, LVA tutor

When feminist activist Gloria Steinem was busy laying the groundwork for Ms. Magazine, LVA tutor Starr Baum was dreaming of a completely different path, her Mrs. degree.



Starr hoped to follow in the footsteps of her beloved mother. “I was a person who thought going to college was getting an Mrs. degree. This was in the late 1960’s. My mother was in graduate school when she met my father and in three weeks married him. They were married over 50 years. My older sister married the day before graduating from college,” Starr said.

Starr’s path did not follow the exact trajectory of her female family members, but close. She attended college and earned degrees in education. “It was then,” she said, I eventually got my Mrs. degree. As a matter of fact, I earned two,” Starr said with a sheepish grin. The first one lasted 11 years and my second Mrs. degree I have had for almost 28 years.”

Along with being happily married, Starr is happily enjoying being a tutor. She has taken the expertise she learned from a 43-year teaching career in early childhood education where Starr taught young children how to read, and put it to work with her adult LVA students.

Starr found out about LVA while exploring volunteer opportunities in Essex County on the Internet. Fortunately for us, and for her, there was only a short gap between her discovery and an upcoming training session to become an LVA tutor. When asked about the 18 hour LVA training, Starr said, “It reinforced everything I had already been applying in my teaching career.”

Starr added some of her own tips as well. She said, “First, get to know your students. My first student, a woman from Mexico, had no vocabulary at all in English. I brought in pictures, a calendar, crayons, and also used gestures (Total Physical Response) to build vocabulary.”

Another one of Starr’s students was a native born English speaker who never had the opportunity to attend school due to dropping out in third grade to help his family. As a teacher, Starr used Language Experience Stories with which she also became reacquainted in her LVA training.

Starr is proud to be an integral part of the LVA family. “Being an LVA tutor makes me aware of individuals who just need our help,” she said, “and I am happy that I am able to use skills that I have used throughout my life in teaching.”

Adult Literacy & Community Library Partnership Program

Like many students, Patricia's desire to learn English was twofold, she wanted to get a better job and help with her children's school activities. She's working toward those goals and is now an office helper and is getting more involved with her children's school.

Another student said she likes reading, writing and speaking English in class. "I'm getting better, before I couldn't understand and now I make progress."

Irene, from Italy, said she had lived the best experience ever, by living here in The United States. She's been learning English, which she loves, and learning a new culture, "This country gave me a big opportunity," Irene said.

"I think my favorite part was learning grammar because before that I had a hard time conjugating the verbs," said another student with pride.

"I like speaking, writing and listening together because they help me understand," said a student.

The students celebrated with a delicious buffet reflecting all their cultures and there was even a little dancing.

These students and more in teacher Eidy Urena's class at the Hilton Branch of the Maplewood Memorial Library, celebrated the end of their class session from the Adult Literacy and Community Library Partnership, a state program that aims to create direct partnerships between local libraries and adult literacy service providers. Together, libraries and literacy organizations provide training or language instruction that help New Jersey residents increase their Adult Basic Education and language proficiency skills in order to enhance their chances of finding employment outside of the low-skilled job market. Funds were granted to libraries throughout the state, including Maplewood, Passaic, and Paterson, which work with LVA to offer intensive ESL classes. One round of classes in Maplewood ended in December and new classes began last week.

