



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



*Tutor Ann Moore (back row, second from left) offered an exhaustive list of tips during the "Taking the Mystery out of Lesson Planning" workshop.*

## *The Insider*

Greetings LVA Family,

Our next support workshop, the last before the summer break, offers two unique opportunities: The chance to exchange ideas with students and tutors in one place at one time and the chance to drink coffee in the library, normally a faux pas in a library setting. So please join us for "Coffee With Friends", a meetup for students and tutors, and be prepared to get your caffeine fix satisfied. Details on the next page.

On the subject of support, we owe a huge thanks to tutor Ann Moore for her presentation of "Taking the Mystery out of Lesson Planning," the workshop held last month. Ann did an excellent job at showing us how to pull together an effective plan to keep our students engaged and interested.

Looks like some ambitious workshops will be offered at ProLiteracy's annual conference in September 2019. And, of course, it's hard to beat the location: San Diego, Calif. Included in the schedule are sessions on "Corrections Education", "Enhanced Technology and Digital Literacy", "Career and College Readiness", "Adult Education/Literacy in Libraries", and "Adult Learner Involvement/Leadership". ProLiteracy, the largest adult literacy and basic education membership organization in the nation, will make a workshop app available this summer but, in the meantime, you can find plenty of conference info at: <https://bit.ly/2EeLy35>

## *In the News*

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

**'A Local Hero Found a Unique Way to Fight Adult Illiteracy: Comic Books'**, Nations Well  
<https://bit.ly/2YrcMKv>

**'Immigrants and teachers seek permanent funding for adult literacy'**, Brooklyn Eagle, <https://bit.ly/2Q2qpwY>

**'Is Monolingualism the new Illiteracy? – Students and advocates rally for language immersion programs'**, Uprise RI, <https://bit.ly/2JFxEJV>

**'At Your Library: Impact of illiteracy on communities is staggering'**, Daily Republic, <https://bit.ly/2Wde22y>

**'Jersey's 'brain drain' outmigration problem keeps getting worse'**, nj101.5.com, <https://bit.ly/2VDbkhl>

### 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)  
Jorge Chavez -Data Processing Coordinator  
[jchavez@lvaep.org](mailto:jchavez@lvaep.org)  
Debbie Graham -Education Coordinator  
[dgraham@lvaep.org](mailto:dgraham@lvaep.org)  
Ellen Martin -Recruitment & Training Coordinator  
[emartin@lvaep.org](mailto:emartin@lvaep.org)  
Mary O'Connor -Trainer & Tutor Support Specialist  
[mocconnor@lvaep.org](mailto:mocconnor@lvaep.org)  
Marisol Ramirez -Student Coordinator  
[mramirez@lvaep.org](mailto:mramirez@lvaep.org)



*Student Carmelie, a nurse from Haiti, is working hard to become fluent in English as she prepares to earn a nursing degree in the U.S.*

## ***Getting to Know Us*** ***Carmelie, LVA student***

Carmelie arrived in the U.S. from Haiti more than a decade ago, but still marvels at the sights of her adopted home. “This is a big country,” Carmelie said. “I am very excited when I visit places. It is very different from my country.”

Carmelie left Haiti in 2009, just months before an earthquake ravaged the country in January 2010, killing some 250,000 people. The earthquake, the nation’s worst in 200 years, led President Obama to grant Temporary Protected Status, or TPS, to many Haitians living in the U.S., on the grounds that their return home would be a burden to the recovering nation. The status permits Carmelie, a trained nurse, to temporarily live and work here.

Carmelie graduated from nursing school in the nation’s capital of Port au Prince. She and her six siblings were the first in their family to be formally educated and to earn college degrees.

Her parents made many sacrifices so that their children could obtain educations. One by one, they sent the children to live in Port au Prince, and to attend school there, while they tended the family’s crops in Dessalines. “My parents are farmers and my mother is still there today,” Carmelie said.

In the U.S. Carmelie found work as a babysitter and, later, as a nursing assistant. Eventually a friend brought her to the Literacy Volunteers of America program at the Bloomfield Public Library. Although she had studied some English in Haiti, Carmelie communicated mainly in her native language of Creole.

From then her life began to change, Carmelie said. She studied with two tutors, four hours each week, for more than six months. She earned a home health aide certificate. While she has a growing command of English, she continues to study and is preparing to earn a U.S. nursing degree.

“Since being in LVA, I can speak better,” Carmelie said. “I also like to read. When I see words that I don’t understand their meaning, I get my dictionary and look them up.”

Carmelie enjoys her new life and language skills but misses home. “I miss my mother,” she said. “When my father died two years ago, I was not able to travel back to my country. That made me sad.”

## **Tutor and Student Support Workshops**

**"Coffee with Friends,"**  
with Students & Tutors  
Bloomfield Public Library  
90 Broad Street, Library Theater  
Bloomfield, NJ 07003  
Tuesday, June 11, 2018, 1:00-2:30 pm

## **Upcoming Webinars**

COABE, the Coalition On Adult Basic Education, will offer a series of free webinars this month on everything from using games to motivate adult students to several digital skills info sessions produced in association with Google’s Applied Digital Skills program. You can view the webinars here: <https://www.coabe.org/pdwebinars1>

## **Tutor Training Workshops**

**Hilton Branch, Maplewood Memorial Library**  
-by Carolyn Van Doren  
1688 Springfield Avenue  
Maplewood, NJ 07040  
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00 am-12:00 pm  
June 4, 6, 11, 13, 18 & 20, 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.lvnewark.org/donatetolva/> or by mailing us a check.*



## “MLB, long expecting Latin players to learn English, is finally beginning to speak their language”

By Jesse Dougherty, The Washington Post, June 4, 2019

*“For so long it’s just been understood that Latin players would learn English,” said Brian Dozier, a second baseman for the Washington Nationals. “Why not also flip that expectation?”*

It was in winter of 2012, in the skinny streets of Margarita, Venezuela, that Brian Dozier first felt like an outsider.

He knew a little Spanish — took college classes, spoke slang with other Minnesota Twins, listened in the clubhouse — but it really wasn’t much. Now, playing winter ball after his rookie season in the major leagues, he struggled to order at restaurants, he couldn’t get the check, and he couldn’t ask for directions once he wandered through the island town.

So Dozier made a promise to himself and kept it in the following years: He was going to learn a second language, help his Latin teammates not feel this way in the United States and, in turn, maybe other American players would follow.

“I’ve been surprised that not a ton of guys have really learned it outside of the baseball talk and basic conversation,” said Dozier, now a 32-year-old second baseman for the Washington Nationals, who is nearly fluent in Spanish even if he still struggles with irregular verb tenses. “It certainly is hard. But for so long it’s just been understood that Latin players would learn English. Why not also flip that expectation?”

Reprinted from *The Washington Post*. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search: <https://wapo.st/2Z8rvud>

*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 Gina and Tom Biglin, LVA tutors

It takes more than a bit of skill to make this team: It requires commitment, enthusiasm, and, most of all, a sincere concern for adult literacy students. Workouts occur every Tuesday.



“Team Tuesday” is the name used to describe a growing number

of LVA tutors who meet their students at the Bloomfield Public Library on one of its busiest mornings: Tuesdays.

The nickname was offered by Gina and Tom Biglin, a married couple that tutors. Their intent was to try to describe the friendly spirit and supportive nature they’ve experienced with tutors who work with different groups in close proximity to theirs.

Team members Gina and Tom each had each spent 35+ years working in corporate America before retiring. But they didn’t want to spend their free time just sitting around.

“We retired with a goal of volunteering,” Tom said. “We took the Master Gardeners of Essex County course and have been volunteers there. However, we wanted to do something more directly beneficial to help people in the area.”

With a little bit of research they found LVA. “It is a great program,” Tom said. “We can do it together and it seems like the perfect fit. Trainer Mary Kao was great. The other trainees were as nervous as we were.”

“You have to break out of your comfort zone,” explained Gina. “We have been very fortunate and feel we want to help others. We know that reading, writing, and speaking are critical skills to all and want to help out with those who want to better communicate.”

And although they tutor separately – Tom with an ESL group and Gina with a basic literacy student – they frequently consult one another on their techniques and ideas, creating something of a team within a team.

“When things go well and you are excited, you can share with someone who understands the satisfaction of seeing a student own it,” Tom said.

“The buddy system of lesson planning has been good for us,” Tom added. “We are each doing our own thing but we are on the same page.”

### New Jersey Association of Lifelong Learning Writing Contest

At New Jersey Association for Life Long Learning's Annual Conference in May, LVA student Martha Diaz was awarded second place for fiction for her story, A Man and His Violin in the 2019 Adult Learner Writing Contest. Martha was also part of a workshop during the conference: "Presentations and Discussion with Learning Writing Contest Winners," where she read her story and talked about her writing process with other winners. She volunteers in the LVA office and is also part of our English-Spanish Language Exchange too

LVA student Sara Chekouh won second place for Poetry for her entry My Kitchen, My Home in NJALL's 2019 Adult Learner Writing Contest. Sara is a friendly, hard working student and we so proud of her and all the students who participated. Please encourage your students to write, you never know where it might lead them. A magazine featuring submissions to the contest and will be available for download as a free PDF at [www.NJALL.org](http://www.NJALL.org).

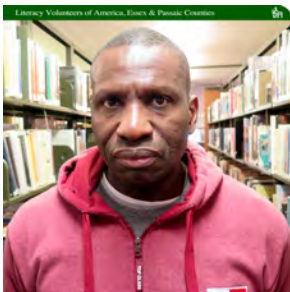


## New Jersey Association of Lifelong Learning Writing Contest (cont.)



Lily writes beautifully about watching the natural world and being one with the earth in her poem **The World and Me**. Keeping a watchful eye on the arrival of flowers at the time of the Chinese lunar calendar, and then the seasons as they change, Lily's poem won an **Online Mention**. Lily's love and concern about the natural world flow through her poetry.

The scents and flavors of her cooking come alive, bringing joy to her family and new neighbors in Sara's poem **My Kitchen, My Home**. Her cooking evokes memories of her mother's home in Morocco and her neighbors, you can almost taste the couscous when she writes about her kitchen being her home. Sara won **Second Place** for her poem.



Clifford, who is now in the military reserves, served in Iraq and Guantanamo Bay and wrote a tender story, **A Young Boy's Dream**. The night before a field trip to the zoo, a little boy has a bad dream about an elephant in the kitchen and was frightened. The field trip is filled with adventures, from visiting the elephants, to a lost coin and more. Clifford's story won an **Honorable Mention**.

A trained CPA in Colombia, Martha also loves music, which are evident in her story, **A Man and His Violin**. It tells the story of family, freedom and pain shared through the beauty of music. The hours and hours of practice as a child, helped the man share his joy and frustrations throughout life in his country. Martha won **Third Place** for her story.



Edilma's memoir **My Dream in the USA**, tells her story of being known as Professor of business at a university in Columbia to the lows of working in a warehouse in New Jersey. Edilma never lost her enthusiasm, humor or energy despite the challenges she faced at the warehouse job. She writes of her experiences and living her dream. "Do you have a dream? Do you have a goal? If you want, you can do it," she wrote. She won an **Online Mention**.

## Essex County College – Adult Learning Center – 2019 Dreams of a Better Tomorrow A Collection of Memoirs, Poetry and Intrigue



Who doesn't dream of being a super hero when they are little? Clifford wrote **The Little Superman**, a story about a little boy's dreams of being Superman and playing football. A football injury nearly break's his father's heart and the little boy's dream.

Wondering what it would be like to be 16 again, Damien wrote about in her memoir **Sixteen** about moving from Jamaica as a teen. She went to a training center to learn job skills and wonder what life would have been if she went to an American high school.



Malala is a name familiar to many, but Gurpreet wrote about the terrible terrorist attack on the young Pakastani girl and how she sympathized with her. Her story, **A Young Living Legend**, writes about the impact this young woman had on the world and on the writer.

Waking the middle of the night with a mind spinning with ideas and questions, Karima remembers the time before her baby was born. Her middle of the night worries were calmed when she placed her hand on her growing belly.



Ligia moved from her native country of Columbia and wrote **Remembrance of Yesterday** about the turbulent time in her early days of parenting in a difficult marriage. And the surprise life held for her in the U.S. Little by little her painful memories have been replaced by happiness.

Thinking about her mom's most common sayings to her, Seung wrote **Yes, I'd Love to Have More Mom**. She doesn't remember being told to do her homework, or clean her room. Seung's memories were all about eating three meals a day and snacks.



Seung's eyes glowed with light when she saw the printout of her library books, the bottom of the receipt showed how much she'd saved by borrowing instead of buying. Her tutor was a great influence in library borrowing too, Seung wrote about her love of libraries in **How I Became a Library Enthusiast**.