



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



Delighted to have had Karen Cardell during February's Tutor Support Workshops discussing "Strategies for Distance Learning." Karen, a long-time LVA tutor, helped the team focus on how to plan and prepare materials to make their online tutoring sessions flow more smoothly. Thank you, Karen!

The Insider

Greetings LVA family!

As spring begins to bloom, we are excited to share with you the latest updates, success stories, and upcoming events from our vibrant community, which is dedicated to promoting literacy and education.

Be sure to read Hanler's story in this edition. Hanler came from the Dominican Republic in 2019, seeking to support his son and provide him with the right opportunities for his growth and development. Along the way, he realized how important learning English was for even the most basic things, such as communicating with his son's teachers. Having left a career in marketing behind, he's looking forward to developing his career here and eventually owning his own business.

In this issue, we are also so glad to share with you Maritza Chang's story. As an immigrant, she started as a student of English as a Second Language, earning accolades along the way including being awarded as Student of the Year at LVA. She worked incredibly hard and now works at the Bloomfield Public Library, and recently agreed to join our board of directors. Maritza exemplifies progress, and we are so grateful to have her voice representing the story of the many students we serve!

We also wanted to take the opportunity to congratulate our Sydney Eckerling, for joining the team in a new position as Education Coordinator. Sydney is an active tutor with five students, a certified teacher, and a mom of two beautiful boys. You can learn more about her in last month's newsletter.

And be sure to read this month's Feature Story "Q&A: How the 50-year-old case that transformed English learner education began." The story discusses a Supreme Court case that decided that students learning English had the right to understand what was being taught in the classrooms and changed education for English learners in the U.S.

In the News

Copy and paste the highlighted website into an internet search bar to view the following stories.

"Many Basic Money Questions Stump U.S. Adults — How to Boost Your Financial Literacy" U.S. News & World Report. <https://bit.ly/4cflhxQ>

"A new starring role for video captions: Language learning" Phys.org. <https://bit.ly/3T17iud>

"A Reading List for Women's History Month 2024" Community of Literary Magazines and Presses. <https://bit.ly/4cpspsU>

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Getting to Know Us Hanler, LVA student

Hanler's journey to success is an inspiring tale of perseverance, resilience, and dedication. Originally from the Dominican Republic, Hanler left behind his job in pharmaceutical marketing and his home country to provide a better future for his son and pursue better job opportunities in the United States.

Learning English was a crucial step for Hanler in communicating with his son's teachers and pursuing better job opportunities. He started his English journey at the Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) and eventually enrolled in the NCC Adult Learning Center before finding his way back to LVA. Despite the pandemic's challenges, Hanler's progress in learning English has been impressive, thanks to his dedication and hard work.

Although he still needs to work on organizing his thoughts and practicing conversations, Hanler has made significant strides in understanding the language. His teachers at LVA have acknowledged his growth and improvement, and he continues to immerse himself in English language resources such as YouTube channels and podcasts.

Despite being a single father and a pharmacy delivery driver, Hanler makes time for his studies, attending LVA sessions twice a week. He credits his teachers, Mr. Bod and Ms. Stephanie, for their support and encouragement, which have motivated him to persevere through challenges and work towards his goals.

For Hanler, success is not just about achieving fluency in English; it's about the discipline, passion, and resilience he embodies every day. He believes that persistence and determination are the keys to success and emphasizes the importance of never giving up, even in the face of obstacles.

Looking to the future, Hanler envisions pursuing a career in marketing in the USA and dreams of starting his own business. His ambition and drive, fueled by his desire to provide a better life for his son, continue to propel him forward on his journey to success.

Hanler's story is evidence of the resolute nature of the human spirit and inspires all who face challenges on their path to success. His unwavering determination and commitment to his goals remind us that anything is possible with hard work, perseverance, and relentless pursuit of our dreams.

Hanler came to the U.S. in 2019 from the Dominican Republic. He shares: "It was never my intention to immigrate to the United States, but my family lives here and I understood that this step was important for my son's development and learning."

Tutor Training Workshops

Online Training, by TBD
Platform: Zoom (sponsored by LNJ)
Wednesdays, 9:30 - 11:30 am
May 15, 22, 29, June 5, 12, & 19, 2024

Online Training, by TBD
Platform: Zoom (sponsored by LNJ)
Tuesdays, 6 to 8 pm
June 4, 11, 18, 25, July 2, & 9, 2024

Tutor Support Workshop

"Tips & Tricks -Reading Skills," with, Dr. Barbara Trueger
Platform: Google Meet
Thursday, April 18, 2024, 11 am - 12:30 pm

Coffee Hour with Tutors

with Cheryl Locastro

Thursday, May 9, 2024, at 3 pm (General in-person meeting)
<http://www.lvaep.org/workshops.html>

Literacy opens a wide door to life. Help us keep that door open with your donation!

Thanks in large part to you, we can aid hundreds of students each year. Please continue your efforts to improve the lives of others by giving the gift of literacy.
<http://www.lvaep.org/donate.html>



Q&A: How the 50-year-old case that transformed English learner education began

Written by **Zaidee Stavelly**
March 15, 2024

Fifty years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court decided a case that would forever change education for English learners in this country.

In the 1974 case *Lau v. Nichols*, the court decided that students learning English had a right to fully understand what was being taught in their classrooms, and that schools must take steps to make sure that they could, whether through additional instruction in English as a second language or bilingual education.

Prior to the Supreme Court's decision, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals had said that San Francisco Unified was not discriminating against students by giving them the same materials and instruction as other students.

Rather, it said the alleged discrimination was "the result of deficiencies created by the children themselves in failing to learn the English language."

The Supreme Court disagreed. "There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education," wrote Justice William O. Douglas in the majority opinion.

The *Lau v. Nichols* case is named for one of the plaintiffs, a little boy named Kinney Lau, who had recently emigrated from Hong Kong. Kinney Lau's first grade teacher at Jean Parker Elementary School in San Francisco was Lucinda Lee Katz.

In an interview, Katz shared how this case marked her life, how it changed education for English learners and what remains to be done to give English learners full access to the same instruction as their peers.

For the full story please copy and paste the following link on your browser: <https://bit.ly/3VmOn1B>

Learning a new culture is more than studying a language. Tutoring is more than learning techniques. Our "Resources" webpage 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.)

Maritza Chang, LVA Board Member

Numerous challenges and obstacles marked Maritza Chang's journey from Peru to the United States. She arrived in August 2015, hoping to build a better future for her family. However, the road ahead was anything but easy.



As a clinical child psychologist in Peru, Maritza was deeply passionate about helping others and committed to education. Upon arriving in the U.S., she struggled with language proficiency and finding work. She sought out resources and support, eventually connecting with Literacy Volunteers of America to learn English.

Through sheer determination and steady perseverance, Maritza's language skills flourished. She not only mastered English but also embraced her newfound language as a tool for independence and empowerment. With her enhanced communication abilities, she managed to secure a job as a Bilingual Library Assistant at the Bloomfield Public Library, where she contributes to various programs and initiatives.

Maritza's journey is a testament to the endless possibilities that exist for those who dare to dream. With a compassionate heart, she inspires those around her through hard work, perseverance, and a lifelong commitment to learning. Her contributions to Literacy Volunteers of America have been significant, and she now serves on their Board of Directors.

Maritza's enthusiasm for fostering literacy and cultural exchange reflects her deep belief in education opening doors. Her journey is a shining example of how resilience, determination, and hard work can overcome even the most challenging obstacles. Her story reminds us that opportunities exist for those who are willing to take risks and pursue their dreams.

As she looks to the future, Maritza's aspirations include furthering her education and obtaining a master's degree, all while paving the way for her daughters to pursue their dreams.

Maritza's contributions to Literacy Volunteers of America have been significant, and she now serves on their Board of Directors. Her enthusiasm for fostering literacy and cultural exchange reflects her deep belief in education opening doors. Maritza's journey is a shining example of how resilience, determination, and hard work can overcome even the most challenging obstacles. Her story is a reminder that opportunities exist for those who are willing to take risks and work hard.