



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



LVAEP President of the Board Sally E. Rice, and staff enjoying an Ecuadorian feast to celebrate the holidays in December.

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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The Insider

Greetings LVA Family,

It's February and, in case you're not totally fed up with Super Bowl news, here's a side story from festivities associated with the big game:

For his efforts to promote literacy, two-time Super Bowl champion Chris Long was named the 2018 Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year, an honor given for outstanding community service activities off the field as well as excellence on the field. The Philadelphia Eagles defensive end created the "First Quarter for Literacy" program last year, a campaign that provides under-served families with books, literacy resources and mentoring services. All in all, 75,000 books were donated to the program, according to an Eagles press release. Chris's efforts were not just administrative: He donated his first four game checks of this past season to the program. He was also recognized for his campaign to provide clean drinking water to communities in East Africa.

In the news, an opinion writer argues that legislation which states that a student enrolled in ESL instruction complete degree requirements in English within three years is an unrealistic deadline. It simply takes longer, he contends. Find this and other stories in the links below.

Speaking of deadlines, this week is the last for adult students to submit their entries for the New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning's 2019 Learner Writing Contest. The deadline for the five-category contest, which offers to students cash prizes and a unique opportunity to have their work published, has been extended to February 15. Details @ www.njall.org

In the News

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

'Adult Literacy Is A Real Problem. How Do We Fix It?'
National Public Radio <https://n.pr/2WUJ16p>

'Learning English: Five adult students, in their own words.'
Hartford Courant <https://bit.ly/2RNwxbt>

'The problems with accelerated learning of ESL (Opinion).'
Inside Higher Ed <https://bit.ly/2Vc6k0r>

'Brother and sister reunite and then finish high school 20 years after dropping out.'
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
<https://bit.ly/2DixRNB>



Getting to Know Us Perseveranda, LVA student

The internet connects people in a variety of ways and LVA student Perseveranda can attest to that first hand with the charming story of a lovestruck suitor who is now her husband and father to their son.

Perseveranda met Norberto online, she was living in Peru and he, originally from Puerto Rico, was living in New Jersey. They got to know each other some before they actually met. Norberto flew nearly 8 hours to meet her in person the first time and was besotted. "He proposed to me the first day he saw me," she said remembering that day more than ten years ago.

"I was a little insecure, I didn't know enough about him," she said. "I said I need to know him a little bit more and he said ok, no problem." Norberto visited Peru many times. "Finally, I said yes," she admits laughing shyly. Iquitos is a port city on the Amazon River in Peru where she grew up the eighth of eleven children.

When she arrived as a new bride in New Jersey she was clear about her goals. "I told my husband I want to learn English, the country is the language and I want to learn," Perseveranda said. She wished she knew English when she arrived with great expectations of new opportunities, but Perseveranda has no regrets.

"Learning English has been my luck charm, it has brought me many opportunities here," she said. Perseveranda found LVA after a visit to the Belleville Public Library to ask about learning English in 2013. "They sent me here," she said. Her tutors are Yolanda McBride and Janet Piorko.

After studying, she earned her driver's license after taking the test in English. Perseveranda got a job as a middle school lunch aid at a school in Jersey City and became a citizen in 2016. "And last summer I brought my parents here for the summer and I did all the visa work myself in English," she said with great pride. She now works as a classroom monitor in the Belleville schools.

While she misses some things from her homeland, Perseveranda is clear about her goals and wants to let others thinking of coming here to know the importance of language. "I would tell them to learn English first before coming here," she said. "That would be my advice to future arrivers."

Employment, a driver's license, and citizenship are only some of the English language goals reached by Perseveranda, a student from Peru.

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, 11:00-12:30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

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

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

Belleville Public Library – by Carolyn Van Doren
221 Washington Avenue
Belleville, NJ 07109
Saturdays, 10:00-1:00 pm
March 16, 23, 30, April 6, 13, & 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.lvanewark.org/donatetolva/> or by mailing us a check.



An adult literacy class in the Trump era: 'This is a safe space'

By Kimberly Redmond, Rockland/Westchester Journal
January 10, 2019

One morning in January 2018, Jacqui Lunchick walked into a classroom at Rockland BOCES and found several students in tears.

The day's headlines revolved about President Trump's description of Haiti, El Salvador and some parts of Africa as "s---hole countries" during a White House meeting on U.S. immigration policies. Trump suggested limiting the number of people coming to the U.S. from those places.

The distraught students were part of an adult literacy program. Many were immigrants. Some undocumented.

"They were crying – but they were here," said Lunchick, Rockland BOCES' literacy coordinator. "Because they know they need the service and they know we will welcome them here no matter what."

Rockland BOCES has been offering an adult literacy program for over 60 years, serving generations of immigrants. All 37 regional BOCES across New York state have adult literacy programs, among the many such programs long offered by community colleges, libraries and other institutions. When Trump was elected, though, after promising to slow immigration and deport undocumented immigrants, administrators at Rockland BOCES thought that enrollment in adult literacy classes might fall.

Reprinted from the Rockland/Westchester Journal. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search:
<https://tinyurl.com/y814778a>

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 Sherri Smith, LVA tutor

LVA tutor Sherri Smith has always cut a glamorous figure when meeting with her students or attending a tutor support workshop. She's filled with a quiet determination to help her ESL and basic literacy students succeed. She also knows the hard work it takes to learn a new language.



Sherri, a New Jersey native, speaks fluent business French and worked in France as an international business woman. You can see the flair she brings to her style with hats, scarves and accessories that appear to be a combination of her time in France and her parents' attention to their own style. That great attention to detail also shows in her tutoring with LVA.

"I enjoy when people learn something new and get that smile on their face," her own face breaking into a sunny grin. Sherri volunteered as a tutor in Washington D.C. before moving back to New Jersey and joining LVA in 2014. She'd seen a student flyer and had a hunch LVA might need tutors too. Sherri was right and she's a pro, using sight words, sustained reading, learner experience stories and role playing with her students Freddie and Ana.

"I enjoy the sight words the most," she says. Sight words help her give her students examples they can use in their daily lives and allow them to participate in the lessons too. "I'm also glad I have an opportunity for the student to be empowered and motivated through literacy," Sherri said.

Sherri brings a business perspective to teaching, she's very organized, uses process and is extremely professional in all her dealings. After studying business finance in school, she went on to work for Prudential and Dean Witter.

To break the ice with her students, Sherri starts each week by asking how her students are doing. She also finds giving them a short break to stretch their legs or use the restroom goes a long way toward a successful tutoring session.

As for what her students have taught her, Sherri doesn't hesitate to tell me. "I've developed more patience as a tutor," she said recalling times a student couldn't make a class.

If Sherri had a superpower, she would grant world peace and literacy throughout the world. Giving to others is a tenet of her life. "I believe in helping people out, that's at the core of my being," Sherri said. "That's why LVA is such a perfect match for me."