

The Literacy Letter

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LVSC's Annual Meeting and Recognition Night Celebrates Achievement

The LVSC Annual Meeting and Recognition Night is an inspiring and invigorating event held in June. This year, more than 65 students, tutors, volunteers, teachers, staff and board members came together for a wonderful evening of fellowship and delicious food! Hard working students and creative, caring tutors and teachers inspired us with their stories of dedication and determination. Executive Director Jay Muldoon presented an upbeat report on LVSC's progress and Board President Martha Davis led the Board of Trustees in approving the 2015-2016 budget and the slate of Board officers. Feedback from attendees was glowing, so we hope you'll consider joining us at next year's Annual Meeting.



Congratulations to 2014-2015 Award Recipients

- LVSC Student of the Year:
Elizabeth Troschianec
- LVSC Tutor of the Year:
Rosanne & Brian Bozzone
- LVSC Volunteer of the Year:
Donna Sturm
- LVSC Community Service Award: **Brian Auger & the Somerset County Library System**
- Spotlight Learning ESL Student Awards: **Valeria Reis & Sen Yang**



Thoughts from Martha Davis, LVSC Board President

Where has the summer gone? It seems all too soon that we must start transitioning into the busy routines of autumn as we reluctantly bid farewell to carefree days spent at the shore with family and friends, to summer vacations at far away destinations, and to leisure times spent on the back porch.

Even though we lament the spontaneity of summer, at Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County (LVSC) we are looking forward to exciting events, to additional programs, and to an overall successful Fiscal Year with renewed energy and vitality.

We are now focusing on our new tutor training classes that began on October 2, six conversation groups at local libraries, and on in-service sessions, with the Basic Literacy tutors session as early as November.

A new project, 'The Tutor Club,' is led by Natalia Black, a fairly new tutor with LVSC. Natalia presented her idea to the Board of how sharing experiences and suggestions among new and experienced tutors can favorably benefit them and their students and also promote camaraderie and a closer relationship between our tutors and the office. Please look for email reminders for future meetings. Thank you, Natalia. We wish 'The Tutor Club' much success!

Please mark your calendars for Friday, November 6th for the Annual Soiree at the Bridgewater Library. The evening promises to be a lot of fun with plenty of good food, refreshments and Hitchcockian Suspense entertainment. For more information, go to our website literacysomerset.org, or call the office at 908-725-5430.

I would also like to mention, that we are planning to have our Annual Appreciation Tea for tutors and volunteers sometime in the month of January 2016. We will contact you in plenty of time for you to reserve the date – the Board, Jay Muldoon and I are grateful for the opportunity to show our appreciation for the time and the caring that our tutors, students, assessors, volunteers and friends give to LVSC.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge and thank private individuals for their contributions, family foundations, corporations and other organizations who have so generously donated to our work to improve lives through literacy.

Notes from our Tutors

Thank you tutors for providing these great student success stories!

- C. now knows how to greet someone on the phone in a business setting, how to transition the business conversation, and how to politely end business conversations. He is a very diligent student and is taking the program seriously - it's very inspiring to me. I am so happy to be working with him.
- B. has been preparing to go on job interviews. We've been working on her grammar and understanding

what is required when she is being interviewed. I've been working with her to help gain confidence and feel comfortable.

- C. has once again started working. She was very proud to have conducted the initial interview in English.
- M. has shown great improvement. She is more confident using the telephone both at work and for personal matters. She proudly announced that she is able to order food for herself at restaurants without help from her sister.

- D. has been improving her grasp of vocabulary and American conversation related to education. She says it is helpful when communicating with her children's teachers and looking at the high school electives her son is choosing.
- F. has done very well in his first month. He can now say and write his address and phone number. His biggest accomplishment this month was understanding coin values, how to make change, and how to ask what something costs.

Would you like to support some of the great LVSC programs featured in this newsletter? The easiest way to donate is online at literacysomerset.org. Or, you can mail a check payable to LVSC, 120 Finderne Avenue–Box 7, Bridgewater, NJ 08807. If you'd like to make a long-term gift, please call us for more information about including LVSC in your will. Thank you for your support!

Annual Report from Jay Muldoon, Executive Director

Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015



LVSC continued to evolve to meet the growing need for adult literacy services in Somerset County. Some highlights of our program expansion include:

- New U.S. Citizenship Preparation Classes
- Five English Conversation Groups, including a new group at Manville
- Three Tutor Training Classes
- Three “How’s It Going” & Tutor In-Service Sessions
- ESL Classes by Spotlight Learning offered at PeopleCare Center
- Faster assessment of new students by expanded Student Assessment team

We also continued to strengthen our financial position through:

- Grants, donations, and events generating over \$100,000
- Successful and fun *Sleepy Hollow Soiree* and *Literacy Lounge* events

Snapshot of our programs and students served:

- 190 volunteer tutors served 220 ESL and Basic Literacy students
- 91 new students assessed
- 46 new tutors trained
- 5 Conversation Groups served 100+ students
- ESL classes taught by Spotlight Learning teachers served 53 learners
- U.S. Citizenship Preparation classes offered in Manville and Bound Brook prepared 17 students for their citizenship test

Our success is a direct result of the work, dedication, and generosity of our tutors, volunteers, teachers, tutor trainers, donors, staff, and Board members. We sincerely thank you and look forward to another successful year at LVSC.

Tutoring Corner *For and About Tutors*

Tutor Club Being Formed

By Natalia Black

Once I got accepted into the LVSC tutor training program I was so excited. The training was a great experience - the teachers were wonderful and I could not wish for better fellow tutors. After completing our training, we were matched with our students and started to serve as tutors. For most of us, tutoring was a very new role. After a few sessions with my students, I started to send emails to my fellow tutor classmates to find out how everybody was doing. Most of my friends were happy to share something about their tutoring experience. In June some of us met at the

LVSC Annual Meeting, a wonderful event, where we enjoyed amazing stories, delicious food and fun giveaways. After talking at the Annual Meeting we decided to meet for coffee and chat about our students, about the best ways to prepare for tutoring sessions, etc. We met at the local Panera Bread cafe to share our tutoring experiences, to discuss our teaching methods and to think how to motivate our students. It was an enjoyable evening - we shared our thoughts and ideas about tutoring, as well as success stories. At the end of the meeting we decided to meet again and on an ongoing basis. That is how the LVSC Tutor Club was born! We are happy to extend an invitation to all LVSC tutors to participate in the club.

You are all welcome to attend the Tutor Club meetings. There is no formal agenda. At our club meetings you will:

- meet other tutors in fun and social atmosphere
- learn from experienced tutors
- ask and answer questions, for example: “How can I motivate my student to do homework?”
- realize that other tutors have very similar questions and concerns
- have fun

Do not hesitate to bring your own topics and ideas! It is always great to have a buddy, somebody who is in the same boat and who understands you. **If you’d like to join the club please email me, Natalia Black, at blackn121@gmail.com.**

Clothing for a Cause

Through Carecycle Inc., LVSC raises thousands of dollars every year by placing clothing donation bins throughout the community. Please consider dropping your used clothing in one of our bins in **Manville at the Chester House** (North Main Street) or in **Bound Brook at ShopRite** (West Union Avenue). We are looking for additional clothing bin locations! Please call the LVSC office if you know of a potential site.

Auto Donations



Donate your used automobile and get a tax deduction! It’s quick and easy, and LVSC will receive a financial contribution as a result of your donation. To learn more, please call the LVSC office at (908) 725-5430.

Design for the newsletter provided by Jessica Ngo, freelance designer.

609.922.2848

Funding News

We extend our gratitude to the following corporations and foundations for their recent grants and donations:

- Amboy Bank
- Macy's
- MagyarBank Charitable Foundation
- Pheasant Hill Foundation
- PSEG Foundation
- Ullmann Family Foundation
- WalMart – Branchburg
- United Way of Northern New Jersey Women's Leadership Council

Help Wanted

At LVSC, there are so many ways to get involved. Please call the LVSC office for more information on any of the following opportunities:

- Become a tutor or recruit a tutor
- Lead a Conversation Group
- Teach a U.S. Citizenship Preparation class
- Train to be a student assessor
- Join a Special Events Committee
- Assist with mailings and light office work
- Photograph an event
- Volunteer to gift wrap at Barnes & Noble during the holiday season



**Literacy Volunteers
of Somerset County**

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Jay Muldoon, *Executive Director*
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Congratulations to 9 Newly Trained Volunteer Tutors!

Spring 2015 Graduates

Jim Cline
Simon Ellison
Jennifer Long
Wendy Messier
Susan Pristas

Deb Santucci
Dawn Sharp
Judith Winston
Joann Witkus

Don't miss this! Buy your tickets now.

LVSC Presents NIGHT *at the* LIBRARY

**November 6, 2015
7 pm - 10 pm**

SCLSNJ Bridgewater Library branch
1 Vogt Drive, Bridgewater

\$55 Early-Bird Special (*before 10.23.2015*)
\$60 Individual Ticket
\$105 Pair of Tickets

RSVP: 908.725.5430
or LiteracySomerset.org

AN EVENING OF HITCHCOCKIAN SUSPENSE
Starring Hitchcock Expert Sidney Gottlieb, PhD

TO BENEFIT LVSC PROGRAMS