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CONNECTIONS

Literacy Volunteers Association Cape- Atlantic, Inc.

Spring & Summer Newsletter 2010

Our Most Rewarding Event



Student Award Winner James Woodson Sr. and tutor Kathy Palmentieri



Students and their tutors enjoy Tutor/Student Recognition Night at Greate Bay Country Club in Somers Point.



Left: Tutor Mike Kammer and student Ba Khuu

Below: Student Maria Martinez and her tutor Amanda Wachter

Bottom: Tutor Noreen Tkacz and student Danuta Pawlowska

Greate Bay Country Club was once again the scene for our Tutor/Student Recognition Night, the time when our Board, staff and supporters get to celebrate the wonderful volunteers and their students who make us proud to be a part of Literacy Volunteers Association Cape-Atlantic. Following our Annual Meeting, guests were treated to a buffet of hors d'oeuvres, while Board Members and staff paid tribute to our tutors and students. "Our tutors represent that better side of our human nature," Executive Director

Sheila McLaughlin said. "They heard a call for help, and they responded. They've joined the heroes of our community because they were listening." She noted the courage of the students, too. "Their struggles and sacrifices are also heroic." President Clark Doran was hailed as the consummate volunteer who has worked tirelessly to ensure the success of all of our endeavors. During an open-mic session, tutors and their students spoke movingly of their experiences working with one another.





Sheila McLaughlin

LVA's Popular Harvest Cruise to Set Sail Oct. 7

Make your reservations early! On Thursday, Oct. 7, at Gardner's Basin we will launch our third annual Harvest Cruise at 5:30 p.m. We've been promised perfect weather again this year!

Tickets are **\$40** for the hour-long cruise and for a buffet dinner afterwards at The Flying Cloud Café.

Thanks to volunteer **Caitlin Honan** for the wonderful job she did laying out our newsletter

Congratulations **Nissi Peram** who completed Winter Tutor Training at Boscov's and was inadvertently omitted from our previous newsletter.

From the Executive Director

Is literacy a luxury? It seems an absurd question, but in these difficult economic times the impact that low-level literacy has on the quality of life for individuals and our communities is often overlooked among what are perceived as more pressing concerns: job loss, foreclosures on homes, violence, hunger, poverty. Our cause, the cause of helping people improve their English language skills, may seem a lesser imperative. But is it really? Here are some telling statistics: approximately 50% of the nation's unemployed youth, ages 16 to 21, are functional illiterates. More than three out of four people on welfare, 85 % of unwed mothers and 68% of those arrested are illiterate. In a study of 20 "high income" countries, the U.S.

ranked 12th on literacy tests. Forty-six percent of American adults cannot understand the labels on their prescription medicines. In terms of dollars and cents, what does this all mean? Illiteracy costs American

"Our cause may seem a lesser imperative. But is it really?"

taxpayers an estimated \$20 billion each year. It has been proven to be the cause of children dropping out of school. Dropouts cost our nation \$240 billion in social services expenditures and lost tax revenues. Based on this information, I think we can agree that illiteracy is a pretty compelling issue with far-reaching implications for the culture, the economy and our future. Literacy Volunteers Association Cape-

Atlantic is in a tough competition with other worthy organizations for the attention of the public and the charitable dollar. This year, we experienced a 24% cut overall in funding from two of our major funding sources. Despite these losses, we intend to continue our efforts operating in a cost effective way, innovating where we can, expanding where we must and advocating for the program that has endured in our community for twenty-six years. We know that because we rely heavily on volunteers, we provide a high return on contributed funds. We know that what we do is important, and we know that literacy is no luxury. It is, rather, a vital sign of the health of a community.

Tutor Reminders:

Please don't forget to submit your tutor time sheet each month. You can e-mail, fax, or call in your hours. It is vital that we get this information for our funding.

Please let us know if your student obtained employment or citizenship while being tutored.

There are many resources for tutors and students at the LVA Learning Center. Stop by our Pleasantville office and take a book.

Welcome Anne Osman

Anne Osman has joined LVA-CA as Program Director. Anne is an experienced Adult Educator having taught ESL classes at both Cumberland County College and Atlantic Cape Community College. A graduate of Rutgers Douglass College with a B.A. in English, Anne has also done graduate work in English as a Second Language education. She has completed LVA-CA's tutor training, and has lead sev-

eral Conversation Groups since coming onboard in February. Her role as Program Director includes arranging Tutor Training Workshops, facilitating tutor/student pairs, and assisting in our fundraisers. "We are glad to have someone with Anne's experience and enthusiasm in our program, and we look forward to working with her," Executive Director Sheila McLaughlin said.



Student Stories Contest Winners

We are pleased to present the stories of the winners in our Student Stories contest. Their efforts reveal how much they have progressed in both confidence and skill after working with their dedicated tutors. We know that writing is often the most difficult part of language acquisition, and we applaud the work our students have put into their stories. Here they are.

I am very happy with the improvement that I have made with my tutor. I think she is a very nice lady. I feel that my reading skill has increased. We work with books and magazines that I have an interest in. She shows a lot of patience with me, and she makes me feel comfortable with learning. I like my studies with my tutor.

– JOHN ERIC MOORE
Tutor Karen Andrews

I feel great today, learning English with teacher Ann.

She does not speak Spanish and I speak a little English but everybody learns, me too!! I think our classes are fun and interesting. Our classes are forcing me to learn.

– JOSE LOAYZA
Tutor Ann Karver

I met Anne in August, 2009. She called me on the telephone and we agreed to meet at the Atlantic City Library every Tuesday at 10:00. Sometimes we meet on Fridays. We have been meeting every week at that time since August. I think I am doing very well. Anne and I work together to help me be more knowledgeable about the English language. We do many different exercises. I have learned the parts of speech. We also use the computer, the Mango program. Anne thinks that I'm doing quite well.

– SILVIA ENCISO
Tutor Anne Migatz

One year ago me and Kathy started to read. I was shy and quiet until I felt comfortable. I wanted to learn how to read better to help out my job and read the book for first aid and cpr because learning how to read better helps open doors. This year I took my first aid test and got a 94!! And I got re-tested at the literacy office and scored 100 points higher. We go to Borders and we went to the wetlands institute. I work for the ARC. We try to give back to people who need. I have taken Kathy to a horse ranch and on a fundraising walk on the boardwalk. I have been improving my reading. I like to read about animals and the earth and how to save the planet. With my tutor helping me we both have learned a lot.

– KATHY BROWN
Tutor Kathy White

ProLiteracy Accreditation: A Challenging and Worthwhile Process

Literacy Volunteers Association Cape-Atlantic has been an accredited by ProLiteracy America since 2003. ProLiteracy is the only body that accredits local adult education and literacy organizations in the United States. Accreditation raises the credibility and enhances the visibility of literacy organizations as members of their communities and as effective participants in the greater adult education system. Renewing our accreditation this year has been a time-consuming effort that has required us to review how well we are meeting the high standards of a quality adult education program. We are confident that following a site visit and review of our work by ProLiteracy, our accreditation will be renewed.

Health Literacy Programming Off to a Great Start

Our partnership with AtlantiCare to deliver health literacy programs funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has been flourishing with programs delivered at the Spanish Community Center and Sovereign Avenue School. More are planned, according to Ann Shaw Health Literacy Coordinator for LVA-CA, in the Hammonton area and in Cape May County. "It's been a pleasure working with Christine Guzman and her group at AtlantiCare to bring this important program to the community," Ann said.

Attention tutors: Do you have a special skill or interest that you would like to teach to a small group for a limited time? If so, please contact the LVA office at **383-3377**. We're looking for volunteers who would like to provide instruction for citizenship preparation, pronunciation, writing, family literacy, or other topic of interest to our learners!

Harrah's Foundation Grant

Alyce Parker, Vice President of Public Affairs for Harrah's Atlantic City Operations, has advised us that LVA-CA will be receiving a \$10,000 grant from The Harrah's Foundation. Harrah's has been a great friend to Literacy Volunteers and we are grateful to Alyce for her continuing support of our work.



A Taste of Summer

We welcomed the summer season in June with our Taste of Summer Event at Steve & Cookie's by the Bay in Margate. Once again, Cookie Till was the perfect hostess bringing together farmers, bakers and vintners to provide their specialties for our guests at a celebration of all things local. Music was provided by popular local entertainer Jennifer Shieh, who delighted the crowd with her keyboard and vocal artistry. A Silent Auction featuring unique gift items completed the evening's festivities. We would like to thank our sponsors, AkPharma, Inc., AtlantiCare, Fox Rothschild, LLP., CapeBank Charitable Foundation, Schiff Enterprises, Harrah's, Ocean City Home Bank, Glenn Insurance and the Borgata Heart & Soul Foundation. Advertising was donated by The Press of Atlantic City and all printing was donated by Signal Graphics. Thanks to Cookie Till, her staff, and all our supporters.



Margate school children and their teachers display students' artwork



1.



5.

1.Cookie Till toasting a wine vendor



2.

2. Silent Auction items



3.

3. Tutor Kathy White enjoying Cookie's fine cuisine.



6.

4. Entertainer Jennifer Shieh and Board Member Ann Nguyen



4.

5. Senator James Whelan and Sandy Reid of The Press line up for Fred's baked goods



7.

6. Dr. Anne Petit Director Sheila McLaughlin, Corinne Epps, Pat Epps, and Ann Shaw

7.Board Member Patrice Leatherberry and her husband Duane Leatherberry

Literacy for Life Conference Brings Literacy To Life

Literacy Volunteers of NJ's annual conference is always an excellent learning, networking and fun opportunity for affiliates throughout the state. This year was no different. Held at the Conference Center on the campus of Montclair State University, the conference offered a rich menu of workshops including such topics as Health Literacy, Financial Literacy, Pronunciation and Grammar, Assisting Struggling Readers, Public Speaking and Writing Can be Fun. We were well represented with a busload of tutors, students, board members and staff making the trip. LVA-CA provided a bus for the group giving attendees an opportunity to get to know each

other and share their LVA experiences. Each spring, tutors and students are encouraged to participate in the Literacy for Life Conference. It's always an outstanding event for anyone who is interested in literacy. Attending this year were tutors Fran Wisov, Paula Bruno, Mea Solomon, Denise Schiavo, Noreen Tkacz, student James Woodson, Board Members Clark Doran, Patrice Leatherberry, and Nancy McKinney, and staff Sheila McLaughlin and Anne Osman. Thanks to Clark and Anne who drove the bus and Henry Goldsmith who rode shotgun.

LVA-CA's Award Winning Student James Woodson Sr.



Former LVNJ President Henry Goldsmith presents The 2010 Student Excellence Award to James Woodson, Sr.

The Literacy for Life Conference was even more special for us this year because student James Woodson Sr., received the Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey Student Excellence Award for 2010. James has been a student in our program since 2007 and for the past two years he has been tutored by Cathy Palmentieri. Together they have formed the kind of bond that all of us at Literacy Volunteers strive for. They have been enthusiastic spokespersons and advocates for adult literacy. James is highly motivated, committed to self-improvement, and is achieving his goals as a student. Cathy has been a dedicated

and innovative tutor whom James has described as "awesome." LVA congratulate James on his award. We are very proud of his progress.

The Fun of Group Learning in EHT



An enthusiastic group of adult learners have been meeting and working with LVA tutors at the Egg Harbor Township Senior Center for the past two years. The group of older adults with varying cul-

tural backgrounds, and English language skill levels, was first taught by LVA tutor Carey Kasky, and is now led by LVA tutor Diane Mozzo. They are very supportive of one another as they work to improve their English so that they can participate more fully in Senior Center activities including Bingo, special events, holiday celebrations and wellness workshops. Caroline Maltz, manager of

the center, says that the class participants truly enjoy the English classes, and she appreciates the efforts and dedication of the volunteer tutors who have made the Thursday morning sessions a success. "Having a literacy program at the Senior Center is a great opportunity for the seniors, and we look forward to having it continue and grow," she added.

KUDOS KORNER

Much thanks to tutor Diane Parker who has been volunteering in the LVA office. She has brought her expertise to a number of administrative tasks that have been left undone for some time. No job is too big or too small for Diane.

Tutor Diane Mozzo reports that her student, Gladys M., whose goal was to improve her English speaking skills so that she could obtain a job, attended a job fair at Showboat and following three interviews was offered a seasonal position. That's the kind of news we love to hear.

Kathy White reports that her tutoring experience with student Kathy Brown is one of the most fun and rewarding things that she does in her life. "My student amazes me with her dedication to bettering herself and even more, how she wants to help others around her." Student Kathy has announced that she and her tutor will be friends and a "reading team" forever. That's the spirit!

Virginia Baldwin proudly told us that her student Sergei has recently gotten a job. Employment was his goal for improving his English language skills. Good luck, Sergie, and thanks, Virginia.

Belaid Bouabboche, tutored by Mike Torpey has passed the citizenship test and became a U. S. citizen in June. Congratulations to Belaid on an outstanding achievement and to Mike for helping him reach his goal.

If you would like to have an LVA representative speak about our organization to your local social group or community service club, please contact the LVA office at 383-3377

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering with LVA or participating in the student program, please complete and return this form:

I am interested in:

- Becoming a tutor
- Becoming a student
- Helping with projects
- Making a donation

Literacy Volunteers Assn.
Cape-Atlantic, Inc.
743 N Main Street
Pleasantville, NJ 08232

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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Search Literacy Volunteers Association

Our Next Tutor Training
Where: Boscov's, EHT
When: 5 consecutive
Wednesday evenings
Time: 6pm to 9pm
Dates: Sept 22, 29, October 6, 13 & 20



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Our Mission Statement

We help individuals in Atlantic and Cape May counties improve their English language skills so they can participate more fully in family, workplace and community life.