

Announcements

October 3 & 17, 2009

Preparing to become a Tutor
Trainer
Camden County Library
Voorhees, NJ

October 22, 2009

State Director's Meeting
Bridgewater, NJ

December 5, 2009

Trainer Tune-up
Location TBA

April 24, 2010

Literacy for Life Conference
Montclair State University
Montclair, NJ

Inside this issue:

News and Events	2
New Students Served	3
Literacy Heroes	4 & 5
Financial Literacy	6
Literacy Advocate	7

Dear Friends,

I'd like to take this opportunity to share my plans with the LVNJ community. As Executive Director of LVNJ for the past 7 years, it has been my privilege to work with you. I am truly grateful to have known so many exceptional individuals who have inspired, mentored and energized me throughout my tenure at LVNJ.

I have been fortunate to be part of an organization that shares my belief that everyone has the right to achieve full literacy. Your commitment and actions have made it possible for adults to acquire the skills necessary to become more confident, productive and active members of their communities. Although I am no less enthusiastic about LVNJ and its mission, I have made the difficult decision to leave LVNJ by the end of this year. My interest in the field of health literacy has grown over the past few years. I would now like to focus my energies on addressing the literacy challenges posed by our health care system so we can improve health outcomes for everyone.

I am confident that LVNJ and our affiliate network will continue to be one of the most valuable non-profit initiatives serving the state of New Jersey. Through your efforts LVNJ will continue to help adults achieve their potential and create a legacy of literacy for their families and communities. I'd like to thank each of you personally for your dedication to the important work that you do and wish you the best in the future.

Most sincerely,
Elaine Director
Executive Director

LVNJ Establishes NJ Health Literacy Coalition

Participants at the Health Literacy Summit sponsored by Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey on April 3 strongly endorsed the creation of a statewide Health Literacy Coalition. LVNJ has taken a leadership role in founding and coordinating the initial activities of this organization. Our first coalition meeting was held at Johnson & Johnson headquarters in New Brunswick in June. The meeting brought together representatives from health care, public health, social service and adult literacy organizations to discuss the multitude of ways that literacy impacts health and health impacts literacy.



Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula, District 17, addressed the Summit participants in the morning session and spoke about the importance of health literacy.

Story continued on page 6

Across the Garden State News and Events

Welcome to 925 new Literacy Volunteers Tutors!

Last fall LVNJ received a training grant from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD). The grant included an allocation of \$90,000 for our network of programs to participate in a major initiative involving the recruitment and training of 900 new tutors. We are delighted to report that this funding has enabled our

affiliates to surpass our target goal and train more than 925 new tutors. LVNJ wishes to thank LWD for major support which has made it possible for Literacy Volunteers to substantially increase its capacity to provide free tutoring to individuals functioning at the lowest levels of literacy.



Save The Date

LVNJ's annual Literacy for Life professional development conference will be held on Saturday, April 24, 2010 at Montclair State University.

Co-sponsored by the Department of Early Childhood, Elementary and Literacy

Education in the College of Education and Human Services at Montclair State University.



Verizon Technology Grant

Thanks to a grant from Verizon, *Log on and Learn: A Resource Manual for Adult Literacy Students and Instructors* can be downloaded for free from our website. Designed for beginning computer users, this 200-page guide has sections on using Word, the Internet, and email. It also contains 23 lesson activities for using computer technology to build literacy skills. Visit <http://lvnj.org/content/lvnj-resources> to download a copy, and please let us know what you think!

International Literacy Day – September 8

Visit the National Coalition for Literacy's Advocacy website to find ideas for celebrating the day:

<http://www.ncladvocacy.org/>



Program Spotlight

Literacy Volunteers of Camden County

Throughout New Jersey, One Stop Career Centers prepare adults to enter employment or improve job skills. In Camden County, a partnership with LV-Camden County has allowed the One Stop to extend its range of services to include adults whose reading, writing, and math skills are below a sixth-grade level. These clients are referred to the Literacy program, which has an office in the Center, and the clients are able to receive individual tutoring or attend small group sessions each week. LV-Camden County has a corps of trained volunteer tutors dedicated to the 50-70 students who attend their sessions each week. This partnership gives LV-Camden the opportunity to serve basic literacy students in their community, a population often reticent to call their local literacy program, and makes a tremendously valuable contribution to workforce development in Camden County.

Governor’s Literacy Initiative Supports 2500 New Students

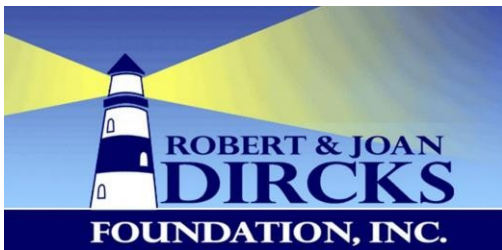
Between January, 2008 and March, 2009 Literacy Volunteers affiliates in NJ added more than 2,500 new students to their programs, providing them with either one-on-one or small group tutoring. This was made possible through \$250,000 in funding received by LVNJ through the Governor’s Literacy Initiative in the 2008 State budget.

LVNJ allocated \$64,000 from the Governor’s Literacy Initiative to our member programs to defray some of the costs associated with intake, assessment, tutoring and support for these new students. Each affiliate also received a \$3,500 grant for a new or existing project that focused on producing meaningful improvements in the literacy skills of adults. Our affiliates demonstrated their ability to leverage this funding in a variety of creative ways. This included expanding the scope of services offered to students, building administrative capacity, acquiring new instructional materials, and increasing tutor recruitment, training and support activities. Both the sustainability and efficiency of programs improved and student waiting lists decreased. Students and tutors became more engaged and felt a greater sense of community, which had a positive effect on retention and on learning.

Unfortunately, funding for the Governor’s Literacy Initiative was eliminated in the 2010 State budget. Literacy Volunteers affiliates now have less funding at a time when demand for our services continues to grow. For 30 years New Jersey has relied on Literacy Volunteers to teach adults whose educational needs are not met by other programs. NJ depends on us to equip low literate adults with the skills they need to find jobs, participate in their children’s education, or become citizens. Let’s make sure that our legislators and Governor know that the impact of Literacy Volunteers programs on our communities is tremendous and should be fairly and consistently funded.



“Students and tutors became more engaged and felt a greater sense of community...”



Literacy for Life Awards Luncheon

Each year, Literacy Volunteers programs nominate their outstanding members for the LVNJ awards. We were pleased to recognize the incredible dedication of the recipients at the awards luncheon held during the Literacy for Life Conference this past April.

David Harvey, President and CEO of ProLiteracy, delivered the keynote address during the luncheon, thanking our volunteers for their crucial role in allowing adult literacy students the opportunity to improve their skills and realize their goals.



Harry Van Houten Award for Lifetime Achievement

Donna Sandorse

Donna Sandorse has worked tirelessly for adult literacy in Union County and throughout NJ. Over the past 20 years, she has served as a tutor, tutor trainer, board member and board president of Literacy Volunteers of Union County, and as a member of the LVNJ board. In all endeavors, Donna is the consummate leader.

Donna is currently the Vice President of the LV-Union County Board. During her tenure as President, Donna instilled a high degree of professionalism in the organization. A longtime fundraiser for Literacy Volunteers in Union County, Donna is responsible for many of their current funding streams. Her fundraising efforts through the years have raised more than a million dollars for adult literacy in New Jersey. One of her greatest accomplishments is making sure that every precious resource is utilized in the best possible way through collaborations and innovative practices. Donna has also been instrumental in helping LVNJ to establish the Affiliate Advisory Committee. This is a structure that enables affiliate boards to share information and resources and communicate effectively with the state organization. Her affiliate, county and the state of New Jersey are better because she brought her skills and talents to this cause.



Alice M. Leppert Award for Outstanding Affiliate Achievement

The Jersey City Library Literacy Program

The Jersey City Library Literacy Program developed *Project Student Retention* to combat the problem of attrition. As a result of their ongoing concerns about losing students, they created strategies that would motivate adult learners and keep them coming back until they achieve their goals. They implemented a new system to monitor attendance, improved their orientation process, enhanced and diversified their program offerings, and increased communication between students and program staff.

The program has witnessed the formation of alliances as a result of *Project Student Retention*. Students are helping each other and bringing in family members and friends. Some students attend two or three times per day for morning and afternoon classes, and others remain for an entire day. Students are more committed to achieving their educational goals and have shown an increased desire to learn. After only one year, Project Student Retention has decreased the student drop-out rate from 43 to 29 percent.



Award for Tutor Excellence

Amy DiFilippo Literacy Volunteers of Monmouth County



Amy is a lifelong learner who has demonstrated her commitment to literacy and to her affiliate by tutoring individuals, training groups of volunteers to become tutors, assisting with program curricula, improving the literacy program's content and curriculum, and volunteering her time and talents wherever she can make a difference.

Amy became a tutor with LV-Monmouth County in 1991. After several years of tutoring she became so enthusiastic about the program that she became a certified trainer. Not only did she become a top-notch tutor and tutor trainer, Amy liked teaching so much that she returned to school and earned her Masters Degree in Education. For the past ten years she has been teaching full-time in the Asbury Park School system. Amy's contributions to literacy are many. She has tutored both Basic Literacy and ESL students for over 18 years. As LVMC's only tutor trainer for nearly eight years, Amy trained over 200 tutors. She has also led many in-service training workshops to help tutors expand their skills and knowledge. Amy has been the mentor for LVMC's two other trainers and actively participates in professional development to increase her expertise on adult literacy issues.

Award for Student Excellence

Sidney Crumwell Literacy Volunteers of Monmouth County



Sidney is a special student because of his perseverance, commitment, friendliness and willingness to help others. Although 83 years "young", Sidney is determined to get his GED. As well as significantly improving his reading and writing skills, he has learned to use a computer for email, research, and to write book reviews. Sidney's involvement with Literacy Volunteers of Monmouth County is multi-faceted. He is the Student Member of their Board of Directors. Sidney always comes to his program's annual fundraising dinners, not only as a board member but also to lend support to student speakers who address those in attendance. Sidney is a most willing and positive adult literacy student. If he knows someone who needs help with their reading and writing, he will tell them his story and

recommend that they come to the program and get a tutor. Sidney does not get too discouraged when he is having difficulty learning something. He is truly a lifelong learner and a leader among students.

Award for Student Excellence

Narvis Bent Literacy Volunteers of the Plainfield Public Library



When Narvis Bent first came to the United States from Colombia 7 years ago he didn't speak any English. He came to the Plainfield Public Library on a quest to learn English and gain confidence. Two years after joining the program, he is speaking English on the job and in his daily life. He is now an active member of the community of learners at the Plainfield Public Library. As a member of "Los Amigos", Plainfield's English language club, he is both a learner, and a teacher of his fellow club members. He has also been willing to share what he knows about computers with his classmates, offering small group sessions for students to learn basic computer skills in English.

Narvis is not only a great student, but a great role-model. One of his fellow students described Narvis by saying: "In our life we have the opportunity to meet many people in different places and circumstances. Only a few of them can touch and change lives. This is Narvis Bent's case. We thank Narvis for willing to give us his time and knowledge without any compensation other than our gratitude."

Visit our Stories page to learn about more Literacy Volunteers students: <http://lvnj.org/stories>.



“How many of us feel fully equipped to save, invest, and manage our money?”

Financial Literacy

The current economic crisis has raised awareness about the critical importance of a financial education. How many of us feel fully equipped to save, invest, and manage our money? Many Americans lack these necessary skills, but those Americans with low literacy skills are hit the hardest. This past year, funding from TD Charitable Foundation has allowed LVNJ to continue our Financial Literacy Initiative, which focuses on improving the financial skills of low-literate adults. Our goal is to give adult literacy students access to the information they need to make informed financial decisions. The grant for \$7500 has allowed us to develop training materials and offer four additional workshops for adult literacy instructors, tutors, and program staff. These workshops prepare educators to help their students acquire basic knowledge about money skills, including topics such as budgeting, opening a bank account, and understanding credit.

Thank you to TD Charitable Foundation for joining us in our commitment to increasing the self-sufficiency of adults with limited literacy.

Upcoming Financial Literacy Workshops

This September, LVNJ will offer three financial literacy workshops for the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The workshops are designed with the goal of improving the financial education of adults with limited literacy and/or limited English by incorporating basic concepts about budgeting, credit, and banking services into instruction. Workshop participants also examine how cultural and personal values affect the way we manage our money. This training is for WIA Partners (staff, instructors, directors) Workforce Learning Link (instructors, counselors) One-Stop Career Center staff, Literacy Volunteers tutors and those interested in advancing basic financial literacy in New Jersey’s adult education programs.

September 15: Essex County College, Newark

September 22: New Brunswick Adult Learning Center

September 29: Vineland Adult Education Center



LVNJ Establishes NJ Health Literacy Coalition

Continued from page 1

The NJ Health Literacy Coalition is currently developing a working structure. The coalition is committed to eliminating barriers to health care and sharing resources that make it easier to navigate our complex health care system. As a coalition partner, LVNJ will continue to advocate for increased use of health related information, training and services that are easy for adults at all literacy levels to understand. Increasing the health literacy skills of both patients and health care providers is essential for prevention of disease and promotion of wellness. Health literacy is a very effective tool that equips all of us with a better understanding of health issues and the ability to make informed healthcare decisions.

PROLITERACY

STATEMENT OF ADULT LEARNER RIGHTS

Statement of Facts

The 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy estimated that 30 million people over the age of 16 in the United States can barely read and write in English and that an additional 60 million have basic literacy skills far below what is considered adequate for earning a living wage in today's technology and information-oriented society. Globally, 774 million adults are illiterate. In the United States, adults who drop out of high school and later enroll in adult basic education or literacy classes to earn a high school diploma or GED can increase their earnings by an average of \$9,000 a year. Yet combined current funding from the federal government, state governments, and philanthropic sources support instruction in basic literacy, English as a second language, adult secondary education, computer training, and vocational education for just 3 million adults.

We Believe

- That the ability to read, write, perform math, and use technology is a basic human right.
- That everyone, from children to adults in every part of the world, has the right to learn these skills and to have access to programs that make it possible for them to acquire those skills.
- That education is a lifelong pursuit.
- That literacy skills are key to reducing poverty, crime, poor health, high health care costs, human rights abuse, and increasing the literacy of children.

We Envision

- A world where all adults have the skills they need to communicate in their native language.
- A United States where all adults can read, write, speak, and understand English and use these skills for critical thinking, to perform math, and use technology at a level that makes it possible for them to achieve their greatest potential as parents, employees, and members of their communities.

Commitments/Proposals for Action

1. We support an integrated and coordinated adult education system that offers instruction in many ways, from the traditional adult basic education programs to volunteer-based community organizations.
2. We believe adequate funding should be made available to provide for advertising and public awareness campaigns to ensure that all adult learners are made aware of the availability of these services.
3. We will work to see that this adult education system receives enough public money to support instruction for all adults who want it.
4. We will work for funding sources to support a comprehensive adult basic education and literacy system that provides for and values all adult learners accomplishing their personal and family literacy goals, academic improvement, and credentialing.
5. We support methods of instruction that make it possible for all adults to continue their instruction even when attendance in a class or taking part in face-to-face tutoring sessions is not possible.
6. We want adult educational services to be free, accessible, and made available in safe locations.
7. We will work to see that all adult learners are included in developing adult education related policy at the local, state, and national levels.
8. We support all adult learners' access to testing, evaluation, and required accommodation for learning and/or other disabilities.
9. We call for all adult learners to have all necessary information about the education choices that are available to them and that they be included in decisions related to their education.

To show your support, sign your name at <http://proliteracy.org/NetCommunity/>.
Click on Statement of Adult Learner Rights.

Literacy Advocate



Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey is an organization committed to improving the basic literacy skills of adults in New Jersey by maximizing the capacity and effectiveness of LVNJ's network of affiliates, by increasing the public's awareness of the services provided by the network, and by promoting greater communication and action on the literacy needs of New Jersey

Get Involved!

Volunteer your time and talents:

www.lvnj.org/local-programs

Support LVNJ:

www.lvnj.org/content/support-lvnj

Follow us on:



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*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use
to change the world.*

Nelson Mandela



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