

Dear Friends of Literacy Suffolk,

I am excited to write to you as the new president of Literacy Suffolk's Board of Directors. I am grateful to follow Bob Margolin, who served ably as president for the past three years, capping his more than 20-year tenure on the board.

It's a privilege to lead an organization that for more than 40 years has profoundly affected the lives of adults seeking help in improving their literacy skills. As a former tutor myself and librarian at Middle Country Public Library responsible for many of its literacy programs, I saw students' eagerness to gain language fluency so they could advance in the workplace and help their families succeed.

During the Covid pandemic, Literacy Suffolk has faced an unprecedented challenge: how to serve the needs of students without meeting in person one-on-one or in small groups with a tutor. I am happy to report that many tutors became students themselves and learned how to use Zoom, WhatsApp, Google Meet, and FaceTime to continue helping their students.

As a result of their determination, our students continued to progress towards their goals. In the past year,

- A mother who cleaned homes to support herself found work at a fast-food restaurant offering health care benefits important to her family.
- A business owner "graduated" from the program after gaining the confidence to converse with his English-speaking customers.
- A former substance abuser who struggled to read growing up on Long Island passed the written test for a Learner's Permit and is looking forward to getting his driver's license and a job.
- An immigrant who has lived in the United States for 25 years is planning to work towards her High School Equivalency diploma, despite not having finished elementary school in her home country and a full-time job, thanks to her rapidly improving English skills and the support of her tutor

The success of our students inspires me, as does the dedication of our volunteer tutors who find time in their often busy lives to help others. My fellow Board members and the Literacy Suffolk staff are proud to support their efforts.

We are working on a revamp of the Literacy Suffolk website to make it more user-friendly for tutors, librarians, and students. Watch for that announcement, then let us know what you think!!

We are also harnessing new technology to make it easier for donors to support our programs. This technology will also help us build an ongoing relationship with our community of donors and volunteers. Check out the new [Donation](#) page, which we will soon be promoting, but it is live now!

If you are already involved with Literacy Suffolk, Thank You! If you would like to become involved...we'd love to meet you! Together, we can ensure that literacy is available to every adult who needs help in Suffolk County.

With warm regards,

Loretta Piscatella
President
Literacy Suffolk, Inc.