



# LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF THE TARRYTOWNS INC.

[www.lvtarrytown.org](http://www.lvtarrytown.org)

The Warner Library, 121 N. Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591 914-488-4250

October 2015

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 39 Number 2

### Our Spring 2015 Tutor Class!



The following new tutors completed our Spring Tutor Training. Welcome to Literacy Volunteers!



#### LVT 2015 SPRING GRADUATES

Sandra Abate	Alina Mason
Kristina Allen	Rania Sioufas Raciti
Karen Gallagher	Sarita Roy
Maria Gorordo-Daly	Carrie-Michele Shivers
Jenny Marcus	Betsy Smith

We are very grateful to the volunteers who stepped up to help train our new class. Many thanks to John Lough, Promila Saxena, Nancy Kaufman Panagacos, Kathy Kee, Liz Siracusa, Sharon Hart and Marilyn Ghilardi for their presentations and efforts to organize finances, tutoring materials, learner-tutor matching, survival kit preparation, tutoring materials reviews, and tutor advisors. We extend our gratitude to our refreshment hosts as well: Linda Wiener, Michele Stone, Nitin Bobba, Debra Cowart, Eileen Quinlan and Jean Chenault.

### President's Report

*Mary Jane Driscoll*

#### *New Website!*

At the annual meeting in June, Sharon Hart gave a demo of our new website which was built by Fred Cruz. We encourage all members of our affiliate to review the website (<http://www.lvtarrytown.org>) and send your suggestions on how to make it even better to [info@lvtarrytown.org](mailto:info@lvtarrytown.org). Please share this site with anyone who may be interested in becoming a Literacy Volunteer, or who would like to make a donation to help our organization serve more students <http://www.lvtarrytown.org/donate.html>. Thanks to Sharon and Fred for all their hard work!

#### *Board News*

Debra Portnoy informed the board this month that she will resign. She has served LVT as a tutor, tutor advisor and board member since she joined our Spring 2006 training workshop. We value her many contributions to our organization and wish her well.

#### *Attendance Awards!*

The following students have received the Lucille and Ted Hutchinson attendance award for attending tutoring lessons for at least 15 hours in a two month reporting period:

#### **January-February**

<b>Student</b>	<b>Tutor</b>
Julia Gomez	Beverly Ho
Adalgisa Valentin	Kathy Kee

#### **March-April**

Julia Gomez	Beverly Ho
Karina Rodriguez	Beverly Ho
Adalgisa Valentin	Kathy Kee
Juan Hernandez	Sandy Mirsky

Congratulations to our students and their tutors!

### ***Student E-mail Campaign***

We are launching a new campaign to collect the email addresses for all our students. Tutors please help! Send an email to [info@lvtarrytown.org](mailto:info@lvtarrytown.org) and provide your name, your student's name and their email address, or you can call and leave a voicemail with the same information as above. We will use these email addresses only for communicating with students about upcoming events – like our Holiday Party – so please send this information as soon as possible!

### ***Milestones***

Reported by Kathy Kee

It's an ambitious task to want to be a U.S. Citizen. However, Ada was up to the task. She had been in our literacy program for a number of months when she shared that she wanted to be a U.S. Citizen. She had previously taken a few classes in another program, dropped out and then entered our literacy program. Ada tested at a Level 1 ESLOA, but is very tenacious, ambitious and determined.

The U. S. Citizenship interview has four components: Civics (100 preparation questions/ answers), reading, writing, and comprehension (questions asked from the application of the applicant). Ada passed the first three components, but not comprehension. She was eligible to return for another scheduled interview within a few months, to be interviewed for the comprehension component that she did not pass originally.

So we dug in our heels and, after several drills and repeatedly going over her application as to "Who, How, What, When, Where," as well as learning new and unfamiliar vocabulary such as height, employer. etc., which was on her application...ADA PASSED THE TEST!

Ada is a wonderful example of "Where there is a will, there is a way!" Although her ESLOA level was low, she was in the U. S. for almost seven years, and her family spoke English, she worked long days on her two jobs and therefore did not have the opportunity to listen and respond to English very much. But Ada had the desire. She received two literacy Attendance Certificates in the four months prior to her final interview, and it has surely paid off!

### ***Becoming a U.S. Citizen***

To learn more about becoming a U.S. Citizen, visit our literacy library books under Citizenship, or go to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) (video link: Becoming a U.S. Citizen-An Overview of the Naturalization Process), [www.usimmigration.us](http://www.usimmigration.us) You can also visit many other online teaching resources.



### ***Tutor Student Matching***

***Nancy Kaufman Panagacos***

After matching the new Fall class of tutors, we still have 38 students on the waiting list. Anyone ready to accept a new student please email [info@lvtarrytown.org](mailto:info@lvtarrytown.org) or leave a note for Nancy in the LV mailbox. Be sure to include your contact information and the days and hours you are available to tutor.

### ***Director of Tutor Advisory Services***

***Marilyn Ghilardi***

As of our last board meeting in September, we had 48 active tutors and we anticipate 18 new tutors will become active when they complete the Fall tutor training workshop. I have reached out to the tutor advisors to follow up with all of their advisees to make sure that their students are tested with the BEST Plus test. Each student must be tested once a year.

## Director of Teaching Materials

### *Promila Saxena*

I have placed cans in the tutoring room to collect overdue fees for tutoring materials kept longer than two weeks. Please return all materials so that other tutors and students can benefit from using them.

Sixteen new books have been acquired for the tutoring center since the start of 2015. Some were requested by tutors and some were donated by ESL instructors. An up-to-date list of all books in our collection is available in the tutoring center.

## Help Wanted!

### *Board Secretary*

We are looking for someone with good listening skills to serve as Secretary on our board. The position requires taking the minutes at six board meetings per year, typing them, and distributing them to the board via email for corrections and comments before each board meeting. If interested, please email us at [info@lvtarrytown.org](mailto:info@lvtarrytown.org).

## The People We Serve



Some of the members of the Spring 2015 workshop class met on May 30th to talk about their experiences since the workshop ended. Carrie-Michele Shivers reported that she had not yet connected with her student but that she had volunteered to be trained as a Best Plus tester, and planned to be both a tutor and a tester for our affiliate. Since that meeting Carrie-Michele worked with a student named Maria who achieved one of her goals - she found a job and is working five days a week.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jenny Marcus works with her student Joe who is Burmese from the Union of Myanmar. She trained with us but chose to be matched with a student in Mount Kisco. Joe (nee Kyan) has been in the U.S. for five years. Jenny learned that many people fled Joe's village when the army marched in. The young men captured by the army were starved. Joe and the other young men were forced to dig a swimming pool. They were often beaten with rifle butts. Joe managed to escape to a monastery where they shaved his head to help him hide there from the army. The monastery had a connection to the United Nations and was able to move him to Thailand, then to the U.S., but he had to pay the airfare. He went to Chicago to learn how to become a Sushi chef and found a job at the A&P making Sushi. He has applied for citizenship, but his first citizenship interview was not successful because his English literacy was not considered to be adequate, primarily due to pronunciation problems. Jenny worked with Joe on citizenship in their lessons. He reads to her from the citizenship materials and she corrects his pronunciation. She says he writes well. Since this meeting, Jenny sent me an update. Joe rescheduled his immigration interview and passed the test on July 7th. Congratulations to Joe who was sworn in as a citizen!

\*\*\*\*\*

Betsy Smith tutors a student named Maria who is from Ecuador. Maria has been in the U.S. for about 15 years and lives with her husband and children. She tests at level 2 on the ESLOA and is an avid reader in Spanish and English. They had met about four times when Betsy gave this report. Jenny said that Maria loves to tell stories, but she does not feel comfortable talking with her co-workers at lunch. Betsy gave Maria a pad to write down what she heard that she did not understand. Maria reported that she often hears her co-workers say "Vadim" to their supervisor. After some discussion, Betsy and Maria figured out that what her co-workers were saying to their supervisor was "I'm done." Maria was so relieved to have that mystery solved. Maria would like to work on fluency reading a sentence. Betsy takes some of Maria's stories and turns them into drills. She has also been using simple readers to read to Maria. They go through the vocabulary and then Betsy asks comprehension questions. Then she gives Maria a copy of the story to read to herself.



Sarita Roy is tutoring Monica from Ecuador who is in her 20's and has a five month old baby. Monica has been in the U.S. for four years. She works cleaning a house, and on the weekends she works at a dry cleaner. Her English is passable – she does not use the past tense. Sarita describes Monica as spunky and devoted. Sarita has been working on survival skills, like going to the supermarket, understanding per pound pricing in English, as well as other kinds of measurement. They practice conversation skills like asking for a raise at the dry cleaner, telling stories and talking about family. Monica told Sarita about crossing the border from Ecuador, and from Mexico to Texas. Her goals for learning English – she wants to learn the vocabulary of dry cleaning so that she can understand more about her job. She also wants to be able to talk with her pediatrician and negotiate different systems, for example – making change in a sales transaction. Sarita records their lessons so that Monica can listen to the recording for homework.

### Upcoming Events!

**Tutor Chat** – There will be a gathering of tutors on Thursday, October 27th at 7:00 P.M. in meeting room B at the library. The purpose is to share tutoring experiences and ideas for helping our learners

achieve their goals. All are welcome to come and chat. If this is well attended, we will try to schedule more chats in the near future. Feel free to bring any materials you find helpful that you would like to bring to the attention of your fellow tutors.



### Holiday Party – Save the date!

**Sunday, December 6th at 1:00 P.M.** in meeting room B. Tutors, students and family members are all welcome. E-vites will be sent in November – be sure to send us your student's email address soon!

### LVT 2015-2016 Calendar

ACTIVITY	DATE	TIME	PLACE
LVT Fall Tutor Training Workshop	September 12, 19 October 3, 10, 24, 31	SATURDAYS 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Meeting Room B
Board Meetings	September 21, November 9, January 11, March 14, May 9	MONDAYS 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.	Meeting Room C
Tutor Chat	October 27	7:00- 8:30 P.M.	Meeting Room B
Holiday Party	December 6	1:00 P.M.	Meeting Room B
Annual In-Service	June 11	10:00 A.M.	Meeting Room B
Annual Meeting	June 11	11:00 A.M.	Meeting Room B
Board Meeting	June 11	12:00 P.M.	Meeting Room B