



LITERACY MATTERS

APRIL 2017

Literacy Matters is a recurring publication of Literacy Nassau, Inc.



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THE IMPACT OF ADULT EDUCATION FUNDING ON PROGRAM DELIVERY

(submitted by Ocaria DiMango)

In New York State, there are over 3.4 million individuals who lack a high school diploma, English language proficiency, or both. That's why Literacy Nassau focuses its services on adults and families who are most in need of reading, writing, and speaking skills. Literacy Volunteer agencies are funded by and accountable to certain standards through Adult Literacy Education funding (commonly known as ALE in the NYS budget). The National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS) was developed by the U.S. Department of Education and tracks learner outcomes for New York State and federally funded adult education programs. ALE funded programs have traditionally used this system and have been accountable for reaching NRS benchmarks, which include testing, attendance, and employment status, among other things. That's why as your case managers we have always been persistent about hours and testing.

Adult Literacy Education (ALE) funds are always at risk of getting cut. Organizations are increasingly being forced to turn away students and maintain long waiting lists due to funding cuts that reduce their capacity to meet demand in their neighborhoods. Last year, petitions were circulated to support increasing ALE funds to help close this gap.

This year, there was a thought that the

Governor might pull a significant amount of funding out of Adult Education and reallocate it somewhere else, and in order to prevent that, NYSED decided to tag the funding in question as a required match for federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) dollars being received by NYS. It was a smart move, because it saved many programs from facing extreme, potentially devastating cuts to their funding. But it also resulted in us all having to comply with federal WIOA regulations, and as you can imagine, the federal government is much more stringent than our state government.

It is critical that you, our tutors, be aware of these changes since they will directly impact what we expect of you.

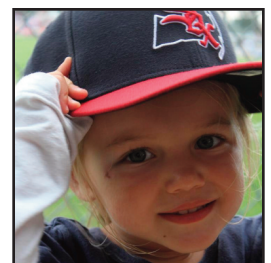
We report our data on the Adult Student Information System and Technical Support (ASISTS) website. It is an online database that will need to be updated on a consistent basis now. Attendance has always been required to be submitted monthly and will continue to be that way. But now, if a student does not have 90 days' worth of attendance in the system then they will be automatically "exited" from the database. In simplest terms, it means that your student's account will now be frozen until the next school year and we will not be able to track or support that student. This is because the government will not fund a student who is not actively utilizing our services. *(continued on page 2)*

THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

In our house, April marks the start of baseball season. One of the reasons my family loves Cape Cod is because we can watch the MLB stars of tomorrow play for \$3 a ticket, thanks to the Cape Cod Baseball League.

My husband, Chris, was a pitcher in college. Recently, he explained the intricate relationship between the pitcher and catcher to me. He said the catcher will put out signs (tapping the thigh, putting out one or two fingers, etc.) to communicate with the pitcher. The pitcher needs to successfully read these signs in order to throw the correct pitch. It's all about the ability to decode under pressure, which is the same thing our Basic Learners experience when reading. Knowing the "code" makes it possible to dissect large, multi-syllabic words, by breaking them down into small, manageable pieces. Over time, fluency develops as words are read faster and with more ease, and comprehension improves as speed increases. So the takeaway is this: just like in baseball, practice makes perfect. That's why our Orton Gillingham tutors meet with their learners multiple times a week. Want to learn more about OG? Call me at (516) 867-3580, extension 11.



Pictured above, our youngest fan (Julie) borrows Daddy's hat to root for the Yarmouth-Dennis Red Sox at last year's Cape Cod League championship game.

Karen





IMPACT OF ALE FUNDING ON PROGRAM DELIVERY (CONT'D.)

Therefore, for 1:1 tutors who may take breaks or are impacted by life events that take time away from your tutoring, please update us on phone contact, Skype lessons or even emailed lessons that you and your student have exchanged, so we can always keep your records updated. For small groups, your season is 3 months, so monthly attendance is vital, in case the student chooses to continue in the program after completing SGIB.

Another major change involves post-testing. If your student will be going away for a period of 2 months or longer, it may be prudent for us to post-test him/her before leaving. We will need to keep post-tests on record for every student who receives our services, and if it looks like their participation period might be ending at some point throughout the fiscal year, we want to capture that post-test before the automatic exit takes place (90 days after their last day of received services). Before, our post-test season was only in the spring. This means that now, it will become more common to see us testing all year long.

Talk to your Literacy Specialist about what you can do to help. By keeping us up to date, we will have real-time data to reflect the growing need for adult literacy services on Long Island.

MY TRIP TO PAKISTAN

(submitted by Umama Pasha)

The first month of 2017 was a whirlwind adventure for me. I took my first international trip to Pakistan, my country of birth. On January 10th, I embarked on 18+ hour flight to live in Pakistan for 3 weeks so that I could attend my cousin's wedding and visit my dad's family. I was eager to meet my family and learn more about the customs and culture of Pakistan.

Geography and a little bit of history: Pakistan is in South Asia surrounded by India on the east, China on northeast, Iran on the southwest and Afghanistan on the west. Fun fact about me: I was born in Sargodha on an air force base. My dad was a squadron leader in the air force. The country is rich with history and is home to the earliest civilizations known to man like Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa but Pakistan is only 70 years old. It gained its independence from India on August 14, 1947 because the Muslim people felt the Indian government was not properly representing the Muslim population. The separation was brutal like many civil wars and left much psychological devastation that can be seen in the relationship between Indian and Pakistani government. Depending on who you talk to, that might be a sensitive topic or a really interesting one.

Religion: Pakistan's full name is the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. It is the second largest Muslim state in the world (the first is Indonesia). Pakistan is a predominantly Muslim state and its culture is deeply rooted in Islam but Pakistan has a small diverse population that practices religions other than Islam, including Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism, Baha'i Faith, Zoroastrianism and Kalasha. Pakistan guarantees freedom to practice any religion.

My family practices Islam. We celebrate two holidays in the year, Eid-ul-Adha and Eid-ul-Fitr. Eid-ul-Adha is the holier of the two and is known as the "sacrifice of feast." It commemorates the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son, as an act of submission to God's command. Before the actual sacrifice took place, God intervened by sending the Angel Gabriel, who put a sheep in his place. The meat from the sacrificed animal is divided into 3 parts: one for the family, one part to share with friends, family and neighbors, and the third to give to the poor and needy. Eid-al-Fitr celebrates the ending of the holy month of fasting called Ramadan.

Language: There are many languages spoken in Pakistan, Urdu is the official language, English has become the lingua franca in the Pakistani government but if you travel to areas like Sindh, Punjab, or Balochistan, you will discover that many people speak more than just Urdu. Fun fact about me: My family is from the province of Punjab so my parents speak Urdu and Punjabi. I can speak Urdu but only understand Punjabi.

Diet: Muslims' diet is restricted to Halal food. The word "Halal" means any object or action that is permissible according to Islamic law. Halal is most commonly referred to in the Muslim diet but the word "Halal" can refer to any object or action that is permissible. Haraam is the opposite, any object or action that is considered outside of Islamic law and therefore is not accepted. Examples of this include: not eating pork or drinking alcohol. In Pakistani culture, it is important for the family to eat together. Sometimes family members even share from the same plate. Some common Pakistani dishes are Pulao and Biryani. Some common Pakistani desserts include Kheer (my personal favorite) and Rasmali. Some dishes are also seen in Indian cuisine as well.

Dress: Depending on what part of Pakistan you go to, you will see many different traditional dresses. The most common is the shalwar kameez. Men wear simple shalwar (pants) and kameez (long shirt). Women wear their shalwar kameez (continued on p.3)

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to our newest tutors:

Andrea Acosta	Maria Acosta
Frank Annese	Mary Alice Aschenbach
Gail Bauer	Janice Caravello
Andrew Corsi	Debra Cosher
Amy DeLeon	Juliana Dwyer
Joanne Finochiarro	Claudia Francy
Alison Frankel	Kelsey Greene
Carolyn Hecht	Donna Heit-Katz
Marsha Herman	Maureen Hogan
Jennifer Hopper	Carol Horvat
Anna Maria Iannetta	Cynthia Katz
Ruthann Kennedy	Alison Marooney
India McClain	Debbie Mincer
Jazmin Mooney	Antoinette Nardo
Jennifer Power	Margy Ringelheim
Kevin Ryan	Stan Schickler
Joanne Scillitoe	Claudia Stern
Eleanor Turino	Donna Vibert



Umama and her family at her cousin's wedding. (Umama is 4th from the left, top row.)



TRIP TO PAKISTAN (CONT'D.)

with a dupatta, which is a scarf that covers their heads. Women's clothing is very popular in Pakistan. I travelled with my mom and sister to the fashion districts in different Pakistani cities and it's a huge industry. Presently, there is a change in fashion; more urban, western clothes are becoming accepted in the workplace and in everyday life. Conservative women wear clothes that cover them from head to toe. This is known as the burqa.

Art/Literature: One of the most memorable places I went to was Lahore Fort. Lahore Fort is a citadel that is fascinating because no one really knows when it was built. The first evidence of it was in the 14th century and since then it was rebuilt during the Mughal Empire. The fortress is decorated with intricate floral designs and mirrors inspired by Islamic and Hindu motifs.

Pakistan has a history of poetry in the country. The most common type of poetry is Sufi poetry written in Farsi because of centuries of Persian influence. The national poet Allama Mohammad Iqbal wrote his poetry in Farsi and Urdu.

Family: Pakistan is a patriarchal society. The man is the head of household but in modern societies, women are becoming increasingly present in the work force. Family is the most important part of life in Pakistan. In many Pakistani families, you will see nuclear and extended families living together in one home. When men are married, they are expected to stay with their wives with his parents. When women are married, they are expected to stay with their in-laws. Due to modernization, this has been changing for many families.

There is so much more to say about the Pakistani way of life. If you have any questions or comments about this article, feel free to contact me directly at upasha@literacynassau.org.

RESOURCE CORNER

(submitted by Rebecca Figueras)

Azar Grammar is a great instructional website for English Language Learners of all levels. Azar Grammar constructs their lessons in a method that practices decoding words through listening instruction. The website provides easy to follow activities that have been compiled by numerous teachers. The activities are adaptable to your students. Each chapter has a corresponding vocabulary guide which assists in the implicit and explicit instruction of new words along with necessary grammatical skills such as tenses and modifiers. Furthermore, there are engaging, in-depth and expanded activities that will add flair to your lessons and use materials that are easily found in your surroundings. Azar Grammar features a valuable "English Lab" online, which allows students to practice interactively through recordings, animations, and videos outside of your sessions.

Another resource that is highly valuable and adaptable is one that we all carry on us nearly all the time. Our smart phones and tablets can be crucial tools for our students to take advantage of. Hopefully, with the spring slowly creeping in, we can discount bad weather; however for our snow birds or those who take extended vacations, FaceTime and Skype are highly recommended. Even for a few minutes throughout your vacation, practice speaking on the phone with your student. Speaking on the phone is one of the areas where our students feel the most uncomfortable, so it is definitely worth the time when you are unable to meet in person. It will help gauge focus points on what needs to be worked on the next time you do meet since speaking via technology is so radically different than talking in person.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy birthday to all of our tutors born in April:

Kami-Leigh Agard	Elizabeth Ajasin	Mary Alibrandi
Zeba Ansari	Carol Aronin	Nancy Benchimol
Sheri Berkowitz	Nancy Bob	Eileen Capriotti
Judy Caputo	Arlene Cherry	Eileen D'Antonio
Margaret Dudley	Anita Faulding	Janet Geduldig
Jeanne Geib	Lauren Gilbert	Kelsey Greene
Michele Haber	Florence Harff	Kathleen Jeacoma
Dolores Joseph	Lorri Klonsky	Eleanor Krebs
Carmelinda Kurtzberg	Juan Manzano	Carol Markman
India McClain	Antonia Obara	Joanne Ortiz
Josephine Palazzolo	Carol Padovani	Terese Pizza
Linda Podhurst	Elisabeth Reilly	Chris Rochford
Susan Rosenberg	Stephen Salyk	Carol Schrafel
Vasu Shah	Linda Shine	James Tenney
Mary Thrall	Debbie Uckele	Rosemary Valenti
Donna Vibert	Virginia Walsh	Joan Whiteside

HEWLETT-WOODMERE LIBRARY'S "TYPICAL" NCBC

(submitted by Nadine Connors, Tutor)

Our Next Chapter Book Club passed its 1-year mark in January 2017. At present we have 8 members. This is an enthusiastic group that shows up on time and makes our hour together fantastic. So far we have read poetry plus 6 books, mostly classics, and one non-fiction. At the beginning of the club meeting we discuss what went on in our lives in the past week, then we read together a synopsis of the last chapter we read. With such a big group (we were 4) we usually read 2 chapters of the current book at each meeting. It was voted on that at the end of each meeting, we would do the weekly word searches, crosswords, and other games, using vocabulary words from the current book. We also create special word searches when it is someone's birthday based on interviews with the birthday person. Additionally, we've used a whiteboard to play Hangman with our vocabulary words.

It was voted on that after we finish a book we watch a movie based on the book (if available) together. We serve snacks, popcorn, and soft drinks, just like a movie house. We are finishing Jack London's White Fang and next we will read Jack London's Call of the Wild. Last week we had a special program featuring a guest who has gone dog sledding, like the characters in the book we are reading. Using a PowerPoint presentation, our guest showed us maps and photos/films of his dog sledding trips in Alaska and Sweden. We also looked at a map of the Yukon, where the Jack London books are set. Our guest brought several items of gear that he uses for dog sledding.

OPEN DOOR

Inspired by the successful celebrations of Black History Month (February) and Women's History Month (March), the Academy of American Poets established April as National Poetry Month in 1996. What better way to celebrate than by working on a piece of poetry (or prose) for your student to submit to Open Door? For those who don't know, Open Door is our annual student anthology of writing, which is debuted at our Recognition Night celebration every May. We are currently accepting student stories, artwork, and photographs through April 28th. Questions? Contact your Literacy Specialist.



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April 6, 2017, 6-9pm

Chateau Briand, Carle Place

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A \$100 TICKET CAN BRING

A FRIEND FOR FREE!

Call Karen at (516) 867-3580,

ext. 11, to register for

this exclusive offer!

TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: DAVID LEIBENHAUT

(submitted by Candice Cantore)

Recently I had the pleasure of interviewing SGI tutor David Leibenhaut. David is extremely flexible, wildly innovative, and dedicated to his students. David has taught in several different locations, days, and times to accommodate ever-changing student needs. David has brought great ideas and excitement to our SGI program as our 2016 SGI Tutor of the Year.

When (and why) did you start tutoring with Literacy Nassau?

I started volunteering with Literacy Nassau in the fall of 2014. I had retired two years before that from teaching English in a NYC public high school in Manhattan. I helped muck out and repair homes along Long Island's south shore after Hurricane Sandy in 2012, which was hard physical work, and poignant. I then wanted to work in some teaching capacity. I first researched online, where I didn't find an exact fit, and then turned to my local library in Valley Stream, where I found this bulging binder with print-outs from many, many organizations, some with multiple copies inserted. I came across a single sheet for Literacy Nassau, somewhat at the back of the binder. I wouldn't claim that trumpets sounded, but I had this feeling I found what I was looking for.

Is there a difference between day and night classes in general?

Whether it is a day or night class, the students are patient but motivated and work diligently by participating in class, taking notes, doing some work at home and pushing themselves to create meaning clearly and completely in a new language. After reading an article, we review for comprehension and then have a discussion which may involve opinion and creative and in-depth thinking. It is exciting when the students no longer need a teacher or a text to prompt speech, and they politely carry on a conversation where each gets to contribute fine ideas, beautifully expressed.

What do you enjoy about Small Group Instruction? What do you get out of it?

It continues to be an amazing experience tutoring here. It has given me insight into a community of people with whom I had little prior contact. The adult students are very interested in learning conversational and written English including idioms, vernacular, and even slang. Many of them have children, and a few 'young' phrases are fun to know. I usually have learners at the intermediate level, which means they can already communicate in English. I am impressed with how competently they incorporate new words and verbs, modifiers and conjunctions. It is rewarding to help them develop their language skills in our 10-week sessions. We also get to learn about each other's culture by sharing ideas about food and families, language and leisure. (And sometimes we even share actual food!) During the course, we bring in some personal experiences and, bit by bit, get to know each other as individuals with specific stories. I am indebted to them for educating me and admire them for the changes they have made in their lives and so gracefully managed.