



## **Annual Report FY2019**

Period of 7/1/2018 to 6/30/2019

### **Organization History**

Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester has educated adults in English language skills since 1973. Six hundred participants engage in our programming each year, with 162 in tutoring and the remaining 418 in ESL courses. This fiscal year we continued to provide English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Adult Basic Education (ABE) programming to meet the demand for adult literacy education while continuing to sustain financials.

As a well-established nonprofit in Worcester, the second largest city in Massachusetts, Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester gains much of its strength from the commitment of the local community, the stellar reputation of its staff and teachers, standardized statewide assessments, affiliations and partnerships, and a solid training curriculum from LVM. Both students and tutors come to our program primarily based on word-of-mouth and personal or community referrals. One of the major strengths of our program, compared to other ESOL/Literacy programs in the area, lies in our unique approach to providing services to our students. We recognize that students have various needs and backgrounds and thus, offer three different programming options to help our students acquire the English language skills they are seeking. Those looking for an immediate option and who feel comfortable in a group setting are referred to our Literacy Academy group course offerings, where they can take group ESOL courses that fit their ability, interest, and schedule. Those students who either desire and/or require a more individualized one-to-one learning process are directed to apply to our one-to-one tutoring program. Lastly, for those students whose schedules do not allow them to access either program, we have digital and distance learning options. Desktop and tablet computers are equipped with the acclaimed Rosetta Stone software. Some students take classes only, some work solely with a tutor but many engage in a combination of tutoring and classes. The digital learning options have been a supplement. Upon initial intakes, we provide all programming options and encourage the use of multiple programs for more intensive impact and learning.

An invaluable resource and one that can't be underestimated, is the caliber and dedication of our volunteer tutors, who give of their time and expertise to work with our students, often times going above and beyond the call of duty and helping them in their acclimatization to life in the United States. Our volunteer tutors come from all walks of life, with a large portion of retired teachers. One-hundred and twenty-two volunteers were trained tutors and another fifty volunteers supported our organization primarily for annual events.

### **Assessment Certification and Staff Qualifications**

100% of current program and administrative staff are certified for BEST Plus 2.0 and TABE assessment again in FY19, and MAPT certification is charged to the Program Manager with support from the Executive Director. One volunteer is also BP and BP2 certified. Staff BP training, recertification, and BP2 certification dates:

- Executive Director - Jolene Jennings, MS: April/May 2016, Spring 2017, February 2018, April 2019.
- Program Manager - Elyse Waksman, MA: January & April 2019.
- Program Manager - Amy West, MA: September 2016, Spring 2017, February 2018.
- Administrative/Program Assistant - Lena Webb: April 2018, August 2018 & April 2019.
- Administrative/Program Assistant - Ben Carver: April & August 2018.

## New & Expanded Initiatives in FY19

- **Small Tutored Learning Circles (STLC)**
  - Primary goal: increasing tutor matches and hours while reducing student waitlist
  - Program Manager will provide more oversight of matches, encourage weekly meetings and inquire into low hours
  - Small Tutored Learning Circles (STLC): Tutors instruct 2-4 students at once (good option for experienced teachers)
  - First STLC formed in December 2018; plans for four more STLCs in FY20
- **English Proficiency for Economic Security**
  - Career distance learning opportunities for English for Work course and one-to-one tutoring pairs.
  - Increased focus on college and career readiness throughout programming
  - English for Work specific or other ESL/ESOL courses each semester for multi-prong education for tutored students (increased hours of instruction)
  - Financial Literacy Workshop offered, open to all tutored and classroom students



## Core Programming

### Tutor Program

- Includes our 18-hour volunteer tutor training and one-to-one weekly ABE/ESL/ESOL instruction
  - One-to-one weekly ABE/ESL/ESOL instruction
    - 162 student/tutor matches were active
    - 5605 hours of total direct ABE/ESL/ESOL education
      - Average of 34.6 hours per student with all matches considered
    - 1 Small Tutored Learning Circle (4 students to 1 tutor) – first circle in FY19 and continued successfully from December 2018 through June 30, 2019 (see “New & Expanded Initiatives in FY19”)
    - All administrative staff in Fall 2018 received paid professional development time with LVM’s *Train the Trainer* for both ABE and ESOL Tutor Training
    - 100 BEST Plus 2.0 assessments applied for current tutored and waitlisted students
  - Volunteer tutor training
    - 4 ESOL and 1 ABE tutor training: October, January, March, and June
      - ESOL - October 2018: 11 new tutors trained
      - ESOL - January 2019: 9 new tutors trained
      - ABE - March 2019: 4 new tutors trained
      - ESOL - June 2019: 16 new tutors trained
  - Tutor Workshops
    - 6 In-Service Workshops Offered
      - July 2018: Complex Sentences - Amy
      - August 2018: Word Recognition, Decoding, and Fluency - Amy
      - December 2018: Games and Activities - Amy
      - February 2019: Tutor Round Table - Elyse
      - March 2019: Listening and Reductions - Elyse
      - April 2019: Intermediate Grammar - Elyse

### English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)/English as a Second Language (ESL) Courses

- 36 9-week courses at our Satellite Office (90 Madison Street) and 1 course off-site (UMass Medical School partnership - course offered for employees and their families on campus; all cost for UMass is self-supported)
  - Courses include survival, beginner, and intermediate levels. Specialized topics are English for Work and

### Helping Your Schoolchild.

- ESL Financial Literacy Workshop open to all students
- Rosetta Stone open lab for survival/beginner level students offered at the Worcester Public Library (WPL) Computer Lab
- Over 400 students participated in ESL/ESOL courses and 65 in distance/digital learning with XPrize Adult Literacy Communities Competition and Rosetta Stone language lab
- Most students participate in 2 courses each semester, and 30% of tutored students also take courses

## Impact Measurement from FY19

Tutored students received standardized Department of Elementary and Secondary Education assessments in the form of BEST Plus 2.0, MAPT-CCR for Reading, and TABE. LVGW students who were assessed showed a student performance level (SPL) growth of 1.1 on average with BEST Plus. The recommended range of instructional hours between pre- and post-testing is 40 to 120, with research showing that it takes approximately 100 hours to increase an SPL. At LVGW in FY19, our tutored students received an average of 36 hours of tutoring and still progressed an average of 1.1 SPL, demonstrating the strong impact of one-to-one instruction guided by our state of the art tutor training and ongoing opportunities for professional development. Forty percent of tutored students pre- and post-tested with the TABE (basic literacy assessment) increased their scores. Half of the tutored students pre- and post-tested with MAPT-CCR for Reading demonstrated a meaningful education gain of 21 scale score points or more, and two-thirds of those students had more than two meaningful educational gains (42 scale score points).

Our one-to-one tutoring program offers four free, comprehensive, 18-hour multi-day volunteer tutor trainings per year. The ESOL and ABE training tracks prepare eligible volunteers to start tutoring an adult ESOL or ABE student. Tutors help adults reach their English language literacy proficiency goals. We followed proven curriculum provided by our state affiliation with Literacy Volunteers of MA to our incoming tutors. Before matching a student with a tutor, LVGW conducts a student intake process which includes collection of demographic and educational information and application of a standardized assessment.

## FY19 Activities and Events

### 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and International Potluck Dinner, October 30, 2018

All students, teachers, and tutors were invited to be part of the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and observe the process of the Board of Directors' annual voting process, hear reporting, develop new connections, and celebrate accomplishments. One connection was formed between a new board member and a tutored student named Majid, a former medical professional from Iran. Our board member is a professor at Becker College, and he invited Majid to speak at his Global Citizen meeting about his experience as a new immigrant. It was a great opportunity for Majid to speak publicly, share his story, and gain value and recognition as a contributing member of our community. Majid's tutor, Joan, supported him at his presentation at the college.



ESL Teacher, Celeste with three students at 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and International Potluck Dinner



### Other activities:

Day of Caring in collaboration with United Way of Central Mass, September 13, 2018

Good Deeds Day in collaboration with JCC, Special Student Scrabble Day, Sunday, April 7, 2019 (pictured at left: Diego and Gustavo playing the game of Scrabble for first time with volunteer Ronna)

Annual Scrabble Scrimmage Tournament, Worcester State University, Saturday, May 4, 2019

## Financial Status

Our organization is operating on an annual budget ranging from \$190,000-\$200,000 for the past few years. LV of Massachusetts is forecast to continue higher funding from past years by 50%, in the amount of \$34,679 in FY20, a welcome increase from the state DESE funds provided through affiliation with LVM. This DESE grant award is restricted to the tutoring program. LVM is now the highest contributor to our tutoring program, which contributed to our total organization income of \$191,680 in FY19.

Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester works to maintain its grant revenues and secured both new and continued foundation support from funders beyond Literacy Volunteers of MA for all programming. Over thirty funding sources annually are needed to support the LVGW's programming and organizational budget. Our grant funding sources in FY19 included LVM (DESE grant for tutoring program), Greater Worcester Community Foundation, George I. Alden Trust, Fletcher Foundation, Stoddard Charitable Trust, Albert W. Rice Charitable Foundation, Mildred McEvoy Foundation, Hoche-Scofield Foundation, George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation, Fred Harris Daniels Foundation, Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, National Grid Foundation, Bernatchez Family Foundation, Robert Treat Paine Association, Reach Out for Schools, Bay State Savings Bank, Unum, Cornerstone Bank, ProLiteracy's National Book Fund, Webster Five Foundation, Unibank, Fletcher Tilton PC, Schwartz Charitable Foundation, Countrybank, and Rollstone Charitable Trust. Funding received from foundations, corporations, and individuals support our core programs primarily offered at 3 Salem Square, Suite 332, Worcester Public Library (WPL) and our Literacy Satellite Classroom at 90 Madison Street.

Thank you for your continued support to help people thrive in the community!

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