



Annual Progress Report FY2017: Period of 7/1/16 to 6/30/2017

Organization History

Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester reached 44 years of educating adults with English Language skills to help people thrive in 2017. In FY16, the organization reached an all-time high of 600 participants which held fast in FY17. **We sustained our reach and programming to educate over 610 adult students while managing to a break-even budget and introducing new initiatives.**

Break even annual financials were accomplished in FY16, no easy challenge, but one that was met with both hard work and dedication to continue providing effective ESL programming to our constituents! Under the leadership of the new Interim Executive Director in Spring of 2016, the organization was both assessed and managed to build a new stronger team at LVGW. This fiscal year, FY17, LVGW started and finished with a qualified and committed administrative team and experienced and qualified ESL teaching staff who operated cohesively and competently to produce both quantity and quality programming. Both existing and new programming initiatives were implemented.

As a well-established non-profit on the Worcester scene, Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester, gains much of its strength from the commitment of the local community, the stellar reputation of its teachers, standardized assessments, and a solid training curriculum. Both students and tutors come to our program primarily based upon word-of-mouth and personal or community referrals. One of the major strengths of our program, compared to other ESL/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 3 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 Madison Place location for group course offerings, where they can take group ESL courses for 12-weeks of classes 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. Thirty-six percent of our tutored students also took our ESL courses in FY17-increasing their learning time to reach English language proficiency sooner.

Our newer initiative this past year is our **English language proficiency for Economic Security** for a career readiness focus. This includes our education and instruction of the CareerReady101 digital learning system. Staff have been trained and we have provided instruction to Tutors and Teachers to help their higher level students with career planning for employment and educational options. This was also introduced at the final session of our English for Work course to allow students to continue their career focus outside of the classroom. Lastly, teachers were educated and encouraged at the end of FY17 to plan to incorporate and align their curriculum, when possible, to the workforce skills in the coming year. This year, our student goal tracking increased over last year and tutored students reported the following goals around employment:

- 34 Improved employability skills
- 8 Obtained a job or a better job
- 4 entered other education and training certification programs
- 75% assessed improved on their standardized tests

Lastly, for those students whose schedules do not allow them to access either program, we have 2 language laboratories (one housed on Portable Kindle Fire Tablets at our 90 Madison Literacy Academy location and the other for use with our Rosetta Stone user license on the WPL library computer room.)

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. Three of our experienced Tutors volunteered when called upon to take their tutoring skills on the road

in Millbury Ma, to answer the call from the Millbury Public Schools and Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester to help ESL parents who were limited in their English language communications skills and cultural understanding who also had no transportation. We formed a pilot small tutoring group focusing on the curriculum of "Helping Your Schoolchild" at the Millbury Public Library for a group of 6-8 immigrant parents for 14-week period to meet the need. We hope to continue one or two off-site small group tutoring or a course offering in FY18 in Worcester County. One-hundred and fifty-four volunteers were trained tutors and another thirty-five volunteers supported our organization with annual events and program support.

Certification/Recognition

100% of staff has been certified for Best Plus Assessment testing by start of FY17. Additional training and certification of MAPT and TABE completed by Program Manager, Executive Director and Administrative Assistants.

- Executive Director-Jolene Jennings, MS; BP April/May 2016, BP2.0 April 2017, MAPT 2017, SABES Courses
- Program Manager-Amy West, MA; BP2.0 September 2016, MAPT 2017, SABES Courses
- Sr. Administrative Assistant- BP Melissa Cohen; 2015, BP2.0 April 2017, MAPT 2017, SABES Courses
- Administrative Assistant-Sheila McManus, MA; BP2.0 October 2016, TABE & MAPT 2017, SABES Courses
- 75% of Administrative Staff are ESL Trained Tutors.
- Teaching Staff and Volunteer Tutors, SABES Courses and other Educational offerings beyond LVGW.

GuideStar Silver Transparency Seal recognition obtained in 2017

New Initiatives in FY17

- **English Proficiency for Economic Security.**
 - **Career 101 introduction to ESL for Work Course and One-to-One Tutoring.**
- **ABE Tutor Training for Program Manager in FY17 for re-introductory in FY18**
- **Off-site Tutoring Pilot in Millbury MA (January-June 2016)**

Programming

TUTOR PROGRAM

Tutor Training and One-to-One Student/Tutor ESL Instruction

- **One-to-one Tutor/Student Weekly Tutoring:**
 - **154 Students Paired with Tutors during FY17**
 - **150 Tutors Trained and Registered / 126 Tutors with reported hours**
 - **66 LVM One-to-One Tutoring matches with over 30 hours tutoring**
 - **45 of these total active matches were newly matched in FY17.**
 - **5,000 Hours of One-to-One ESL/ABE Tutoring in FY17**
 - **13,500 Hours donated by Volunteer Tutors beyond direct ESL Tutoring: Tutoring preparation; Travel, Trainings/Workshops, Preparation Time and Events.**
 - **50 hours of Special Summer Individual/Small Groups (2-3) Tutoring with Clark University Intern and LVGW ESL Tutor Trained in June 2016. Three to five students from July-August total: 50-hours. *Students participated in conversation, reading, writing and Kindlefire Rosetta Stone tutoring with summer intern at our Madison Literacy Academy location.***
 - **New Program Manager trained in ESL Tutor Training in 6/2016-7/2016.**
 - **New Program Manager trained in ABE Tutor Training session at LVM Boston June 2017- a new initiative in FY17/FY18.**
 - **Pilot satellite location in Millbury in conjunction with Millbury Public School teacher's request for ESL Tutoring with Immigrant Parents. Meeting with LVGW current tutors at Millbury Public Library for small group tutoring in process for 6 month pilot to un-served**

area: January-June 2017. Two tutors/3-8 parents/mothers of school-age children.

- **Assessments are ongoing with a majority taking place from May 1st to June 30th. Records show:**
 - **100 Pre and Post Assessments applied as of 6.30.17.**
 - **77 MAPT Pre and Post Assessments applied for current students in FY17.**
 - **12 TABE Pre and Post Assessment applied for current students in FY17**

- **ESL Volunteer Tutor Training: Three 18-hour ESL Volunteer Tutor Trainings:**
 - **3 ESL Tutor Trainings Held: September, January and June**
 - Sept 2016: Tutor Training: trained 9 new tutors: 7 Females/2 Males
 - Jan 2017: Tutor Training: training 15 new tutors: 13 Females/2 Males
 - June 2017: Tutor training: goal for 17 new tutors: 14 Females/3 Males
 - **41 Total Tutors Trained in FY17 – 91% of goal met 41/45 Volunteer Tutors**
 - **24 Volunteer Tutors trained by 12.30.16 (mid-year)**
 - **41 Volunteer Tutors trained by in FY17**
 - **45 New Volunteer Tutor matches to waiting students in FY17 (listed above)**

ESL INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS for Current Tutors/Teachers

Educational Workshops Provided:

1. Aug 2016: Using the Kindle Fire workshop, led by Summer Clark Intern, Sia, attended by 6 teachers & tutors
2. Oct 2016: Reading Skills, co-led by Hossam and Amy, attended by 11 tutors
3. Nov 2016: Teaching Grammar, led by Amy, attended by 5 tutors
4. Dec. 2016: Teaching Pronunciation, led by tutor Nancy Donnelly, attended by 7 tutors
5. Feb 2017: Using Career Ready 101 with your student – 2 trainings scheduled at varying times:12 total attended-6 tutors
6. March 2017: Helping your student with citizenship, a tutor roundtable- 8
7. April 2017: Tutors' choice: Teaching Vocabulary Workshop-10 Tutors
8. No Workshops in May due to busy mandatory post assessment period May-June.
9. June 2017: Program Manager in dual ABE Tutor Training to Train the Trainer, Boston & Instructed ESL Training, Worcester
10. Continual offerings of educational tools & opportunities via Facebook and posted on our Bulletin Boards in both locations.

ENGLISH LITERACY ESL GROUP COURSES

ESL Courses held: 37 in FY17

- **26- 12 week courses**
- **2 – 12 week courses off site (UMMS)**
- **6 – 6 week courses for Spring into Summer Courses: June 7 - July 18, 2017**
- **2 – 5 week Intersession Courses; Drop-in rolling classes for current students only (*no registration required*)-volunteer/staff led.**
- **1 – 14 week Millbury Pilot Tutor-led group (*6-8 women-refed by Millbury Public Schools for helping your schoolchild curriculum*)**
- **8 Teachers provided 618 Direct Instructional Group ESL Course Hours and 580 Indirect Hours (Trainings, Workshops, Extra-prep,Travel and Meetings)**

ESL Courses include: Survival, Beginner, Intermediate and Specialized Courses targeting community needs are: ESL for Work, Reading Your Local Newspaper and Helping Your Schoolchild

Student Count in Courses

- 610 students registered for courses in FY17
 - 300 participants in courses on average each semester: Fall/Winter
 - 611 Total Hours in Group Course/Classes

- **13 Beginner** – Faculty led instruction combining computer ESL Software and various teaching methods in the Worcester Public Library (WPL) Computer Lab Classroom
- **13 Intermediate** –Faculty ESL led instruction in the LVGW 90 Madison Place Literacy Academy classroom with various teaching methods incorporating the Smartboard
 - Targeted specialized subjects including– *ESL for Work & Women & Mothers*.
- **2** ESL Courses for immigrant student community offered on campus (*program direct cost is self-supported*)- UMass Medical School Off site Partnership
- Each student participated in 2 courses on average and 50% of students participate in complimenting One-to-One Tutoring and ESL Group Courses.
 - **610** Total participants in both ESL Courses and Tutoring programs in FY17

***FY17 Final total student count for combined programming: 610**
Previous Years: FY16: 600 Students / FY15: 500 Students

Impact Measurement from FY17

Standardized Dept. of Secondary Education assessment testing was applied to tutored students in the form of; Best Plus, MAPT and TABE. Students receiving pre/post testing in FY17 showed a 1.4 average SPL level for Best Plus, our primary assessment. In Massachusetts and within national research, ESL education shows hours required to advance one level as; Range: 100hrs (beginner)-170hrs (high intermediate) ESL instruction is required for an ESL student to advance 1 SPL level. The tutored students tested for Best Plus received an average of 42 hours of ESL English language. **A gain of 1.4 SPL growth** was measured at end of FY17 or ratio of 1.4 SPL:43 ESL Tutored hours - which indicates above average instructional and learning impact result for hours provided in comparison to ratio of 1:100 (Beginner) or 1:170 (Intermediate.) **Last year we reported a .4 gain of SPL growth for tested students. This year we measured specifically the Best Plus pre-post tested student scores which showed the above average learning result of 1.4 SPL growth. These 43 student/tutor one-to-one tutoring matches met for a reported 1820 hours during FY17.**

Our One-to-One Tutoring Program offers three free, comprehensive, 18-hour multi-day trainings a year to prepare qualified individuals to tutor with an adult ESL student to help them 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 in-take process which includes collection of demographic and educational information and application of a standardized Best Plus 2.0 ESL language and communication testing system we apply for current conversation ability level (pre) and again before the end of the fiscal year (post) if they have reached 30hours or more. The cost for each test rose in FY17 to \$3.00 per person each year for pre/post testing in FY17. FY18 it will increase again.

Our ESL class offerings included several offerings such as Survival English, Conversational English, and Beginner Reading and Writing, Women & Mothers: Helping Your Schoolchild and ESL English for Work. In addition to the curriculum designed by our experienced ESL faculty, students have the option to self-study using Rosetta Stone® language learning software, which is installed on each computer in the laboratory.

Organizational, Program and Fundraising Event Highlights

43rd LVGW Annual Meeting, October 17, 2016. Guest Speaker, Dr. David Jordan, Seven Hills Foundation. The goal of the meeting was to share with students, tutors, faculty, staff, board members, and guests the accomplishments and growth of LVGW over the last year. We demonstrated the importance of the work that constituents do in support of LVGW and our services.

Our guest speaker, **Dr. David Jordan**, shared data from the report “The Foreign Born Population of Worcester, Massachusetts: Assessing the Challenges and Contributions of a Diverse Community.” Dr. Jordan’s speech focused on literacy at both a global and local level. His speech demonstrated the critical need for the services of LVGW and for the work that you do in support of our organization. Dinner was included in evening for 50 participants.

Holiday Bake Sale & Exchange December 2016. First time event for all students, tutors, teachers and staff. Combination bake sale fundraiser component (small) and sharing/exchange of baked goods from various cultures/nationalities shared together over conversation, donated prize drawing and gift certificates to recognize tradition of holiday festivity in the United States of America while demonstrating a common practice of what a holiday bake sale is for cultural understanding. 25 participants.

Volunteer Recognition with Coffee and Conversation will be held again in April 2017-week of April 24th this year. This will be our second annual social event honoring volunteers during **National Volunteer Week**; Tutors, Teachers occasional volunteers will come together in a casual gathering at the LVGW office, coffee/baked goods and small gift provided to recognize volunteerism. We plan to hold similar event annually to continue building relationships, share stories and best practices and recognize our generous volunteers each year.

The **Scrabble Scrimmage** signature social and fundraising event was held Saturday, May 6th from 5:30-8:30pm, at the Worcester State University. Event highlights include; 77 attendees (increase of 25% from previous year) and a fundraising goal of \$3,500 in sponsorship reached. This is our primary individual/event fundraiser that raised 5% of revenues annually.

Worcester Women's Oral History Project with ESL Provider partnership to highlight Immigrant Women stories of Worcester. A year-long project in 2017! Interview storied will be shared at our Annual Meeting, October 25th and at the WWOHP event on December 2017.

Financials

Our organization set a budget of \$206,956 with a goal of sustainability. LV of Massachusetts provides 10-12% of the organizational budget of Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester which applied as a restricted grant award to the Tutor Program. Seventy-five percent of our funds are obtained from foundation and corporate funders and 15% estimated from individual donations, events, earned income and unsolicited donations.

Literacy Volunteers worked to maintain its grant revenues and secured both new and continued foundation support from funders, besides Literacy Volunteers of MA for Tutor Program, funders supporting LVGW organization include; Mildred H. McEvoy Foundation, Hoche-Scofield Foundation, Stoddard Charitable Trust, The Schwartz Foundation, Albert W. Rice Foundation and Fred Harris Daniels Foundation. LVGW was able to achieve break-even annual financials in FY16, providing a solid sustainable foundation to start FY17. The largest funder in FY17 continues to be the Greater Worcester Community Foundation with LVM just behind.

Organization challenges included lower fundraising amounts than forecasted for both foundations and individual donations. Staffing and leadership change contributed to some decline in outreach. Much energy went into organization structural development with new hires and training of staff, program support and building new relationships while reviewing operations past, present and future. We ended FY16 with reaching our budget with some last quarter fundraising efforts with the incoming Executive Director, but in FY17, we fell behind with timing on grant award receipts and individual fundraising by the board and executive director. One grant from Hoche-Scofield for \$6k was approved in late June with notification to LVGW after the end of the fiscal year in August. **The Executive Director wrote forty grant applications and secured and managed 33 grant awards in FY17**-a strong response. With management of budget Executive Director was able to keep expenses down by \$10k, to keep unexpected loss and timing of grant awards to \$14k in FY, leaving a budget gap of \$25k for end of year financials. The short-fall was taken from the assets, leaving starting assets in FY17 at \$100k, a necessary asset goal amount to carry our monthly expenses through the lull of the grant season.

Funding is obtained from foundations, corporations, events and individuals to support the core program and operations. Tutoring and ESL Group Courses for English language literacy skill development offered at Literacy Academy is located at 90 Madison Place & Worcester Public Library, 3 Salem Square, Worcester (WPL.) Tutoring and ESL Courses are the core programs.

To increase fundraising including but not limited to individual donations, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed in January 2017 to strategize on fundraising opportunities and set goals for future. Strategy is to continue current grant award levels or slightly above, expand and identify individual fundraising avenues and explore earned income potential. Goals: Development of Annual Appeal mailing list, outreach to corporations for Amazon Smiles order donations, social media; WPI partnership & Go Fund Me, merchandise sales; LVGW Tote Bags and most importantly, building relationships with our contacts, constituents and community who value our mission and impact.