

Annual Report FY2018: Period of 7/1/17 to 6/30/2018

ORGANIZATION MISSION, HISTORY AND CONSTITUENTS

Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester (LVGW) has educated adults in English Language skills to help people thrive since 1973. **In FY18, LVGW continues the trend of assisting over 600 adult students by providing English language education to a total of 607!** A total of 187 of these students enrolled in individual tutoring, were assessed and matched to individual tutors; 391 students attended an average of 2 ESL courses each, 29 received computer-based instruction, and more were registered, assessed and waitlisted for an individual tutor.

In FY18, actual financials came in just 3% below break-even, an improvement by 6% over FY17. Our mid-year budget review and adjustments to keep us on track for solid budget projections is a key financial process improvement, and drives us to end the fiscal year with good financial standing. Two unsolicited grant awards for recognition of LVGW's work totaling \$20,000 came from The Ruth H. and Warren A. Ellsworth Foundation and the George I. Alden Trust. LVGW also received a volunteer bequest of \$10,000. We are grateful for their recognition and support of our work to help adult immigrants, refugees and ABE students to gain English language proficiency.

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 group course offerings, where they can take group ESL 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 2 language laboratories (one housed on Portable Kindlefire Tablets at our 90 Madison Literacy Academy location and the other housed in the WPL library on the desktops.) Desktop and table computers are equipped with the acclaimed Rosetta Stone software. Some students take classes only, some work solely with a tutor but over half our tutored students engage in a combination of tutor and classes. The language laboratories have been a supplement. Upon initial intakes, we provide all programming options and encourage 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. In fact, one tutor, a retired reading teacher in the public school system, organized a small group of students, all of whom were illiterate in the native languages, to assist them in their quest to master the written word during FY16. One-hundred and sixty volunteers were trained tutors and another fifty-one volunteers supported our organization in both programming and annual events.

Assessment Certification and Staff Qualifications

100% of staff was certified for Best Plus (BP) Assessment and MAPT Assessment in 2017. Additional training and certification completed for TABE. BP Assessment training, recertification and BP2 certification accomplished:

- Executive Director-Jolene Jennings, MS; April/May 2016, Spring 2017, April 2018
- Program Manager-Amy West, MA; September 2016, Spring 2017, April 2018

- Administrative Assistant-Sheila McManus, MA; October 2016, Spring 2017, April 2018.
- Volunteer Tutor Assessor-Linda Oroszko, BP certified since 2016 and reactivated in 2018.

New Initiatives in FY18

- **English Proficiency for Economic Security.**
 - CareerReady101 introduction to ESL for Work Course and introduced to One-to-One Tutoring
 - English for Work specific course in Writing and Conversation with community guest speaker for our Fall and Winter semesters.
 - Increased awareness and emphasis on Work and Career Readiness within majority of programming
- **ABE Tutor Training at LVM for Program Manager in FY18 for re-introductory at LVGW**
- **ABE Tutor Training for existing ESL Tutors Only-pilot for Program Manager, Fall 2017**
- **Increasing Tutor matches and hours while reducing the Student Wait List**

Provide more oversight to matches-encourage weekly meetings/inquire into low hours
Approach a couple of tutors to lead small tutor circles/groups. Tutors may instruct between 1-4 students at once to meet the individual tutoring standards (*good option for experienced teachers.*)-*in research, and development in FY18 with plans for pilot in late FY18, while expanding in FY19.*

PROGRAMMING

Tutor Program

Includes our 18-hour Volunteer Tutor Training and One-to-One Weekly Student/Tutor ESL Instruction

- **One-to-one Tutor/Student Weekly Tutoring: 187 student/tutor matches activated and the volunteer tutors provided 5,727 hours** of total direct ESL/ESOL and ABE education. *This was a significant increase in total hours of tutoring in FY17 by 15%, from 5,000 to 5,727 hours. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers and staff for their perseverance!*
- Another 13 volunteer tutors will receive student matches in June 2018, and are added to the total matches, but are pending accumulating hours with their student in FY19. This brings the total volunteer tutor numbers to 160. Several of our tutors are matched to more than one student per year. Our volunteer tutors provided a total 5,727 hours of direct tutoring in FY18.
 - **187 Total Tutor/Student matches were activate during FY18**
 - **47 New tutors trained and matched at the end of fiscal year on 6.30.18**
 - **Program Manager training in ABE Tutor in Boston 2017**
 - **Program Manager provided ABE Tutor Training at LVGW**
 - **100+ Best Plus assessments applied for current tutored and waiting listed students.**

Volunteer Tutor Training: Four 18-hour Tutor Trainings

- **3 ESL/1 ABE Tutor Trainings: September, October, January and June**
 - Sept 2017: ESL Tutor Training: trained 13 new tutors: 6 Female/7 Males
 - October 2017: ABE Tutor Training-Pilot in-house training to 8 current ESL Tutors: 7 Female/1Male
 - Jan-Feb, 2018: ESL Tutor Training: training 13 new tutors: 12 Female/1 Male (*Pictured here*)
 - June 2018: ESL Tutor training: 13 new tutors and 1 current for refresher: **10 F/ 3 M**
- **47 Total Tutors Trained to date – Goal of 45 in FY18 is exceeded!**



- **Volunteer Tutor Informational Orientation was held in April 2018: 15 attendees**
- **50+ new tutors matched to waiting students in FY18 (listed above). Total of tutor/student matches active during the year totalled 187!**

Development Trainings for Current Volunteer Tutors and Teaching Staff

Workshops for Tutoring Development

08/24/2017: Online Resources Roundtable, Inst. Amy-6 tutors

10/2017: Mango Online Resource, Inst. Sheila-4 tutors

12/7/2017: Reading Comprehension Workshop, Inst. Amy- 8 tutors

02/2018: Employment/Career Workshop, Inst. Amy-10 tutors

03/22/2018: Teaching Vocabulary, Inst. Amy- 8 tutors

04/26/2018: Teaching Conversation/Conversational Language, Inst. Amy- 7 tutors

05/24/2018: Listening & Pronunciation, Inst. Amy- 7 tutors

English Literacy Adult ESL Courses

ESL Courses Numbers: 32 multi-week courses instructed in FY18

- **26 courses over two 12-week semesters of classes: Sept.-Dec 2017, and January-April, 2018.**
- **5 courses over one 6-week Summer semester of classes: June-July 2018**
- **1 special multi-week ESL Financial Literacy Course**
- **ESL Courses include: Beginner, Intermediate levels that focus on conversation, reading, writing and pronunciation. In addition, our specialized courses targeting community needs are: ESL for Work and Helping Your Schoolchild.**

Course Descriptions:

- Beginner Level– 12 ESL Teacher led group instruction combining computer ESL Software and various teaching methods in the Worcester Public Library (WPL) Computer Lab Classroom or at our Madison Place Literacy Classroom.
- Intermediate Level –12 ESL Teacher led group instruction in the LVGW 90 Madison Place Literacy Classroom with various teaching methods incorporating the Smartboard and other resources.
 - Targeted specialized subjects including– *ESL for Work, Helping Your Schoolchild and Reading Your Local Newspaper-a popular topic!*
- *Intermediate Level-1 Pilot ESL Financial Literacy education 6-week course offered with partnership of BayState Savings Bank.*
- UMass Medical School Partnership- 2 ESL Courses on-site for employees and their families on campus (*cost is self-supported*)
- *Students participate in 2 courses each on average, and 20-30% of students participate in multi-prong approach with both our One-to-One Tutoring and ESL Group Courses.*
- *Over 600 students alone registered for our ESL courses this year.*

Impact Measurement

Standardized Dept. of Secondary Education assessment testing was applied to tutored students in the form of; Best Plus, MAPT and TABE. Once again in FY18, LVGW students assessed showed a Student Performance Level growth of 1.4 SPL on average, above the average! 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. Historically, students receiving pre/post at LVGW testing in FY16 showed a .4 average SPL level, FY17 climbed to 1.4 SPL growths, with FY18 holding steady with success! This year, the tutored students who were tested received an average of 38 hours of ESL English language tutoring, and results reflected a **gain of 1.4 SPL growth**, a ratio of 1.4SPL Growth: 38hrs. Result continue to indicates a

very good instructional and learning impact result for program hours provided in comparison to ratio of 1:100 (Beginner) or 1:170 (Intermediate.)

Our One-to-One Tutoring program offers four free, comprehensive, 18-hour multi-day Volunteer Tutor Trainings per year. The ESL and ABE training tracks prepare eligible volunteers to start tutoring for an adult ESL or ABE student. Tutors then 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 in-take process which includes collection of demographic and educational information and application of a standardized Best Plus language 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 increased in FY18 to \$3.70 pp per year for pre and post-testing in FY18. Re-certification for all Best Plus assessors is generally required annually.

Our ESL class offerings included several offerings such as Survival English, Conversational English, and Beginner Reading and Writing, Parents and Caregivers: 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.

Financials

Our organization operates on an annual budget of just under \$200,000. To remain at or near our break-even budget goal, we must apply close financial oversight and apply a mid-year adjustment to assure sustainability. Surprise variables were both positive and negative. Positive included the generous unsolicited funder donations from the Ruth H. And Warren A. Ellsworth Foundation and George I. Alden Trust, along with a first time bequest from a former volunteer! Staff turn-over of part-time staff occurred, which never seems to come at a good time for workload. We ended our year in good standing, closing within \$5,700 of actual financials.

Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester works to maintain its grant revenues and secured both new and continued foundation support from funders, besides Literacy Volunteers of MA DESE State Funds for our Tutor Program, funders supporting LVGW organization and programming includes; Mildred H. McEvoy Foundation, Hoche-Scofield Foundation, Stoddard Charitable Trust, The Schwartz Foundation, Albert W. Rice Charitable Foundation, The Fletcher Foundation and the Fred Harris Daniels Foundation. The largest funder in FY18 continues to be the Greater Worcester Community Foundation. LV of Massachusetts provides 10% of the organizational budget of Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester which is applied as a restricted grant award to our Tutor Program. In our 4-year grant process with LVM for state DESE Funds, the next four years are approved! We are budgeting for 15% of organizational budget as LVM, affiliates and the state succeeded in a much needed increase to ABE/ESL funds.

Annual organization challenges are anticipated for most small nonprofits. LVGW challenges include balancing programming demands with constituents' schedules, human resources, program and office space, and individual fundraising. A large student population was seen this year by the evacuees from Puerto Rico, in response to the slow recovery from the 2017 hurricane. A high number have been reflected in our registration for both ESL Group courses and application to our One-to-One tutoring program. We have been able to absorb most newcomers in our courses, and many have added to our waiting lists for a free tutor. We refer to the ESOL Network if we are not able to accommodate a student due to registration limits.

Funding received from foundations, corporations and individuals support the core English language education programs. Programming includes our One-to-One Tutoring and ESL Group Courses. The program locations for English language literacy skill development are offered at our 3 Salem Square, Suite 332A, Worcester Public Library (WPL.) and our Literacy Academy at Madison Classroom, which is currently located at 90 Madison Place. Our long-range vision is to have one location capable of housing all programming, and staff for maximum efficiency of human resources and finances. A strategic plan was initiated in May 2018, which included four targeted areas, one of which is to address the space and location with a plan in 2019 for a proposed implementation by 2021.

Programming and Event Highlights

Day of Caring with United Way of Central Mass at Community Harvest Project: September 14, 2017



Pictured L to R; Theresa, Yahui, Melody, Jolene, Darrelyn, Amy and Ban.

Engaging volunteer event with United Way Day of Caring for Literacy Volunteers crew at Community Harvest Project Farm! This was our second year volunteering with our constituents for the Day of Caring. Literacy Volunteers **stood out in the field** as one of the few nonprofits amongst forprofits to volunteer at this annual volunteer day. We are very proud of our students, volunteer tutors and staff for their civic engagement!

During our 4 hour shift, our collaborative teams helped to pick 16,000 servings of produce in the morning. Lots of eggplant for all for the food pantries of Worcester County! Nice impact and a great way to learn, participate and engage our students in our culture of civic engagement. A new tradition at Literacy Volunteers!

Worcester Women's Oral History Project and LVGW: A Collaborative Partnership

A year-long oral history project with LVGW, WWOHP and three of our remarkable woman immigrant students, were unveiled at two speaking engagements. Students shared their stories at the LVGW Annual Meeting, 10/17 and at the WWOHP Public Reading, December, 2017.

Three Literacy Volunteers of GW tutored students who participated in sharing their stories are pictured here with staff who conducted and transcribed the interviews.

All three of our students received thank you bouquets from Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester.

From left to right:

Jolene Jennings, Executive Director
Edna Froio, Tutored Student
Sheila McManus, Administrative Assistant
Carmenza Ramirez, Tutored Student
Amy West, Program Manager
Yahui Kong, Tutored Student



44th LVGW Annual Meeting, October 2017. Three student guest speakers; Tutored students with various backgrounds and education levels, who participated with LVGW in the Worcester Women's Oral History Project. The goal of the meeting beyond nominating new board members and year-end financial reporting was to share student's goals and accomplishments through our Tutoring Program with our constituents. Guest included our students, tutors, faculty, staff, and board members. We demonstrated the importance of the work that constituents do in support of LVGW and our literacy education programming with adults in the Worcester area. A light dinner for 40 guests was provided during the educational and inspirational evening.

Annual Volunteer Recognition with refreshments and conversation was held at Madison Place in April 2018.

The **Annual Scrabble Scrimmage Tournament** is Literacy Volunteer's signature community and fundraising event. The **17th year** of this event was held on Saturday, May 5, 2018, at Worcester State University. Over \$6,000 benefited LVGW in conjunction with sponsorship from Bay State Savings Bank, Countrybank and Accelerated Media Technologies. A superb evening of gaming, teamwork, food and fun was had by all 100 in attendance!

Yours in Community,

Jolene Jennings

Jolene Jennings, Executive Director

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