



Literacy Volunteers
of Greater Worcester

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020



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LETTER TO OUR COMMUNITY

During the fall and winter of this past year, LVGW was in a period of staff transition, yet we maintained smooth operations with the hard work of dedicated board members, staff, and volunteers. Just a few months later, we were faced with an even more significant challenge.

In March, when Massachusetts began to see a rise in COVID-19 cases, we needed to quickly determine the best way to continue instruction without in-person meetings. We needed to maintain communication with hundreds of volunteers and students during the pandemic. We needed to assess our financial position and adjust to economic changes.

We are proud of everything LVGW has accomplished this year with your support.

Our teachers and volunteer tutors creatively adapted and collaborated to provide online classes and tutoring. Our staff dove headfirst into distance learning and professional development to assist our instructors and students. We still served 566 students throughout the year. Our supporters helped us meet our spring fundraising goal when we couldn't host our signature scrabble event. Our monthly donor program grew eight times in size compared to the previous year.

We are grateful for the foundations and

corporations that have continued to fund our critical educational services this past year. Additionally, we received a Paycheck Protection Program loan, a CARES Act grant through Mass Humanities, and a grant from the Worcester Together Fund, all of which have allowed us to maintain level programming and staffing in 2020. THANK YOU!

Immigrants, refugees, and adults with limited literacy are among the groups that have been hit hardest by this pandemic. Providing education as a pathway to independence has been more important this year than perhaps ever before. That is why we are deeply grateful for all of the people who have helped LVGW succeed this year.

We cannot wait to see what the next year brings.

Sincerely,

Elyse Waksman
ELYSE WAKSMAN

Executive Director

Amanda Addeo
AMANDA ADDEO

President



OUR MISSION

Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester provides adults with the English language skills they need to thrive in our community.



PROGRAMS



We provide English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and basic literacy instruction through four core programs:

1. **Literacy Academy.** We offer free ESOL courses, from survival to intermediate level. Specialized courses include English for Parents and Caregivers, Book Club, Civics and Citizenship, and English for Work. In FY20, we provided 33 ESOL courses over 27 weeks, including online classes via Zoom after the COVID-19 shutdown.
2. **One-to-One Tutoring.** We train ESOL and basic literacy volunteer tutors, match them with students, conduct standard assessment upon intake and annually, and provide continuous support and resources for tutors.
3. **Small Tutored Learning Circles (STLC).** This program is an expansion of our one-to-one tutoring. Tutors are matched with small groups of 2-5 ESOL students. STLC reduce the time students spend on the waitlist, promote peer learning, and help build relationships among learners.
4. **Self-Directed Learning.** We provide a variety of online resources such as Rosetta Stone for students to study independently, supplementing their participation in our other programs and increasing their hours of instruction.

EVENTS



46th Annual Meeting & International Potluck

October 30, 2019

Worcester CleanTech Incubator

At our annual meeting, we celebrated our successes from the previous year, including serving more students with our new small tutored learning circles. We heard from tutor Mala Krishnamurthy about her experiences with her two students, who are very different but share a common goal of learning English to become more connected in their community. We welcomed three new board members: Suze Jean-Charles, Mitchell Gaumond, and Ben Straight. Last, but certainly not least, we enjoyed delicious food from many different cuisines!

EVENTS

In January, we hosted a Meet & Greet event at Redemption Rock Brewing Company for all our students, tutors, teachers, staff, board, and community supporters to get to know one another. We had just undergone a staffing shake-up, so there were some new faces! With wonderful speeches by two student-tutor pairs (Olivia & Joan, Seetha & Carol) and great beer, it was a fun night to remember.



Meet & Greet

January 28, 2020

Redemption Rock Brewing Co



STUDENTS

In FY20, we served 566 students across the four programs and filled 898 seats.

Geography: From 72 countries (see next page). 81% live in the city of Worcester, 19% in surrounding towns in Worcester County.

Race: 14% Asian, 13% Black/African American, 46% Latino/a/x, 22% white, 5% undefined/other

Gender: 70% female, 30% male

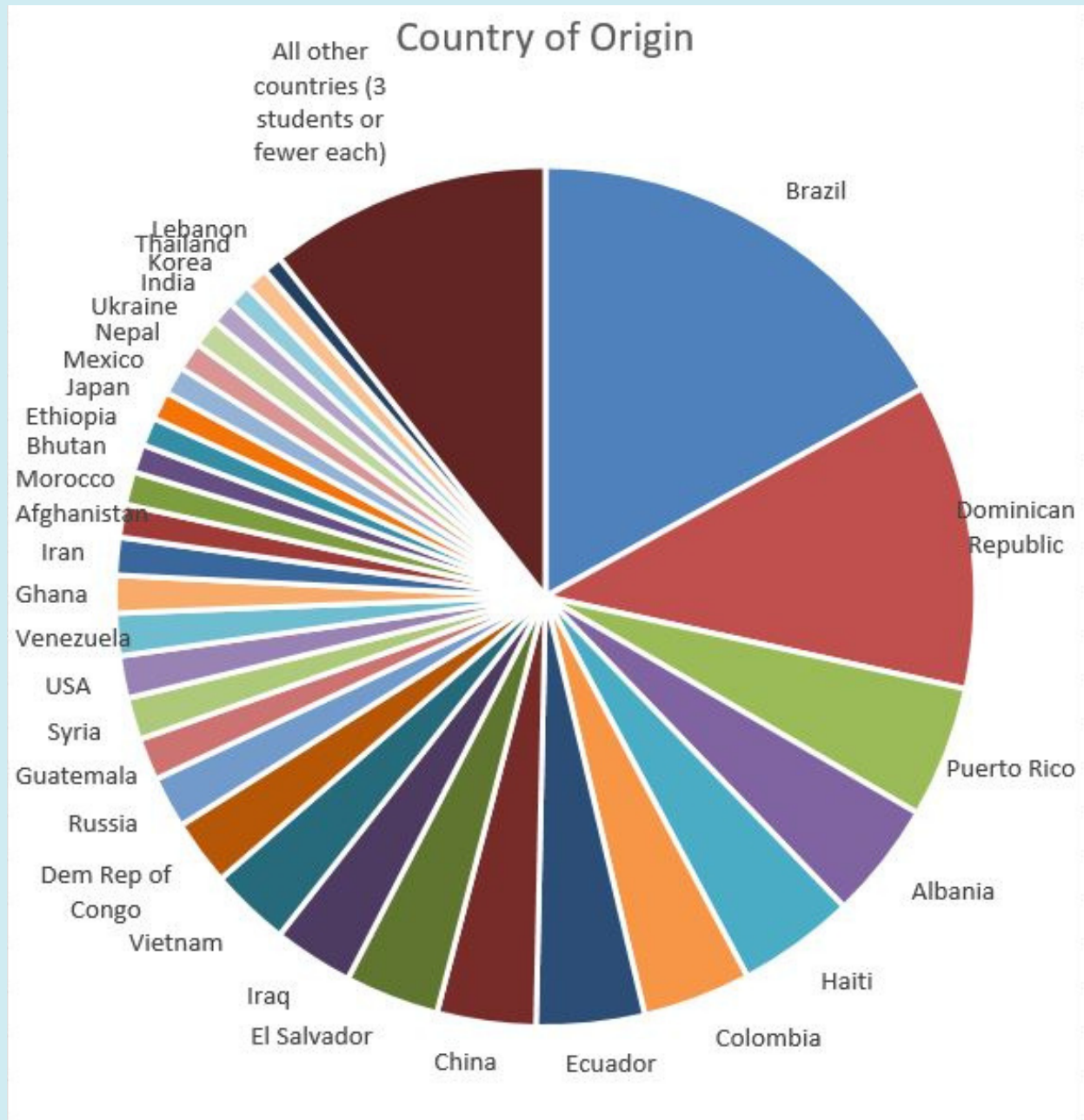
Languages: 57 different languages spoken. Most common languages: Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Albanian, Haitian Creole.

Employment: 49% employed & seeking career growth, 20% unemployed & looking, 28% not in workforce, 3% unknown

Age: 18 to 87. The 25-44 age group makes up 50% of our students.

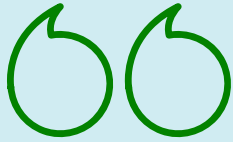


STUDENTS



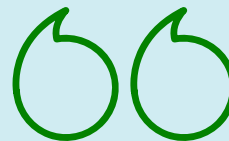
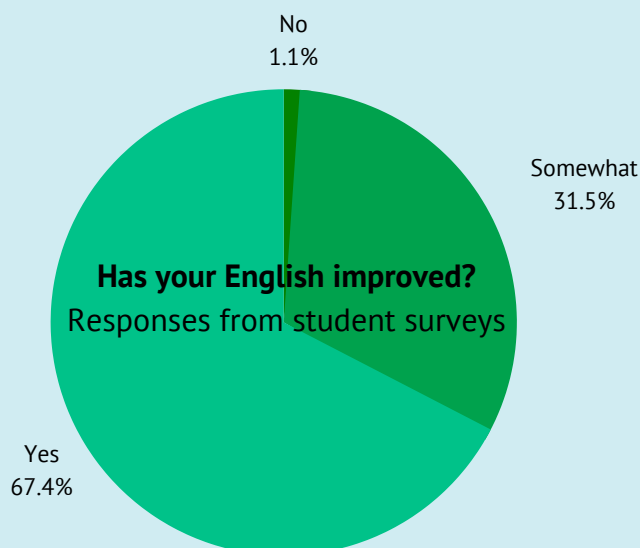
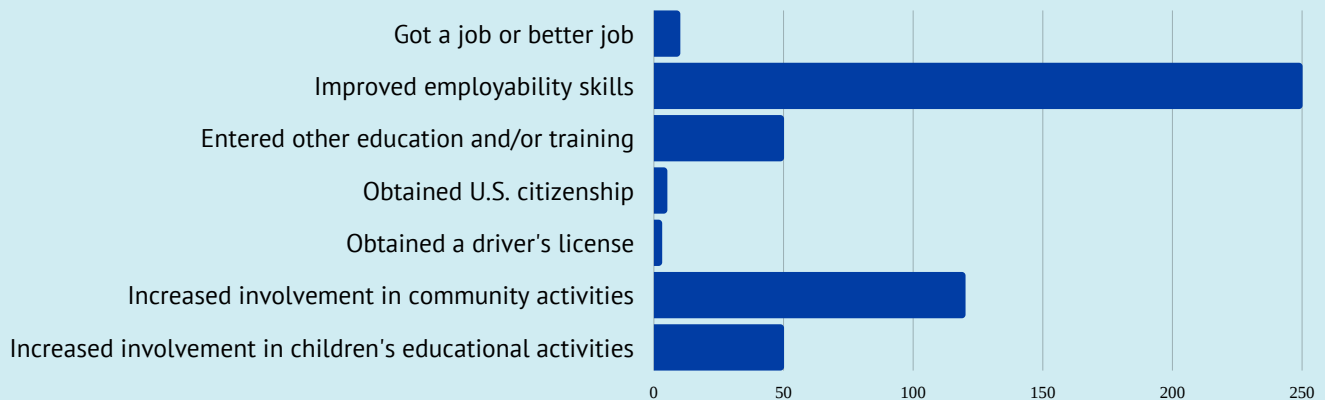
IMPACT

Note: due to covid-19, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and LVM prohibited standard annual assessments at the end of the year. Here are some other ways that we can show our impact from FY20.



My favorite thing about Literacy Academy is meeting so many different students - all of us have the same goal to improve our English. **Everyone has so much passion** to learn English.

Everyone wants to speak out and tell us what they think and what they experience. It is very interesting to see many different people from different countries. Teachers are very responsible, patient, and have lots of experience. The classes are very good! Because of the pandemic they moved the classes online. It was a very good experience!" -Cong, student from China



Online classes are the best. Because I get time to work and study. I don't have a car and it made my life easier. In addition we are more protected until this pandemic is resolved. Thank you for this opportunity." -LVGW student, summer 2020

SUPPORTERS

LVGW operates on a modest annual budget to provide the most impact with our sustainable income and expenses. We continue to review financials mid-year for sustainability and fiscal responsibility. In the wake of covid-19 and its economic impacts, our total revenue for the year was \$172,637. We kept expenses low while continuing to deliver level programming with distance learning.

Our individual fundraising initiatives continue to grow. We transitioned our annual Scrabble Tournament fundraiser to an online fundraiser and auction in May and exceeded our goal. Our monthly giving program grew 8 times in size from the previous year. We continue to receive support from many foundations and corporations, who are so important to our students' success! Thank you to our wonderful FY20 funders (listed below) and individual donors.

Albert W. Rice Charitable Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee

Bay State Savings Bank

Bernatchez Family Foundation

Cornerstone Bank

Countrybank

Dollar General Literacy Foundation

Ellsworth Foundation

Fletcher Foundation

George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation

Greater Worcester Community Foundation

Hanover Insurance Group

Hoche-Scofield Foundation

Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts / MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation

Mildred H. McEvoy Foundation

National Grid Foundation

Reach Out for Schools Foundation

Robert Treat Paine Association

Schwartz Charitable Foundation

Stoddard Charitable Trust

UniBank

Unum

Wyman-Gordon Foundation

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

LVGW would not be able to do this work alone. We are so grateful for the many collaborative partners who are working toward a shared vision for Worcester and adult literacy.

- Worcester Public Library: hosts our main office, provides resources to our students and volunteers, refers students to our programming
- Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts: provides a comprehensive 18-hour training for our volunteers and organizational support across a statewide network of 12 affiliates
- ProLiteracy: provides ongoing professional development opportunities to staff and volunteers
- SABES: provides ongoing professional development opportunities to staff and volunteers
- Quinsigamond Community College Bridges Program: offers a classroom space to tutors and students
- ESOL Network of adult education service providers in Worcester: refers students to our ESOL and literacy programming, opportunities for further collaborations among Network members (Ascentria Care Alliance, Assumption Sisters, Catholic Charities, Clark University, Green Island Center, ESOL Navigator, QCC, Training Resources of America, Inc., WARM, Worcester Adult Learning Center, Worcester Public Health, Worcester State University, WPI, YOU, Inc., and more)
- Worcester Community Connections Coalition: circulates a listing of existing referral agencies, promotes our programming, provides parent guides for our students, and refers students to our program
- Clark University: coordinates college internship opportunities on our site, provides interns, donated classroom space for training
- Assumption College: provides volunteer classroom aides for our Literacy Academy classes through service-learning projects
- Worcester State University: provides interns, hosts our signature annual fundraising event (Scrabble Scrimmage Tournament)
- Jewish Community Center: refers volunteer tutors, participation in annual Good Deeds (Mitzvah) Day with other local organizations
- RSVP Worcester Area Volunteers: refers volunteers to our tutor training program
- Greater Worcester Community Foundation: funding and professional development opportunities for our staff and board members
- Redemption Rock Brewing Company: provide event space
- United Way of Central MA: promotes our upcoming volunteer opportunities, lists us on annual holiday wish list, refers volunteers to our tutor training program, we participate in their annual Day of Caring

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF



Board and staff at the Annual Meeting & International Potluck, October 2019

Board:

Amanda Addeo, President
Marc Sanguinetti, Vice President
Kelsey Miller, Treasurer
Melissa Depanian, Secretary
Michael Mills
Frank Callahan
Vitana Melesiute
Nelson Santos
Suze Jean-Charles
Mitchell F. Gaumond
Ben Straight

Staff:

Elyse Waksman, Executive Director
Lena Webb, Literacy Academy
Coordinator
John Riley, Volunteer Coordinator
Rafaela Joseph, Admin/Program
Assistant