



THE LITERACY COUNCIL  
OF LANCASTER-LEBANON

# The LiteracyLine

Winter 2018

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## The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon

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## Celebrating 2017, Anticipating 2018 -Cheryl Hiester, Executive Director

The days are cold and short, but things are warm and bright at The Literacy Council. Students are coming, they are learning, and they are meeting their goals.

As the holidays and end of year get closer, we have been talking about all that we have accomplished at The Literacy Council in 2017. We moved our Lancaster office, we expanded our staff and we added innovative new programs.

Looking ahead to 2018, we are determined to build our capacity to serve our community. Where do you go if you need a high school diploma? Where do you go if you need to learn English? Where do you go if you graduated from high school but you need to improve your skills so that you can further your education?

### You go to The Literacy Council.

Sadly, there are more than 60,000 adults in our service area who could use our help.

We have identified four organizational strategies to help us build capacity, strengthen our programs and ensure student outcomes.

### Strategy One: Expand outreach, advocacy, community engagement, and collaboration.

We must strengthen the knowledge and awareness of our supporters, the community and policy makers about the determinants of limited skills in adulthood, and connect with partner organizations to expand solutions.

### Strategy Two: Focus on student achievement and accountability.

We must continue to innovate programs and services to ensure relevance and efficacy and demonstrate a clear return on investment.

### Strategy Three: We must diversify and expand our funding.

Nonprofits face a continuous struggle to secure the funding needed to address critical social issues. We must work hard to build strong relationships with our supporters, educate potential investors, and share our students' successes.

### Strategy Four: Ensure an organizational culture of lifelong learning.

If there is one lesson to be learned from the continuous changes in skill demands, it is that every citizen must become a lifelong learner. Our students know that getting a high school equivalency diploma is not the goal post; it is a first step.

Our staff knows that we must work hard to continuously improve and adapt our services to meet the needs of our students as community members, workers and family members.

As end of year approaches, I hope you will consider joining our effort. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to The Literacy Council this year. Donations can be made online at: <http://www.getliterate.org/make-a-gift/>.

As the New Year approaches, please consider volunteering. We need volunteer tutors and mentors to work with adult learners.

From all of us at The Literacy Council, we wish you, your family and loved ones a very happy holiday season.

Many thanks - we hope to hear from you soon!

*Cheryl Hiester*





## **Integrated Basic Skills Education and Skills Training to Ensure Success**

**-Linda Cullen, ESL Student Coordinator**

### **Phase One: SELHS Medical Assistant Training**

*Lancaster County needs well trained medical assistants.*

*More than 200 internationally trained medical doctors live in Lancaster County and are working in warehouses and other entry level jobs.*

A new program is helping to increase the pool of well-trained medical assistants and help doctors qualify for work in the medical field. Five internationally trained physicians are taking the first step on a career path leading to a job in the medical field thanks to a partnership of SouthEast Lancaster Health Services, The National Institution for Medical Assistant Advancement (NIMAA) and The Literacy Council.

Following a competitive application process, this small group of students were chosen to participate in a medical assistant training program that leads to an industry recognized credential. SouthEast Lancaster Health Services and NIMAA facilitate the medical assistant training and The Literacy Council teaches the English skill that participants need to be successful in the training. This approach is called Integrated Education and Training. The program was made possible by grants from BB&T and The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

The language barrier isn't the only challenge that

participants in this program face. Internationally trained physicians are not allowed to practice medicine in the United States until they meet all of the American requirements for their medical degree and licensing. Learning a new language takes time and effort and many of these students are working 40+ hours in entry level jobs to support their families. The NIMAA program is a chance for them to start getting the training they need to reclaim their careers.

The Medical Assistant training is an intensive program which requires a significant time commitment, dedication and sacrifice; however, the students feel they are lucky to be participating in a cutting-edge project, that if successful, could be duplicated in many other areas of the country. Three days a week the students receive at least twelve hours of clinical training, 6-8 hours of homework, and 1 hour to skype with students throughout the country. The other four days of the week, these students work 40-50 hours in their current jobs to support their families.

The training wraps up in April 2018 and this group of students who show incredible determination and passion for practicing medicine, will pass their medical assistant certification exams and take another step in towards restarting their medical careers in their new country.

## **Libraries and Literacy: An Important Partnership**

**-Jenny Bair, Program Director**

When I was a kid I would spend almost every evening after dinner at my local public library. I would do my homework, check out books, or just hang out and giggle with my friends. Later, when my daughter was young, she and I would spend hours flipping through the stacks, doing puzzles, or attending special events at the library.

For much of my life the library has been a place of community, a place to relax, a place to form memories, as well as a place to gather information and grow my knowledge. I no longer have homework or book reports to do. My daughter is more interested in checking out boys than books. But, the local library is as important as ever.

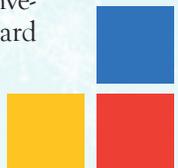
For many years The Literacy Council has had informal partnerships with the public libraries in both the Lancaster and Lebanon communities. Our staff has often referred our tutor-student pairs to the library for a quiet space to hold a session, or has recommended that students without a computer or internet connection visit the library and use

the computers available there.

As needs for services outside Lancaster and Lebanon cities have increased, The Literacy Council has forged formal partnerships with local libraries to bring much needed programs to these communities.

- The library in Mountville has been the home to several ESL classes as well as a site for GED tutoring.
- In Columbia, the library has committed space for GED classes.
- The Ephrata Public Library has long provided space for classes and tutoring. In addition, for the past two program years, they have provided funding for GED classes in their annex.

The collaborations between The Literacy Council and our local libraries have provided safe, quiet, and convenient spaces where our adult students can work toward their goals and find community.





## **A Baby Boomer in Search of Work** **-Cathy Roth, Student Services Coordinator, Lebanon**

At CareerLink, we see many graying heads come through the door. Some people entered the workforce when it wasn't necessary to have a diploma. Some had health setbacks and now need less physically tiring jobs. Others may be skilled workers from other countries but not able to speak English well enough to gain a position. Often these folks need more help than what is offered through the services at CareerLink. That is when they are referred to the Literacy Council for assistance. We can provide them with classes geared toward a High School Equivalency diploma, or ESL classes that have a Career Pathway goal. But, what about the folks who don't know the first thing about computers and are required to do online work searches to comply with unemployment compensation requirements or job training program?

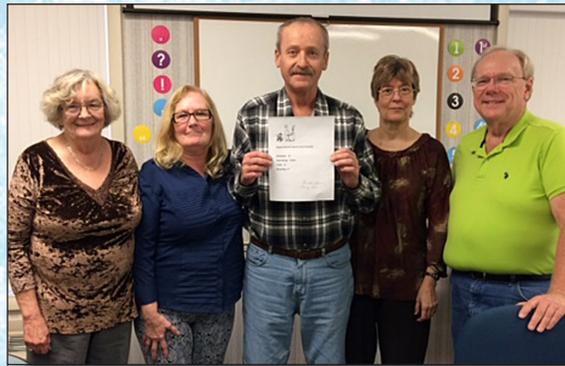
Lebanon's CareerLink is fortunate to house SCSEP, the Senior Community Service Employment Program which provides older workers with minimum wage part time jobs in non-profit programs, allowing them to gain experience in new careers. It has been my privilege to work with several of these students to help

them navigate the internet and look for their next job or career.

Dennis Fecondo is among those I have worked with in a job search. He was last employed in a family business, Fecondo & Son Masonry Company. When his father died, the business closed. With no diploma and no computer skills with which to search for a job, he was in a bind. The SCSEP coordinators made us aware of his situation. Dennis was a good reader, but his math skills would not equip him for the HiSet test. Dennis willingly spent time outside of his SCSEP hours attending a small group math class taught by a volunteer tutor. We began weekly computer lessons, practicing applying for positions on a variety of sites as well as checking e-mail for responses.

Several weeks ago, he said he could do it on his own. When a cleaning position opened at CareerLink his SCSEP advisors vouched for his character, work ethics, and he was hired.

Dennis still continues working with a tutor in math. That High School Diploma will one day be his.



*From left to right: SCSEP Marilyn Heuer, Annette Uffner, Dennis Fecondo, Cathy Roth and math instructor Ron Ludwick*

## **Gifts That Give Hope** **-Ilsa Powell Diller, Outreach & Resource Coordinator**



On Saturday, December 9th, The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon participated in the Gifts That Give Hope Alternative Gift Fair at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center. Here's what it's all about:

Do you wish for a simpler, more meaningful way to give gifts to friends and loved ones? Buying gift donations (or alternative gifts) from our 30 nonprofits provide life-changing benefits for people in our community and the world. Imagine providing a life-sustaining gift in the form of food, shelter, education, medicine, social justice, and more for those in need. You will feel good giving. Your friends and family will feel good receiving. Those you help will feel hope and restoration. Gifts That Give Hope ([www.giftsthatgivehope.org](http://www.giftsthatgivehope.org)) change lives and bring lasting impact!

So yes, the event is over, but good news! You can still purchase gift donations through December 31st! Each donation comes with a beautiful holiday card, and an insert describing the gift that you are giving to you friend or family member. If you're still trying to find that special something for the person who has everything, why not give a gift that gives hope. To give a gift, visit: <https://squareup.com/store/gifts-that-give-hope-lancaster>.

## **Upcoming Event**

An Evening of Matched Pairs  
April 15, 2018  
5 PM - 7 PM  
Lancaster Marriott





## **“Boomerang” Tutoring -Jonile Miller, Office Manager, Lebanon**

Volunteering as a tutor in adult literacy can be very rewarding. Many times, even if a tutor discontinues tutoring, he or she will later feel the draw to return to it. Volunteer tutors have a passion for wanting to see adult students succeed in reaching both their educational and life goals. These three tutors are great examples of volunteers who have “come back” to helping learners at The Literacy Council’s Lebanon office:

Judy K. Bard began tutoring in the early 1990s in Lebanon, and continued with the Literacy Council by serving on the Board throughout most of the 90’s. She did this while also working as a Librarian at the Lebanon HACC site. Later, she moved to Lancaster and felt the urge to continue tutoring. Because of her positive past experience with the Lebanon office, she volunteered in Lancaster, and is currently tutoring a student in the Lancaster area. Judy says she loves to tutor and thanks The Literacy Council for the opportunity to serve adult learners.

Randy Swope volunteered in Lebanon as a computer instructor in the early 2010’s. It was a delight to see Randy bounding down the staircase, as his enthusiasm was contagious. He left each person he met with a smile on his or her face. Randy had to take a hiatus from tutoring to take care of his health. However, he recently called

the Lebanon office to let them know he is once again in good health and eager to tutor again. He will be tutoring in Citizenship and is set to begin with a student in the New Year.

Admary Vargas began volunteering as a classroom assistant in Beginning level ESL two years ago in a Lebanon evening class. Her help in translating difficult to grasp concepts was especially appreciated by the students and classroom instructor. She was hired by the IU13 in a temporary Citizenship classroom assistant position. With the conflict in schedules, she regretfully had to leave the Literacy Council volunteer position. When the temporary job was concluded, she returned to volunteering in the Lebanon office, and is currently tutoring one student in citizenship and 2 students in ESL.

“Boomerang” tutors are to be commended for their dedication and enthusiasm to serving the community through adult literacy education. The Literacy Council is honored to have volunteer tutors like the ones above in both the Lancaster and Lebanon offices, and we are so thankful for their passion and drive to help others succeed in meeting educational goals. These tutors have an impact on the lives of adult learners that is never forgotten.

## **Career Pathways: Building Pre-Employment Pipelines -Bobbi Hurst, Student Services Coordinator**

A good way to be successful in a new career is to actively prepare to enter that particular field of work. One method of preparation is to utilize online tools such as ONET or the Occupational Outlook Handbook. These resources provide detailed descriptions of jobs, as well as, average compensation, education and skills needed and how much demand is likely to increase or decrease. Another way to be successful is to participate in a pre-employment informational training relative to a specific business or organization and employment opportunities.

The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon (LCLL) is partnering with Community Services Group (CSG) to develop and implement a pre-employment informational training based on CSG’s entry-level Direct Care Professional position. The three session/six-hour training is designed to inform potential CSG employees of the mission and baseline requirements for employment. Participants will watch a video depicting the work of direct

service providers and participate in a discussion with direct service professionals.

Beyond the baseline requirements, participants will identify personal skills and values that are a good match for CSG employment. Basic reading and writing activities will be conducted with work-related documents. Current CSG employees will be available to field questions relative to their work-related experiences and to the potential of career advancement at CSG.

Finally, participants will research Direct Service employment opportunities on the CSG website, identify an entry-level job position, read the job description, determine suitability to pursue employment and complete the online job application.

This pre-employment training is scheduled to be marketed to job seekers in December 2017/January 2018 and implemented mid to late January of 2018. Please stay tuned for a follow-up article in the next newsletter.



## **Volunteer/Student Highlight: Bonnie and Harriet** **-Jane Myers, Volunteer Services Coordinator**

In 3rd grade, Harriet realized that she was behind the other students in her class. She knew that she could not read. Because she was ignored by the teachers and other students, Harriet became the class clown and troublemaker. She passed each grade and graduated because “they just wanted to get rid of me.”

Later, Harriet began working with a caseworker who recognized the “piece of the pie” that was missing. In December, 2015, Karen, Harriet’s caseworker, contacted the Literacy Council and the process began. It was a challenge from the beginning. Harriet had little experience with computers and the reading program, “Reading Horizons”, is completely computerized. However, Karen and Harriet persevered and Harriet’s reading skills began to improve. In September, 2016, Harriet was matched with a volunteer tutor, a retired elementary teacher and certified reading specialist. Harriet told me that she was so frightened to meet Bonnie. Bonnie hated the parking garage. Thus, the match began!



Using Orton Gillingham, a phonetic based method of teaching reading skills, Bonnie structured her curriculum for Harriet. In September, 2017, I retested Harriet. From barely reading, she had advanced to a 6.6 grade equivalency. Because of how her skills have improved, Harriet can read the newspaper, prescriptions, menus, and information posted by her employer. She has a better job at Goodwill because she can read the merchandise labels. When a co-worker couldn’t read a letter from the supervisor, Harriet read it to her. “I was so proud.”

I asked Karen, the caseworker, to describe Harriet. She is “fun, happy, big-hearted, persistent, mothering, and goal oriented. The word ‘can’t’ isn’t in her vocabulary.”

When I asked Bonnie to describe Harriet, she said she is “highly motivated with a good sense of humor.”

I asked Harriet to describe Bonnie and Karen: “They are my guardian angels.”

## **Imagination Library: Supporting Children and Family Literacy** **-Ilsa Powell Diller, Outreach & Resource Coordinator**

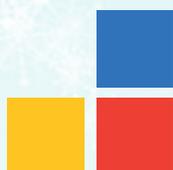
Imagination Library is a wonderful program offered through the Dolly Parton Foundation. Originally starting in Dolly’s hometown in Tennessee, the program now serves eligible children in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom! The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon originally received some funding to start administering this program in some of most needy areas of the two-county area in which we serve adult learners. It was and continues to be a great way to promote family literacy and learning together. Since the start, LCLL has expanded to serving six zip code areas (which is how service areas are determined), plus all of Pequea Valley School

District (which includes several different zip codes). Children ages 0-5 who live in one of the designated zip code areas can be registered to receive free books once a month, delivered to their homes. That’s it. No catch. Just imagine the library these children could have in their own homes by the time they’re 5! To date, we have had 303 children go through the Imagination Library program, and we currently have 398 enrolled. If you are interested in learning more about Imagination Library, visit <https://imaginationlibrary.com> or contact Ilsa at [ilsa@getliterate.org](mailto:ilsa@getliterate.org) or 717-295-5523.



## **Former Student Turned Volunteer**

Former student, Milton, helped explain a lesson in Spanish for those who struggled with English.





## The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon

We serve the people and communities of Lancaster and Lebanon Counties; working in partnership with multiple stakeholders, including but not limited to nonprofit agencies, educational institutions, business and industry employers, governmental staff, and organizations. Key to our success is a network of highly qualified volunteers, professional staff, and a supportive community.

### Mission

Promoting lifelong learning and learning for life.

### Vision

Adults have skills to transform their lives, sustain their families, and strengthen their communities.

### Values

- **Quality** – Our high-quality programs and services are rooted in evidence-based practices and offered in an encouraging and caring environment.
- **Goal-Driven** – Our programs and services demonstrate results that support the education students need to successfully transition to the next step of obtaining their life goals.
- **Respect and Integrity** – Our compassionate and caring approach and interactions are highly respectful of diverse backgrounds and differences. Our integrity rests in our word, all deeds and actions that ensure trustworthiness and confidentiality.
- **Leadership** – Our staff, board members, volunteers, and students are engaged and are actively advocating for adult education. Our responsibility to continually enhance our own leadership skills will keep us prominent in the field.
- **Innovative** – Our effective partnerships, strategic approaches, and being open to possibilities allow us to respond creatively to our work.
- **Collaborative** – Our willingness to build strong relationships and alliances with others that support our mission ensures commitment to serving our community and the betterment of society at large.



**The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon is a partner agency of the United Way of Lancaster and Lebanon Counties.**

### Board

The Literacy Council is governed by a volunteer board of directors. 2017-2018 board members:

Richard Frerichs, President  
Ashley Garcia, Vice President  
Eric Luckenbaugh, Secretary  
Dave Diffendal, Treasurer

Scott Cole  
Joseph Getway  
Martha Guaigua  
Cheryl Hiester\*  
Sreeni Jakka

Mary Edith Leichliter  
Andrew Race  
Heather Sharpe  
Sandy Strunk  
Marlene Usdin

*\*(Non Voting)*

### Staff

Jenny Bair, Program Director  
Linda Cullen, ESL Services Coordinator  
Karey Getz, Program Assistant  
Cheryl Hiester, Executive Director  
Roberta Hurst, Student Services Coordinator  
Jonile Miller, Office Manager, Lebanon  
Jane Myers, Volunteer Services Coordinator  
Ilsa Powell Diller, Outreach & Resource Coordinator  
Cathy Roth, Student Services Coordinator, Lebanon

### Volunteers Needed

Do you want to make a difference in someone's life and in your community? Please consider tutoring an adult student. Tutors are needed to teach basic education skills including reading, writing, mathematics, English language, and GED preparation. We provide training, all materials, and technical support. For more information in the Lancaster area, please call 717-295-5523. For more information in the Lebanon area, please call 717-274-2554.

**407 Lafayette Street, Lancaster, PA 17603 (Please note our new address)**  
**243 Schneider Drive, Lebanon, PA 17046**