

# The Literacy Line

Spring 2018

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## **The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon**

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## **Here's to Spring and New Beginnings**

**-Cheryl Hiester, Executive Director**



The winter months are quiet. People are indoors. The earth is brown and the trees are bare. Soon, we will be outside. There will be leaves on the trees and flowers in the gardens. There will be grass and birds and lots of activity. Winter prepares us for starting anew. This year, about 1,000 adults will decide to step into an adult education program at The Literacy Council. These adults will have many options to choose from as they start anew on their journey to improve their skills and expand their opportunities.

The Literacy Council holds programs throughout Lancaster and Lebanon Counties. In addition to classes held at our main locations in the cities of Lancaster and Lebanon, there are classes in Paradise, Ephrata, Elizabethtown, Columbia and Mountville. Also, there are additional sites throughout the two counties where tutors and students are working together.

At The Literacy Council, adults can improve their basic skills, develop digital literacy, prepare for college and job training, learn English and prepare for a first job or a better job. Adult education has a solid return on investment. 100 hours or more of adult education attendance equates to \$9,621 extra earnings per year.

The adults who come to The Literacy Council are taking control and investing in their futures. They are ready and motivated. The staff and volunteers are ready to help them meet their goals. This spring, help us increase our capacity to serve more people by investing in the mission. Perhaps you have been thinking about something new for yourself. Why not become a volunteer? If it's not the right time, you can make a big difference by investing your charitable giving in adult education.

Happy Spring from all of us at The Literacy Council!

## **Springing Into a New Partnership**

**-Jenny Bair, Program Director**

For more than 10 years The Literacy Council has partnered with the Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13 (IU13) to provide a full range of adult education services to people in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties. As the needs in the community have increased and diversified, The Literacy Council has continued to connect with partnering agencies to collectively address public necessities.

To date, The Literacy Council has partnered with United Way in both Lancaster and Lebanon counties, IU13, Church World Services, Franklin and Marshall College, Bethany Christian Services, Columbia Life Network, Factory Ministries, Columbia Borough School District, Lancaster Health Center (formerly SouthEast Lancaster Health Services), Ephrata Public Library, Columbia Public Library, Harrisburg Area Community College Lancaster Campus, Lancaster County Career and Technology Center Willow Street, CareerLink in both Lancaster and Lebanon counties, and the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce. The services provided as part of these partnerships include comprehensive education services to adults pursuing a high school equivalency diploma or learning English as a Second Language;

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## Student Spotlight

### From Student to Volunteer -**Jonile Miller, Office Manager, Lebanon**

In September of 2016, Admary Vargas came to The Literacy Council with the intent to improve her English to help her find a job. She moved to Lebanon from Puerto Rico the previous summer and was having no luck in finding a job in her profession. Admary has a Master's Degree in Education and Counseling from a University in Puerto Rico. Admary spoke English, but needed to improve her skills to include professional vocabulary and also work on accent reduction so that native English speakers would better understand her if she was teaching in a classroom.

Admary worked with a tutor for six months before deciding she wanted to volunteer. She felt that a good way to improve her own language skills would be to volunteer in an English as a Second Language class. There she would have the opportunity, through working with students, to more fully grasp grammar and writing, and improve her pronunciation. Admary assisted in the beginner level class in the evenings. She was able to translate to the students when they didn't understand the new concepts being taught. She researched and learned ways to teach the students pronunciation of the alphabet, the sounds the

letters make when reading, and the sounding out of words. Admary assisted in the class for several months, and was able to help some of the students move rather quickly to a higher learning level.

Admary applied and was accepted as a classroom aide in an evening class at Lancaster-Lebanon IU13. The position ended when the class was discontinued during the summer months. She then returned to the Literacy Council to volunteer once again, but this time she wanted to tutor one-to-one. She began teaching citizenship in August of 2017. The student Admary tutored achieved citizenship in February, 2018. She had added another student in September of 2017, to whom she taught conversational skills. This student's goal was to advance in his job, and he was able to attain his goal in by December 2017.

In January, 2018, Admary was hired by PROBE in Lebanon as a full-time counselor/educator. Admary is an inspiration to those students she has assisted through the last few years. She has shown that if you persist, and try different avenues towards reaching your goal, you can achieve your dreams.

### Empower Tutors Through New Online Training Modules -**Jane Myers, Volunteer Services Coordinator**

In July, 2018, eight new online tutor training modules will be available to adult education programs funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The 30 minute modules are organized to serve as a base structure for tutors to utilize as they begin working with adult learners. These modules will also serve as refresher courses for those volunteers who have already been tutoring adult learners.

The modules will include:

- Tutoring Routines: learn the components of a tutoring routine and how it can benefit the adult learner
- Teaching Adults: learn to identify the characteristics of the adult learner and how to plan instruction based on goals and needs
- Teaching Adult Basic Education (ABE): learn teaching activities for ABE students and how to incorporate the College and Career Readiness Standards into the activities

- Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL): learn to identify communication needs and the techniques to build language skills
- Lesson Planning: learn how lessons fit into a tutoring session and the steps of planning a lesson
- Textbooks and Authentic Materials: learn how to adapt textbook lessons and supplement textbooks with authentic materials
- Teaching High School Equivalency (HSE): learn about GED and HiSet, the two high school equivalency tests accepted by the state of Pennsylvania
- Teaching Strategies: learn why the strategies presented in the previous modules work

When the modules are available through PDE, The Literacy Council will offer professional development sessions for tutors to introduce them to the materials and information. Look for more information later this summer.

## There's a New TABE Test In Town -Bobbi Hurst, Student Services Coordinator

The new Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) 11 and 12, have been approved by the U.S. Department of Education. TABE 11&12 are aligned to the national College and Career Readiness Standards for three core subject areas: Reading, Mathematics and Language. The tests also align with both state approved high school equivalency exams, GEDTS and HiSET.

TABE 11 and 12 Reading content reflects life and work-related situations focused largely on informational text excerpts that include research, scientific and historical information. In addition, excerpts are included that reflect our cultural diversity. The levels of reading difficulty range from Literacy (L) that assesses beginning readers, to Advanced (A) that is closely aligned to the content on high school equivalency tests.

TABE 11 and 12 Mathematics content reflects math application involving tasks such as computations involving time, distance, weight, statistics and equations. The levels of math difficulty range from Literacy (L), in which some of the test is actually read aloud, to Advanced (A) that includes geometry, statistics and probability, functions and algebra. Like the reading test, the advanced level math also closely aligns to the content students will see on high

school equivalency tests.

TABE 11 and 12 Language content reflects the communication skills needed to function in daily life and at work. Some of the individual skills assessed are in grammar, usage, mechanics, sentence formation and paragraph development. Test items reflect the writing process as it applies to life and work. Like both the reading and math tests, the levels of difficulty range from Literacy (L) to Advanced (A). Testing into the advanced level of the language test should indicate a student's ability to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

In addition to being a more accurate predictor of GEDTS or HiSET readiness, TABE 11 and 12 introduces a new online testing platform and a new, improved Locator Test. These features should save time and provide more insight into and diagnosis of student strengths and weaknesses. Watch for information regarding a more detailed and hands-on professional development for tutors and teachers, via the next newsletter and/or directly from Jane Myers, our Volunteer Services Coordinator.



## LHC and LCLL: Teaming Up to Offer Certified Medical Assistant Training -Linda Cullen, ESL Services Coordinator

Lancaster Health Center (LHC and formerly SouthEast Lancaster Health Services) was selected by the National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement (NIMAA) to offer Certified Medical Assistant training to address the growing need for skilled healthcare professionals. Working closely with NIMAA, Linda Cullen, from The Literacy Council provided language support to students while preceptors at LHC taught 92 clinical skills. Simultaneously, NIMAA ran rigorous online courses. The students spent over 10 hours each week completing the online assignments and an additional hour a week on a national web conference with NIMAA students around the country.

With the first successful training winding down, LHC announced that they are launching a Healthcare Futures program created to accommodate and honor the diversity of culture among Lancaster Health Center's patients. Foreign educated, medically skilled refugees and immigrants can learn more about this program which will resume in September, 2018 by contacting Paula Wilson, EdD.

NIMAA Coordinator and CSS Education Coordinator at Lancaster Health Center 717-299-6372 ext 16035 or email Paula.Wilson@lanchc.org.

Volunteer RNs either retired or currently employed will be needed to assist with classroom instruction and may contact Jane Myers, Volunteer Services Coordinator at 717-295-5523 or jane@getliterate.org.



Left to Right: Niang Lam Lian (Burma); Yadira Garriga (Cuba), Tamara Favier (Cuba), Tahsien Al-Zubaydi (Iraq), and Liliana Leyva Blanco (Cuba) will be honored as the first participants to complete a 7 month intensive course in order to become Certified Medical Assistants.

## **Transition -Cathy Roth, Student Services Coordinator, Lebanon**

Every literacy instructor I know whether in an ESL Classroom, an HSE classroom or tutoring in small groups strives to build a supportive relationship with his or her students. The relationship between the student, the teacher and fellow students help to encourage student participation in his/her own learning. Building student-teacher rapport takes both time and patience. Students need to feel acceptance and safety to take the challenge to come out of their comfort zones and learn new skills. Students need to feel a sense of confident identity as they embark on their learning and strive toward meeting their goals.

Students don't always recognize their achievements. Sometimes they focus on how far they have to go to reach their goals and not on how far they have come since they

started. Sometimes they fear transition to another level—that means new students and a new teacher to get used to and learn to trust.

With technology, it is easy to get in touch with students and encourage them to reach out to their teachers and classmates with questions and concerns. This also makes it easier to stay in touch with students as they transition into different classes and ultimately, out of the program into their next life chapters. Staying in touch with students is especially helpful in documenting achievements that occur after students leave the program. Following students after they leave our program is a challenge, but it is important data to collect and share with our funders, helping to paint the picture of success and advocacy for adult education.

## **An Evening of Matched Pairs: #5 Is the Best One Yet! -Ilisa Powell Diller, Outreach & Resource Coordinator**

On Sunday, April 15, 2018, the Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon hosted the 5th annual An Evening of Matched Pairs. This fund raiser includes food tastings with wine and beer pairings from about 15 local restaurants who dedicate their time and resources to support the Literacy Council during this event. The evening also includes both live and silent auctions, games of chance, music, and dancing. This is the largest fund raiser for the LCLL, and it is truly an enjoyable event for the approximately 250 people in attendance. This year, in addition to receiving sponsorships, donations for the event increased 32%, and revenue from the auctions and games of chance increased 47%. All of the dollars generated will go back into programming, and will help the Literacy Council continue to provide free adult basic and literacy education services to students in Lancaster and Lebanon counties. It is a wonderful experience to witness the generosity, support and dedication of the community to our organization. We extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who made this event such a success! THANK YOU for helping us continue our critical mission of promoting lifelong learning and learning for life!



## **New Partnership *(continued from front page)***

programs for adults transitioning to work, training or post-secondary education; and connections for students who need support in addressing their basic needs.

Most recently, The Literacy Council has connected with the Solanco Family Life Network (SFLN) in Quarryville in the southern end of Lancaster County. The community in this rural area had a problem. Many of the families connecting to services through SFLN had a need for classes for high school equivalency preparation or English as a Second Language instruction. Opportunities were limited. There were no agencies providing this service in the surrounding area. Although classes in Lancaster City are open to anyone with a need, there are no public transit routes to the area. Other candidates work 8-10 hour shifts preventing them from arriving on time to classes offered in the city.

Solanco Family Life Network sought the expertise of The Literacy Council and IU13 to provide a solution. In late March of 2018, The Literacy Council and IU13 started classes for English as a Second Language and high school equivalency at the Southern End Community Association building. Through this new partnership we are able to connect to students in a new community, and they now have the opportunity to work toward their goals and improve their lives.

## 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.**



**The Literacy Council of  
Lancaster-Lebanon is  
accredited under the PANO  
Standards for Excellence®**

### 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                    Mary Edith Leichliter  
Martha Guajiga            Heather Sharpe  
Cheryl Hiester\*            Sandy Strunk  
Sreeni Jakka                Marlene Usdin

### 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.

\*(Non Voting)