



The Literacy Council
of Lancaster-Lebanon

The Literacy Line

Spring 2024

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Literacy & Learning
Success Centers

Lancaster | Lebanon

**The Literacy Council of
Lancaster-Lebanon**

407 Lafayette Street | Lancaster, PA 17603
717-295-5523

400 Locust Street (rear) | Lebanon, PA 17042
717-277-5682

www.literacysuccess.org

The Literacy & Learning Success Centers, a service of
The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon.

Spring Forward 2024

Cheryl Hiester, Executive Director

As the flowers bloom and the days grow longer, there is a sense of renewal and possibility that fills the air. We are excited to share our Spring 2024 newsletter with you! So much is happening at The Literacy & Learning Success Centers. In this issue, you will meet the newest member of our team. You will read a moving story from a refugee student. We are also sharing updates on our strategic priorities of access, opportunity, and belonging, career mobility, and digital excellence. You will find expert teaching tips and celebrate student success.

We are making strides in implementing our strategic priorities and working hard to empower adult learners to map out their personal journey of success. Our commitment to providing personalized instruction, advisement, and leveraging partnerships with key community partners has resulted in our students finding jobs, building careers, and defining what success means for them.

As we move forward, let's celebrate spring by planting seeds of learning, growth, and opportunity that will lead to prosperous and sustainable careers. I hope you enjoy the Spring 2024 issue of The Literacy Line.

Warmest regards from everyone at the Literacy & Learning Success Centers.

**Last chance to join the fun and support
adult literacy!**



May 20, 2024
Conestoga Country Club
Lancaster, PA

<https://bit.ly/LinksForeLiteracy2024>

Community Connections Make All the Difference

Steve Hess, Program Supervisor

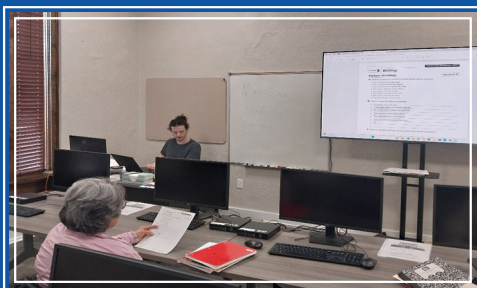
Covering an area of 4.2 miles, with a population of nearly 27,000 people, Lebanon, Pennsylvania, is home to Weaver's Famous Lebanon Bologna and an area that reflects a diverse and culturally rich community. The Literacy & Learning Success Centers, a service of the Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon, also calls Lebanon one of its homes, having an office located in the Lebanon Church of the Brethren on Locust Street.

The Lebanon Success Center has embarked on providing English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and building relationships by partnering with local agencies to enhance the support and services provided to the community. With these comprehensive resources, the adults we serve have the opportunity to gain skills to transform their lives, sustain their families, and strengthen their communities.

Here are some of the highlights from the year 2024 so far:



Cathy Roth, a seasoned Success Center Instructor, presented at the PA Migrant Education Program in Lebanon County during their Family Reading Night in January 2024.



Evan Ippolito, our newest member of the Success Centers, reviewed class materials at the WEPA Empowerment Center, where the Success Center of Lebanon provides an ESL class.

Moving forward, the Success Center of Lebanon plans to offer Tech Tuesdays, a drop-in skills training that allows interested individuals to earn certificates in essential computer skills, software skills, and technology used in daily life. These offerings will be available on Tuesdays from 10 AM to 5:30 PM and facilitated by the Success Center's Digital Navigator, Deb Totton. We will also open another ESL class and participate in the Family Reading Night at the PA Migrant Education Program in Lebanon County in May. As we continue to embody our mission of "Success through lifelong learning and learning for life," we invite you to visit our Lebanon location, learn more about the exciting things happening, and gather information about available volunteer opportunities.

Tech Tuesdays at



Drop in digital skills training
Tuesdays

10:00 am - 5:30 pm

*400 Locust Street Lebanon, Pa
at the Church of the Brethren
(*enter at Pershing Avenue)



Bring your device
or learn on one of
our laptops!

What it is

The Northstar Digital Literacy Certificate program is a free self-guided online set of lessons that hone your ability to perform basic computer skills. You can earn a certificate in each of these areas:

Essential Computer Skills
(Basic Computer Skills, Internet Basics, Using Email, Windows, Mac OS)

Essential Software Skills
(Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Google Docs)

Using Technology in Daily Life
(Social Media, Information Literacy, Supporting K-12 Distance Learning, Career Search Skills, Your Digital Footprint)



To earn a certificate

For a certificate, each assessment must be taken in a supervised setting. You can take any of the tests at this site. [It is free.](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL
CONTACT DEBRA TOTTON AT LANCASTER | LEBANON LITERACY & LEARNING SUCCESS CENTER
(717) 295-5523 OR EMAIL: DEBRA@LITERACYSUCCESS.ORG

The Literacy & Learning Success Center is a service of The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon



Mastering the Art of Teaching English

Cathy Roth, Adjunct Instructor

Although we have great materials available in the Ventures Series to use in ESL classes, nothing builds more classroom connections than sharing personal experiences. No matter which unit I teach, when it comes time to challenge students to write, I create my own sentences or paragraphs. Here is an example utilizing skills: ing adjectives, vocabulary, and unit theme.

Following the unit reading, we have this discussion - What jobs have you done? (present perfect tense). How would you describe them using ing adjectives? This gets students to focus on what they have done in different jobs and what they may want in a future job. As an organization, we strive to help our ESL students find life-sustaining jobs in the community.

Here's an example of what I shared with my students during this activity as I modeled how to answer what was being asked of them: I love my job. I have been working as a teacher since 1973. I have worked in a shoe factory, a food processing plant, a restaurant, and a library. Of those non-teaching jobs, I enjoyed the library the most and the food processing plant the least. Let me tell you why.

Working in the shoe factory was **exhausting** and **boring**. I sewed the same seam on the same shoe style every day. It was noisy, and the music being played was **irritating**. Working at the food processing plant required me to stand at the line and pick out the rotten tomatoes from 8 PM to 1 AM. It was **tiring** and **disgusting**. It was **embarrassing** when I fainted one night

from the extreme heat and maybe from the smell.

In the library, the job was easy: putting returned books back on the shelf, sitting at the desk and checking out clients, and occasionally helping someone find a book. It wasn't very **challenging**.

In the restaurant, the owner taught me about good customer service. I liked talking to customers, but conversations were brief. It was **rewarding** when customers left a nice tip because they appreciated my speed and my attention.

As a teacher, I find my job is never boring. Learning about my students, their countries, and their cultures is interesting. Planning lessons is **time-consuming** but also **satisfying**. It's **pleasing** to see my students using team-building strategies during breakouts. It's **energizing** to see students speaking more comfortably and reading with better pronunciation. Keeping attendance records and checking to see why students aren't coming can be **disappointing**, but often, it is **reassuring** when they explain that they had appointments but they enjoy the class. Student questions are **stimulating** and energize me to work harder planning for the next class. Although sometimes the computer problems are **frustrating** and directions for fixing them are **confusing**, I am happily challenged to improve my skills at every opportunity.

This is a good way for my students to learn and practice English; it is also a great way for me to learn more about each of them.

Level Up & Launch: Access, Opportunity, and Belonging at the Success Centers

Taylor Thomas, Program Coordinator

Step into the heart of our organization's latest endeavor: crafting accessible videos tailored for every member of our diverse community. As we strive to make our resources inclusive for all current and prospective students, this project is a poignant testament to the power of representation. Behind the scenes, our videographers and audio/translators embody the very essence of perseverance, each intimately familiar with the journey of learning a new language in a foreign land. From these humble beginnings springs forth a beacon of hope—a testament to the transformative potential of education.

Their stories illuminate the path from uncertainty to empowerment, showcasing the boundless possibilities that await those who dare to dream. With unwavering dedication, they've not only mastered English but also cultivated thriving businesses, a

testament to the resilience of the human spirit. Through our videos, we invite you to glimpse the vibrant tapestry of opportunities awaiting you within our literacy success centers.

From digital literacy assistance to English as a Second Language programs, career development initiatives, and beyond, our videos offer a panoramic view of all that our organization has to offer. But our commitment to accessibility doesn't end there. Recognizing the diverse literacy levels among our learners, we ensure that our content is available in multiple languages, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Prepare to journey behind the doors of the Literacy & Learning Success Centers, where every frame tells a story of empowerment, inclusion, and the relentless pursuit of knowledge.



Student Spotlight



Title: Dreams Realized - Celebrating a New Chapter as a US Citizen

Daysi became an American citizen in February 2024. Roger interviewed her about her experience.

What does being a U.S. citizen represent for you?

The United States of America for me is the best place to fulfill my dreams, because I'm free to vote for my leaders. I love this country for the economic system and the people are nice and friendly.

How did you prepare for the test?

I watched videos on Youtube from the Immigration Office about American history, geography, writing, reading, and other issues in the N-400 form. I also worked with Jenny at the Literacy Council.

What rights do you now find as a citizen?

There are job opportunities, voting in elections, and to join in a political party.



Advisement Corner: The Role of Student Advisors in Career Exploration and Planning

Megan Goerner, Program Supervisor

As the school year is coming to an end, plans for the new school year at the Literacy & Learning Success Centers are being made. In the 2024-2025 school year, we plan many improvements to our advising program. First, we are excited to have two full-time advisors, Darrill Ersery and Taylor Thomas, who will provide advisement to our students. The addition of two full-time advisors will provide us with the opportunity to consistently offer both evening and daytime advisement to our students.

In addition to the wonderful staff that will provide advisement services, the advisement team has plans to expand our advisement corner. We have already created our advisement corner as a space where students can meet with their advisors to discuss career planning, educational needs, and community resources. We are excited that soon we will have a kiosk, like many of our partners, that will provide resource listings at the touch of a button. This kiosk will allow our students to see information on community resources in many languages.

In addition to this kiosk, we are going to have our own career pathways and resource presentations available to students so they can access much-needed resources easily and in multiple formats. These presentations will be offered on various topics like career options, postsecondary options, accessing food banks, becoming involved in the community, and more. The 23-24 school year has been great, and the new school year is looking to be even better for Success Center students as we work to transform lives, sustain families, and strengthen our community.

For additional information about this service, view Lancaster Online's article at: https://lancasteronline.com/business/local_business/new-kiosks-at-lancaster-county-schools-libraries-to-help-job-seekers-and-students/article_9239fe9a-0982-11ef-a184-23ca2ab18a30.html.



A Story of Difficult Choices and Hope: A Refugee Family's Story

Jane Myers, Volunteer Services Coordinator

There was one day, one extremely beautiful day in my past, in which my father came from his office and carrying two pens which had my father's name written on them. My father gifted one to me. After some days I went shopping and I saw a pen holder which matched the pen, so I bought that and gifted it to my father. We were happy, united family, but after a few years, the Taliban took over our country, our Afghanistan. My family had to leave because my father worked with American military as a doctor. My father was trying to rescue himself and our family, so we had to leave our house and go to Kabul. I took my pen and put it in my mother's purse. When we arrived in Kabul, the interpreter said to my father, "you, your wife and four of your children can go to America and the rest of your children will remain here in Afghanistan." It was a hard decision that none of us were able to make all of us were trying to have all of our family together in America or stay here in Afghanistan to die together. We were really worried because if my dad remained, no one knows what the Taliban would have done to him. Three of us

stayed. My mom took her purse that had my pen. My brothers and I came back to our house, and I found the pen holder that I had gifted my father. I'm still waiting with that pen holder until one day I will be able to gift it once again to my Habibi, to my Hero, to my dad.

This story, written by one of her siblings, was told to me by Malalay, a student in the Medical English Class and who also meets one-on-one with a tutor.

When Malalay took her posttest, she gained 39 points which is exceptional. Dan Weber said, "Malalay is a rock star."

When she agreed to tell part of her story, she included a note to her instructors: Becky, Sylvia, and Dan. It stated, "What would I do without you? Thanks for everything you constantly do for me. Your time and energy are my most precious resources. Thanks for giving me so much of it. You make me feel seen and heard and I love you for that. Please accept my most deep and sincere gratitude."

Angela Saldana March 19, 2024



BREAKING BARRIERS: MY JOURNEY OF OVERCOMING TOWARDS LITERACY

Goals | Overcoming barriers | Talents

1. What goals led you to adult literacy?


The primary motivation that led me to adult literacy is grounded in my firm belief that mastering the English language is essential to achieve my personal and professional goals, and to enrich my family's life.

As a native of Colombia, where Spanish is my mother tongue, I recognized the critical importance of English as a vehicle to access meaningful opportunities in the United States. This country, characterized by its diversity and vast opportunities, demands fluent English proficiency to fully engage in society and the job market. Aware of this reality, I committed to adult literacy as a fundamental step towards the comprehensive development of my language skills and the accomplishment of my professional and personal aspirations in this culturally diverse and dynamic context, with the firm purpose of providing a better future for my family and being an example of perseverance and overcoming for them.




Summary

My name is Angela Saldana, and I have been a Literacy student for approximately a year and a half. During this time, I've had the privilege of immersing myself in the world of learning and literacy, exploring new skills and pushing my own limits. Throughout this exciting journey, I've faced challenges, overcome obstacles, and experienced significant personal growth. Additionally, I've had the privilege of sharing experiences with classmates from diverse cultural backgrounds, enriching my learning journey even further. In this newsletter, I aim to share my experience and reflections on the transformative power of literacy in my life, as well as the lessons learned and achievements made on this path towards mastering the language and acquiring new skills.



Angela Saldana March 19, 2024



2. How are you working to achieve those goals?

To achieve my literacy goals, I am adopting a diligent and committed approach, thanks to the invaluable service provided by the Literacy Council Lancaster-Lebanon and the exceptional guidance of teacher Lauren Swartz. Although I cannot attend in person due to personal commitments, I have found in online classes an invaluable opportunity to learn and grow. Through these virtual lessons, I actively participate in reading, writing, and comprehension exercises and receive feedback. In addition to formal classes, I dedicate time each day to practice at home, using materials recommended by Lauren and exploring online resources that complement my learning. This comprehensive and adaptive approach allows me to continue advancing towards my literacy goals, even when circumstances prevent me from attending classes in person.

I am deeply grateful for the ongoing support from the Literacy Council and Lauren, who have not only provided me with the necessary tools but also encouragement and motivation to overcome obstacles and achieve my goals

3. How have you overcome barriers? (having a young child, language etc.)

Overcoming obstacles has been a journey of self-discovery and determination in my literacy journey. Becoming a mother to a beautiful daughter and facing the language challenge has been a path filled with sacrifice and personal growth. Amidst the demands of motherhood, I found in my daughter not only a reason to persist but also a source of inspiration to reach my goals. Every night, as I watched her sleep, I committed to moving forward, despite exhaustion and difficulties. At the same time, mastering a new language has been a mountain I climbed with courage. Although English is not my mother tongue, I immersed myself in learning with passion and determination, constantly seeking new ways to improve and refine my language skills. Through Literacy Council Lancaster-Lebanon's online classes and resources, I transformed every obstacle into an opportunity for growth and learning. Along the way, I found strength in the love and support of those around me, and I am determined to continue inspiring others with my story of resilience and determination.

4. What talents do you have that have helped you?

My personal talents have been invaluable support in my literacy journey. The determination and perseverance I have cultivated over the years have been essential to overcome the challenges that have arisen along the way. Likewise, discipline has allowed me to maintain a consistent study schedule, even in the busiest moments of my life as a mother. Additionally, my ability to adapt to new situations and learn from my mistakes has constantly propelled me forward, nurturing my personal growth and academic development. Moreover, through my commitment and passion for learning, I have found the strength to persevere even in the most challenging times. All these talents, combined with the support of the Literacy Council Lancaster-Lebanon and the professional guidance of Lauren Swartz, have been the key to my success in this literacy journey.

In conclusion, every day, as I delve into literacy lessons, I carry in my heart the longing for a brighter future for my family. Each word I learn and every obstacle I h brings us one step closer to that shared dream. Adult literacy is not just a personal quest for growth but an act of love for those who matter most in my life.

Meet Our Newest Staff Member: Welcoming a Great Addition to Our Team!

Jenny Bair, Program Director



Evan Ippolito is the newest member of the Success Center team. You can find him during a visit to our Lancaster office, teaching beginning-level ESL or in Lebanon, providing instruction to beginning students in collaboration with our community partner, WEPA (Working to Empower People for Advancement). Since coming on board in January, Evan has jumped into teaching with energy and excitement. We are so pleased to officially welcome Evan to the team!

Here's a little more about Evan:

Hometown: I was born and raised in Lancaster City and have lived here my whole life. I've lived in nearly a dozen different places over the city and have always loved it. It is a beautiful place with lots to celebrate, wonderful diversity, unique small businesses, a healthy art scene, and amazing Amish and PA Dutch food. (But more often, I'm a customer of the Puerto Rican restaurants.)

Childhood Dream Job: I've always dreamt of doing something helpful. Whether as a scientist or researcher, a journalist, or even a teacher, I've always wanted a job where I can know for certain I am putting good into the world. Working for a non-profit like the Success Centers fulfills that perfectly.

First Job: My first job was working for my dad as a house painter in high school. He works for Barry Hoover's Painting and Paperhanging, and after that, I spent a few years working for my mom's bakery, Amaranth Gluten Free Bakery.

Education: High School: McCaskey; College: University of Pittsburgh (main campus), 2018-2022 I was an English Literature and Fiction Writing double major with German Language and Film minors.

Movie: Nothing beats Monty Python & the Holy Grail for me. Never fails to make me laugh.

Book: My favorite book of all time is Ray Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles*. Published in 1950, while Sci-Fi was still young and malleable, Bradbury created an atmosphere (no pun intended) that I haven't experienced in a book or film since. The eerie blending of time, the interweaving of current politics with futuristic ideas, and a healthy amount of apocalypticism make it a fun and thoughtful read.

Guilty TV Pleasure: Guilty TV pleasure is having my friends over for cocktails as we watch the trashiest television available. Jersey Shore, Flavor of Love, I Love New York, etc., are regulars at my apartment.

Hobbies: Outside work, I spend a lot of time working out and being active. I am teaching myself to play guitar, and when the day is all over, I'll unwind with video games. I also try to spend as much time with my friends as possible.

Music of Choice: I am a fan of indie/psychedelic rock. All-time favorites are The Flaming Lips, but others include Duster, Faye Webster, and Sonic Youth. Some smaller acts you should check out: Pearl & the Oysters, a French band I saw at Tellus that blew me away with their tropical vibe and "wall-of-sound" style. Tanukichan is excellent for those who want a young person's take on "dad rock." And finally, Candy Claws' album "Ceres and Calypso in the Deep Time" has been on repeat in my car with its extremely "musical" and whimsical sound.

How do you live the Success Centers Mission?: I have always been known by my friends and family as someone who, above all, is compassionate and understanding. I have always been the shoulder to cry on, the one to help you get back on your feet, and the one to always say what you need to hear. It is this attitude that draws me to the Success Center's mission of helping others achieve the life they want and deserve.

The Literacy Line

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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

To promote success through lifelong learning and learning for life.

Vision

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

Values

A place of welcome – We work hard to be a place where each person feels valued, safe, welcomed, and visible at the Success Centers.

Trust and integrity – We do what we say. Our students, colleagues, community partners, funders, and donors entrust us to fulfill our mission and we believe that it is our duty to be worthy of that trust.

Inspire possibilities – Our programs inspire adults to realize their chosen potential. Our programs meet adult learners where they are and help them set and meet their goals. We commit to success for our students, staff, volunteers, and the program.

Staff

Jenny Bair, Program Director
Darrill Ersery, Program Coordinator
Megan Goerner, Program Supervisor
Steven Hess, Program Supervisor
Cheryl Hiester, Executive Director
Mitchell Hiester, Program Assistant
Evan Ippolito, Instructor
Katherine Ludlow, Instructor and Program Coordinator
Jane Myers, Volunteer Services Coordinator
Rita Nutter, ESL Instructor
Ilsa Powell Diller, Outreach and Resource Coordinator
Monica Shannon, Receptionist/Program Assistant
Lauren Swartz, ESL Instructor
Taylor Thomas, Program Coordinator
Debra Totten, Digital Navigator

Adjunct Instructors

Meredith Aul
Shawn Gaffney
Deb Linton
Cathy Roth

Board

The Literacy Council is governed by a volunteer board of directors. 2023-2024 board members:

Chad Burgess, President
Erik Cianci, Vice President
Scott Cole, Secretary
Philip Heckert, Treasurer
Ashley Garcia
Martha Guaigua
Cheryl Hiester*
Stephanie Stauffer
Tim Steffen

*(Non Voting)



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

Volunteers Needed

Take action today and join us. We need volunteers to teach basic education skills.

To get started, contact:

Jane Myers,
Lancaster and Lebanon
Success Centers
jane@literacysuccess.org

The official registration and financial information of The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon, LVA, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

"When obstacles arise, you change your direction to reach your goal; you do not change your decision to get there."

–Zig Ziglar