Literacy Volunteers
of Greater Worcester

July 1, 2023-
June 30, 2024

Annual REPORT



PREPARED BY
LITERACY VOLUNTEERS
OF GREATER
WORCESTER

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About Us

Since 1973, Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester has provided the free English language education necessary for adult learners to thrive in our community.

To fulfill our mission, LVGW relies on a small staff, including qualified ESOL teachers, and a vast network of trained volunteers who serve as one-to-one ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and ABE (Adult Basic Education) tutors.

Over the last 51 years, we have served over 12,500 students from 120 different countries. LVGW is committed to enriching the Worcester area by building a more literate, culturally informed and economically self-sufficient population.



MISSION

To provide social and economic empowerment through culturally compassionate English language education.

VISION

A society free of literacy and language limitations.

LVGW is an affiliate of Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts and ProLiteracy Worldwide

info@lvgw.org

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS of MASSACHUSETTS

ProLiteracy

Executive Director's Message

FY24 has been a very exciting and productive year, and LVGW has made great progress. Together, the Board, staff, teachers, and tutors, have stabilized and revitalized LVGW's services and operations.

We have recruited and trained a small but dedicated team of skilled staff and office volunteers with diverse backgrounds and expertise in educational assessment, marketing and IT.

We have streamlined and standardized internal processes and procedures and have implemented best practices for information gathering. By using a data-driven approach, we have been able to enroll all students on our ESOL class waitlist each semester and expedite the enrollment process.

As a result, we have enjoyed the high retention rate of our students in our ESOL program, high participation rate in our class evaluation survey, and overwhelmingly positive feedback from our students. However we could not have achieved any of this without vital support from individuals, foundations, local corporations, and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

At the same time, we have developed a road map including strategies and actions needed to sustain our mission and help us grow.



LVGW has a legacy as being one of the only providers of free English tutoring services in the community. More recently, we have evolved to become one of Worcester's only providers for Survival-Level English courses designed for students who speak little to no English. Some of these students face the added challenge of being illiterate in their native language as well.

Adult literacy and English language education is an essential first step in the path to economic security and self-sufficiency. Whatever students' goals may be, LVGW is here to provide the English language education required to help them survive and thrive as self-reliant and engaged members of our community.

With your continued support, Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester can continue to champion the survival and success of Worcester area families from around the world.

Sincerely, Pingsheng Chen

FY24 Highlights

In response to an increasing population of New Americans and refugees in the Worcester area, our needs assessment has enabled us to pivot quickly and provide impactful, student-centered services with limited resources. We have built a community that welcomes and supports each of our students, and connects them with each other and to the local community.

- We have redesigned and successfullly promoted our three 10-week semester ESOL program with yearly calendar, waitlists, in-person registration, and ongoing support.
- We have added two more Survival-Level English classes and doubled student learning hours by scheduling classes which meet twice per week.
- We have offered a monthly New Tutor Orientation.
- We have offered quarterly 18-hour Volunteer Tutor Training. 22 new tutors have been added to the tutoring program!

FY25 Goal: Maximize Impact

- We are launching group tutoring services that are embedded into local businesses and community service centers.

- We are offering additional workshops on resume writing, interviewing, and communication skills including American English Pronunciation.

- We are building pathways to workforce and career readiness, and economic integration by partnering with MassHire, QCC, and other local organizations.

Board of Directors

Tori Buerschaper
President
Community Harvest Project

Eric Collier
Vice President
RapidRatings

Kelsey Miller
Treasurer
Mechanics Hall

Mitchell F. Gaumond
MetLife

Frank Callahan
Worcester Academy

Laila Mhirig
Cornerstone Bank

Anyeliny Lamptey
Point32 Health

Ilka Kostka
Northeastern University

Hilda Rosa Maldonado
CENTRO Inc.

Raquel Mota-Hays
Worc. Pub. Schools

Meet The Team



Amanda Andrews
Program Manager, MA



Pingsheng Chen
Executive Director, M.Ed. in ESL, MLS



George Gurbanov
Administrative Assistant, BS



Iris Delgado
Senior Admin. Assistant, MLS

ESOL TEACHERS

ALEXANDRA WADE
AMY WEST
ASHLEY FRANKIAN
BJ HILL
DARRELYN PASKAVITZ
FAITH LANDRINE
HOSSAM ELSAYYAD
ROBERT PETERS
SUSAN PALIS
SIENNA ABLORH

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

FATEMEH HARASANI
KARINA WHEELER
LAURA BAUM
PETER JIANG
SARAH GALINDO
THI HUE BARBINI
TUYET NHI LOAC

VOLUNTEER TUTORS

CHE-ABDUL ABDUL-RASHID
AMANDA ADDEO ANDREWS
ABDULSALAM ALMADANI
MARK ANDREWS
KAREN BAILEY
JERRY BEAVERS
ELISSA BERRY
MARGARET BOATWRIGHT
MARCIA BUTZEL
MISHEL CAISAPANTA
ERIC CAPELLARI
CRISTOBAL CORNEJO
SUSAN CROSSLEY
KATHRYN DELISLE
LAURA DICKHAUT
RORY DICKINSON
EDWARD FANJOY
PAIGE FIRMENT
JOHN FOREMAN
FATEMEH HARASANI
JOY HENNIG

TUTORS CONTD.

PETER JIANG
ANDREA JOHNSON
DOUG JOHNSON
CASEY JONES
BONNIE KANNER
ELIZABETH KELLY
KAREN KETT
KIM RODRIGUEZ
DEBORAH KOCHEVAR
ILKA KOSTKA
ELIZABETH KUNHARDT
FAITH LANDRINE
DENNIS LINDENBERG
MARY MACADAM
ROSEMARY MCDONALD
SUSANNA MEYER
CARLO MORRISSEY
ROSA MUMBIELA-SIERRA
JOSEPH (JOE) MYERSON
RACHEL ORANGE
LINDA OROSZKO
LISA OSMOLOWSKI
WILLIAM PHILLIPS
DAVID RUSSELL
PETER RUSSELL
STEVE SILVERMAN
AMY STARK
SUSAN TUBMAN
CAROL UPTON
AMY WEST
GEORGE WRIGHT

PURPOSE

Because English language literacy is integrally linked to quality of life, increased adult English language proficiency benefits families, the community, and the economy.

Unfortunately, the Barbara Bush Foundation has reported 17% of adults in Massachusetts have low literacy, and in Worcester County 17% of adults lack basic literacy skills. According to ProLiteracy, data from federal and national sources indicates low adult literacy costs the US several hundred billion dollars annually in non-productivity, crime, and loss of tax revenue due to unemployment. More than 40% of adults with the lowest literacy levels live in poverty and healthcare costs linked to low adult literacy are estimated to be $232 billion per year.

LVGW provides students with a pathway to social and economic independence that begins with free English language education. Based on City of Worcester 2022 population estimates, Worcester is currently home to over 45,000 foreign-born individuals from 85 countries, constituting 22% of our city's total population (205,918). As the number of New Americans in our community continues to grow, the free English language education services our organization provides have become more essential to the survival and success of an even greater number of adults in the Worcester area.

STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING

LVGW's comprehensive educational offerings are designed to engage adult students with real needs and interests. As a result of their participation in either our tutoring or classes, students demonstrate an increased ability to understand and be understood when communicating in English and navigating daily life in America.



The educational and professional backgrounds of our students are as diverse as the places they come from and the languages they speak. We provide student-centered services to truly honor the uniqueness of our adult learners.

Furthermore, we are invested in creating an environment where students feel comfortable learning because their culture is considered a valuable asset to learning, not a barrier. Exposure to other cultures and an appreciation for diversity helps our students thrive as citizens of Worcester and global citizens alike.



Programs & Services

English & Citizenship Classes

LVGW offers 10-week ESOL classes in Spring, Summer, and Fall. Three levels of English classes including Survival, Beginner, and Intermediate are taught by experienced ESOL teachers. Courses are available in person and online.

Personalized Tutoring

We provide 1-on-1 and small group tutoring services to individuals, other nonprofit organizations, and corporations. We recruit and train ESOL and basic literacy volunteer tutors, match them with students, conduct standard assessments upon intake and annually, and provide continuous support and resources for tutors.

Career Readiness Workshops & Support

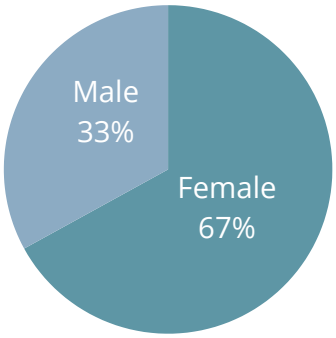
To prepare our students for securing employment and/or educational opportunities, LVGW integrates workforce readiness training and assistance into its ESOL program through partnerships with MassHire, QCC, and the Worcester Public Library.

LVGW by the Numbers

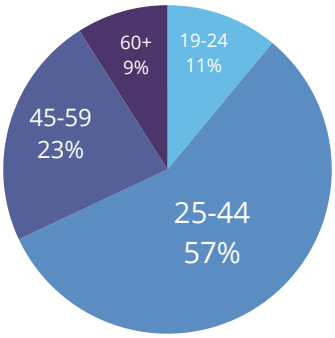
July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024

In FY24, LVGW served 473 students.

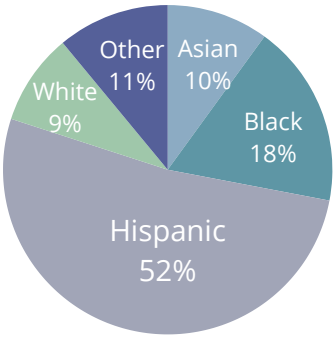
Gender



Age



Race

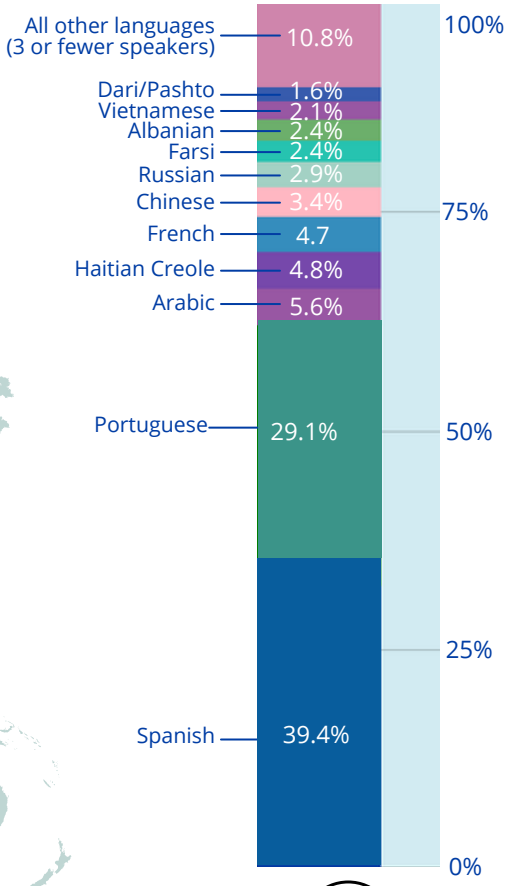


Education Level



Language

38 languages spoken



Country of Origin

Our students are from 50 countries.



FY 2024 Results

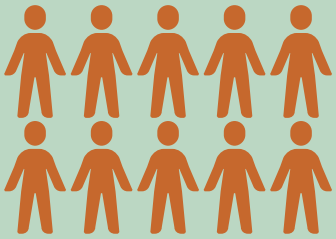
Students surveyed have identified the following motivations for improving English proficiency:

- obtain a (better) job
- improve employability
- enter other education or training
- obtain a driver's license
- increase cultural understanding
- obtain U.S. Citizenship

Students surveyed at the end of the 10-week learning have reported the following improvement:

100% of students' English language improved significantly.

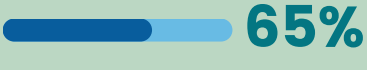




75% of students reported that their speaking, reading, writing, listening and confidence improved



65% of students improved their work and/or educational prospects



60% of students improved their health literacy and communication with their healthcare provider



Twelve total students have become U.S. Citizens!



Volunteer Tutoring

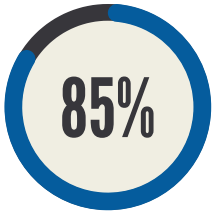
Students in this program get the unique support they need from our trained voluntunteers

37 Tutors

In FY24, our team of volunteer tutors met with students for a total of over 2,800 hours.

61 Students

85% of students demonstrated improvement based on standardized testing results



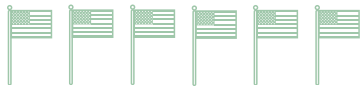
3 students are enrolled in workforce training programs



2 students earned their GED and 3 more are working towards it



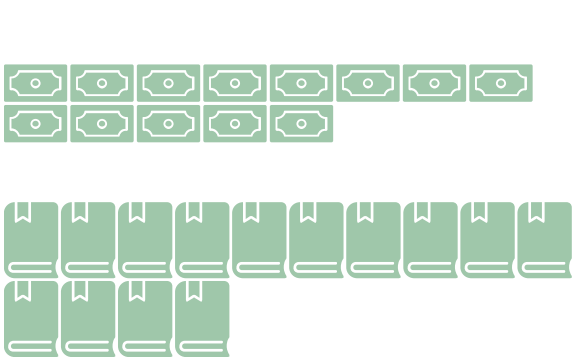
6 students have become US citizens!



5 students earned their driver's license and 4 more are working towards it



13 students have obtained a new or better job



14 students report they are enrolled in classes

Tutor Testimonials

20+ NEW ESOL tutors trained!

Meet LVGW's newest trainers!



Hossam Elsayyad



Amanda Andrews



Dennis Lindenberg

Hear directly from our volunteers!

"Jose takes out library books to read at home. He is a successful artist and is able to manage the business aspects of his career. He now drives himself to our meetings."

"We're working on Juan passing the Army National Guard entrance exam."

"Ester is a joy! "

"She has recently accepted a new job with the MA probation department. She says her fellow employees love her and she feels very comfortable with them. She is also working to attain a pharmacy internship with CVS. "

"Raj recently changed jobs by confidently passing the interview process."

"ALAN has been taking courses to become a Certified Financial Advisor."

"Ferdowsa is finishing her class in medical assisting. She hopes to take courses towards her LPN."

Student Testimonials

"Great experience of my life, I never thought I would be able to speak English one day, for me it is a dream coming true!"

"LVGW program has helped me lose my fear of communicating and has given me courage, strength to understand that the barriers of not wanting to speak were put up by myself. I am very grateful to God and to you because I know that I will be of great help to other people."

"I loved ALL lessons, opportunities to share something and the class time was great for me. Thank you so much!"

"I work in a restaurant serving customers. At first when they spoke to me very quickly, I did not understand them. Now I understand more and I can respond easily and provide them with better service."

"I found a job in Massachusetts. I can speak a little with the coworkers."





Community & Culture:
beyond the classroom

Beyond English, LVGW provides students with an education in American life and culture. No matter where they come from, it is our goal to help students and their families feel at home in Worcester. Not only do students gain an understanding of American life and culture, but in studying alongside one another they get the chance to explore a *whole world* of different cultures just by engaging with their peers.



Worcester Art Museum



Naturalization Ceremony





Worcester Historical Museum

Community & Culture:

beyond the classroom

LVGW Field Trip to Worcester Historical Museum

Thanks to the WHM for hosting our museum tour. And thank you again to students and their families, teachers, tutors, Board members, and staff for joining us!

Here are photos from LVGW's Field Trip to the Worcester Historical Museum, April 6, 2024





International Potluck Party Dec. 2023



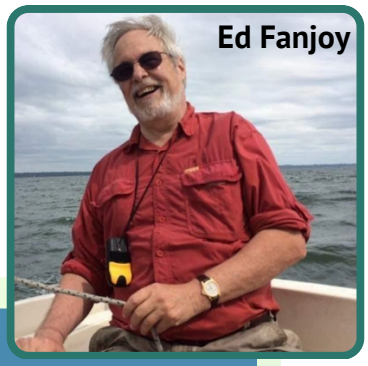
MCAE NetWork May 2024

Funding & Support

We are so grateful to the corporations, foundations, and individuals who continue to support our mission of providing English language literacy skills to the Greater Worcester community. Thank you for your generosity.

Individual Giving

With every dollar you donate and every hour you volunteer, someone's life changes for the better!


Ed Fanjoy

Five students received 467 hours of English tutoring from Ed Fanjoy in FY24. In addition to tutoring dozens of students over the years, Ed is also our highest monthly donor!

Here's what motivates this invaluable tutor and generous donor.

"I lived in Latin America as a kid because my dad worked overseas. That gave me an affinity for people of different cultures.

I got into tutoring after a mission trip [to] Guatemala; the folks we were helping stressed the importance of learning English. That [it] meant a ticket to the middle class in their country.

I completed the tutoring class in 2017 and have had as many as five students at a time. LVGW has given me the opportunity to discover and grow a talent I didn't know I had. They've even given me a chance to run workshops on interviewing and writing a resume.

The LVGW has given me some of my fondest moments in the last several years. I will be forever grateful."

Foundations & Government

Albert W. Rice Charitable Foundation
Bernatchez Family Foundation
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Ellsworth Foundation
Fletcher Foundation
Fred Harris Daniels Foundation
George I. Alden Trust
George F. & Sybil H. Fuller Foundation
Greater Worcester Community Foundation
Hoche-Scofield Foundation
Mass Humanities
Mifflin Memorial Fund
Mildred H. McEvoy Foundation
ProLiteracy
Robert Treat Paine Association
Schwartz Charitable Foundation
Stoddard Charitable Trust
United Way of Central Massachusetts
Wyman-Gordon Foundation

Corporate Donors

AFL Global
Berkshire Bank Foundation, Inc.
Cornerstone Bank
Country Bank
National Grid Foundation
Rockland Trust
Rollstone Bank
Town Fair Tire Foundation
Webster Five Bank
Walmart Local Community Grant (FC 6490)

Thank You

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