ANNUAL REPORT

Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester

2026

Literacy Volunteers
of Greater Worcester



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About Us

Our mission is to provide social and economic empowerment through culturally compassionate English language education

Since 1973, LVGW has served over 13,000 students from 120 different countries. To fulfill our mission, we rely on a small staff, including qualified English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers, and a vast network of trained volunteers who serve as one-to-one ESOL and Basic Literacy tutors.

Through a combination of tutoring and three levels of ESOL classes, we support students on the path to economic security and self-sufficiency. Of the 500+ students we serve each year, more than 80% live in the city of Worcester; the rest live in surrounding towns throughout Worcester County. Although some students have no formal education, many of them have advanced degrees in medicine, law, finance and education.





A Message From Our Executive Director



Because communication and culture are integrally linked, language education is much more than vocabulary and grammar. At LVGW, we prioritize culturally responsive teaching, contextualized learning, and community-building as the means to provide competency-based English language education.

For many students in our program, learning American English and adapting to life in America go hand in hand. Our integrated approach to English education and literacy incorporates the work and life skills adults urgently need to navigate daily life and achieve economic independence.

With over 500 students from 58 countries, many of our students have endured considerable hardships in their home countries and here in America. Our classes and individualized tutoring program alike offer a place of respite from trauma where friendships are formed and new dreams take root.

During special times like the World Cup, our classroom is a place of cultural pride and celebration. In times of crisis, such as the recent earthquakes in Venezuela, our classroom is a space where students can comfort one another.

In today's world, the needs of our students have grown increasingly more complex. We continuously evolve to provide the kind of support that makes each student's educational journey a successful one, and adult learners continue to trust LVGW to provide programming that is free, flexible and inclusive.

At LVGW, a place where education and human connection intersect, our instructors and volunteer tutors remain committed to teaching English while building confidence, restoring dignity, fostering belonging, and helping people navigate challenging times. Creating a safe place to learn and find community is not separate from our mission - it is our mission.

With appreciation,

Sienna Ablork

The People Powering Our Impact

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Madeleine Moreno, Peter Russell

STAFF



Sienna Ablorh, MBA
Executive Director

Amanda Andrews, MA
Program Manager





Iris Delgado, MLS
Administrative Assistant

Maria Valiente, MEd
Program Assistant



Teachers

Alexandra Wade, Amy West, Ashley Frankian, Jane Palensiia,
Nicholas Roberts, Robert Peters, Susan Palis

Interns

Christena Mena (Worcester State University)
Kai Moore (Clark University)

Volunteer Tutors

Abdulsalam Almadani
Adele Hamilton
Amanda Andrews
Amy West
Andrea Johnson
Anna Katorina
Beth Stark
Beverly Roeder
Caitlin Doyle
Carla Morrisey
Carol Upton
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Steve Silverman
Susan Crossley
Susan Tubman
Susana Moreno Giraldo
Susanna Meyer
Vy Phan
Warren Leijssius
William Phillips
Gary Tuthill

Our Tutoring Program

LVGW recruits, trains and matches volunteers with adult English language and literacy students seeking individualized support. Each week students receive 2 hours of free tutoring; customized lessons focus on topics that help adult learners build confidence, independence, and practical language skills for everyday life.

*"**He sets the agenda of our sessions together, tailoring them to his current challenges and upcoming needs.** We cover everything from understanding and cost optimizing his cell phone plan to writing cover letters to going shopping at Target."*

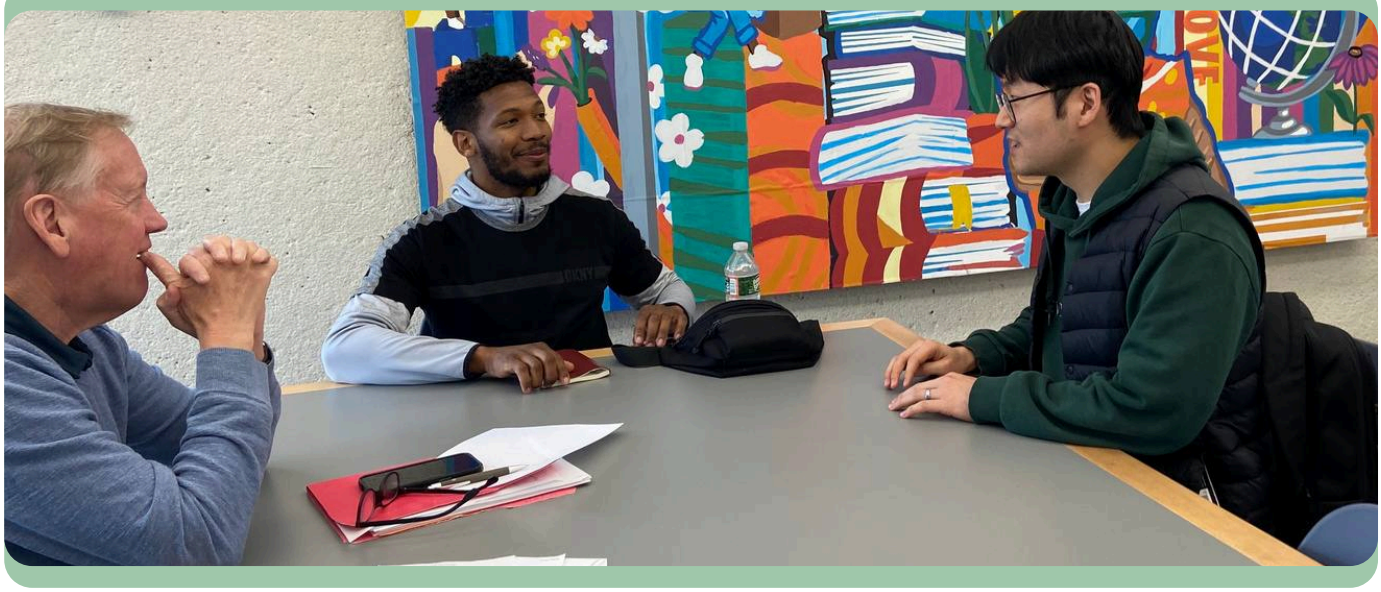
Volunteer George W.

Participation:

- 82 tutors volunteered
- 4,485+ hours volunteered
- 116 students tutored, including 45 NEW students
- An average of 37.5 instructional hours/student

Student Achievements:

- 5 secured employment; 18 were promoted at work
- 13 started additional educational programs
- 5 registered to vote
- 4 became US citizens
- 3 opened a business



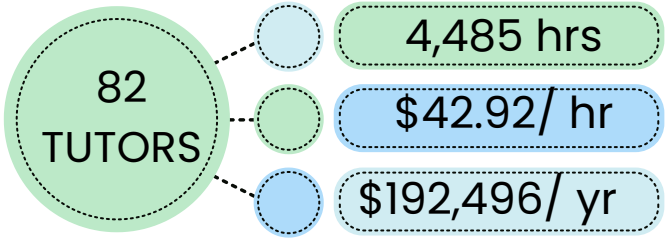
The Value of Tutoring

What's 4,485+ hours of free tutoring worth?

We know the time and skills our volunteers donate is *priceless*. However, the Independent Sector has tried to quantify the tremendous value of volunteers in our community.

According to their recent report, the estimated value of volunteer time in the state of Massachusetts was $42.92/hour as of 2025.







Growing up, I spent a lot of time with my grandmother, who spoke very little English. I remember translating phone calls and things she heard on TV for her when I was just eight years old. Her experience made me **realize how many doors greater access to English can open, which is why LVGW's mission felt so personal to me as a first-generation Haitian American**.

Nerlande P.

"Love working as a tutor. I help students to understand idioms, accents and slang, work related phrases and words...Practical listening and pronunciation is an area where one on one tutoring can make a huge difference. So many words in English sound alike. **We have fun with it! LV can lead to real break throughs for motivated students."**

Peter R.



Tutors: *In Their Own Words*

"I love tutoring! My student is smart and motivated, already almost fluent and aiming to start her Masters soon. We enjoy talking and working together and exchanging our cultural viewpoints on things. We've both learned much more about American and Iranian culture, respectively. **Tutoring is one of the highlights of my week."**

Caitlin D.

"As I'm sure is the case with many ESL volunteers, I started thinking I'd be adhering to a strict English lesson curriculum every week, but I quickly realized how much more complex LVGW's students' needs are, and how English education is honestly the tip of the iceberg of the challenges people relocating to the U.S. face. **This is a remarkable organization that I love being a part of."**

George W.

Our ESOL Classes

Our free ESOL classes meet for 10 weeks every Spring, Summer, and Fall. We offer three levels of English classes (Survival, Beginner, and Intermediate) taught by experienced teachers in person and online.

Our students from all over over the world share common goals such as understanding native speakers, communicating with medical providers, applying for work and helping their children succeed in school.



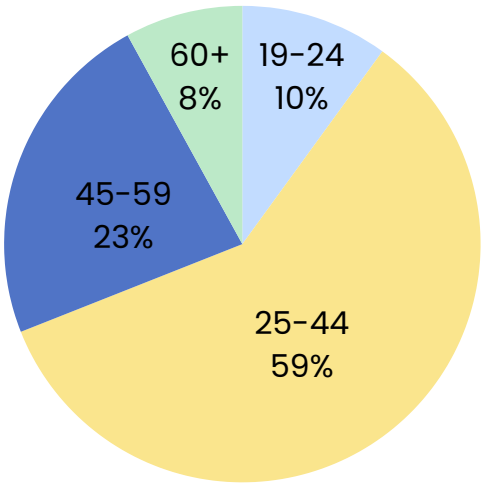
In FY26 404 adult learners took our English classes

- 36 students got a job
- 22 reported being promoted at work
- 33 entered additional educational programs
- 27 started workforce training programs
- 23 got their driver's license
- 11 student became US citizens

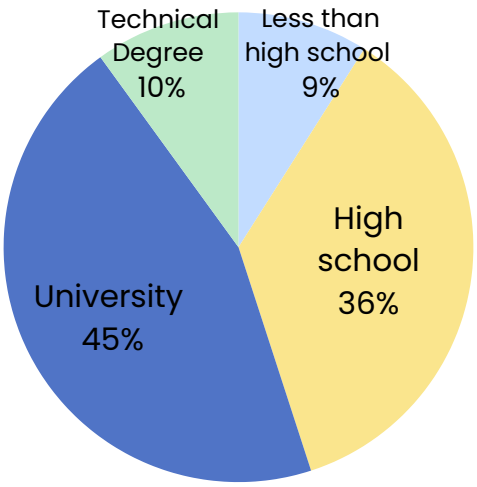
Demographics

Who are the 404 students who attended our classes?

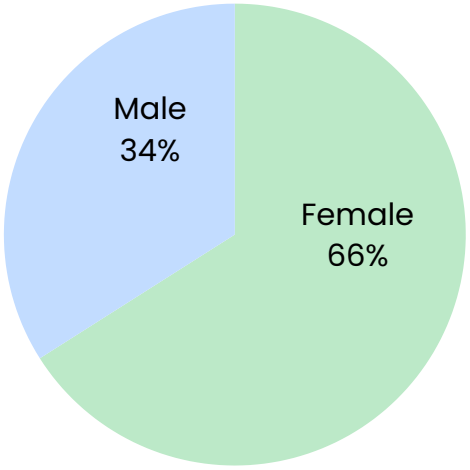
Age



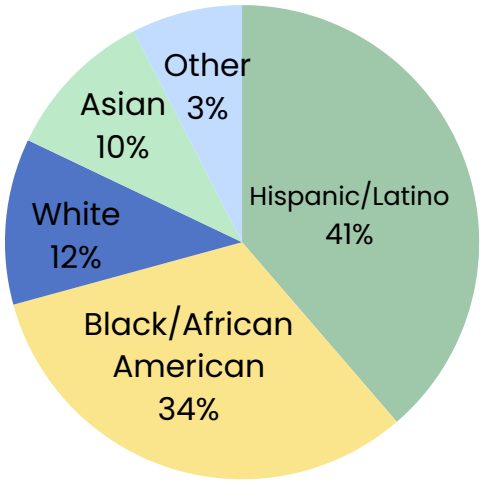
Education Level



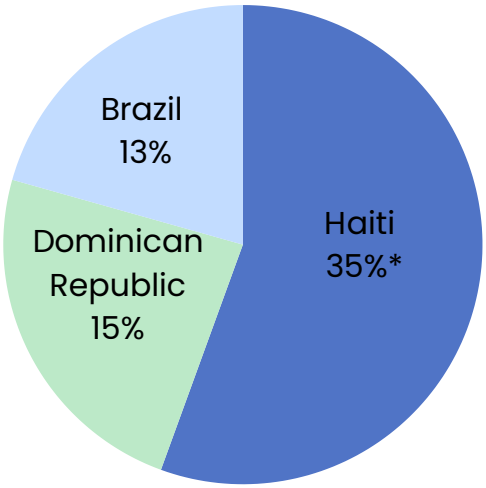
Gender



Race



Top 3 Countries



Our students came from 58 unique countries and speak 42 languages.

Students' Stories



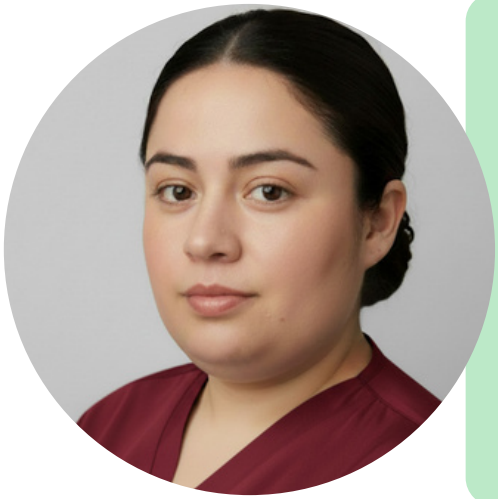
"I truly appreciate the support I received through the LVGW program. Working with a tutor, practicing my speaking, and participating in pronunciation workshops made a real difference in my confidence and progress. These experiences helped me strengthen my English and ultimately pass the exam needed to enter the Foreign-Trained Lawyers Program at Suffolk University Law School."

Jennifer

"My English class with Literacy Volunteers helped me find my voice and build the confidence to communicate effectively. This experience solidified my goal to begin a healthcare career, starting as a CNA."

Wendell





"When I first started at LVGW I took a group class and eventually I transitioned to individual tutoring. My first tutor helped me get ready for my CNA exam. We practiced questions for the exam and I passed he helped me with the interview questions for my current job as a Medical Assistant. After 2 years with LVGW, I feel more confident in my speaking and listening and my English has improved a lot."

Asmelda

Community Engagement



Exploring the galleries of ArtsWorcester



Immersive tour of the Cantor Art Gallery at Holy Cross



An afternoon of hockey with the Worcester Railers



Annual International Holiday Potluck

Foundations & Government and Corporate Donors

We are grateful to the corporations, foundations, government agencies and individuals who continue to support our mission of providing English language literacy skills to the Greater Worcester community.

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dese Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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ProLiteracy

Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts