

LVWC Student & Tutor News

Fall 2023

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Summer Session

We were busy over the summer

In the past, most of us took the summer off, but not this year. Our Wednesday conversation class, led by Kathy Busse, continued through the summer and was well attended. We had summer hours through July and most of August, and we were happy to see many students and tutors continue throughout the summer. Our students and tutors who meet in other places throughout Washington County and eastern Connecticut also continued throughout the summer.



Literacy Volunteers of Washington County

7 Elm Street

P.O. Box 245

Westerly, RI 02891

401-596-9411

www.literacywashingtoncounty.org

Join us!



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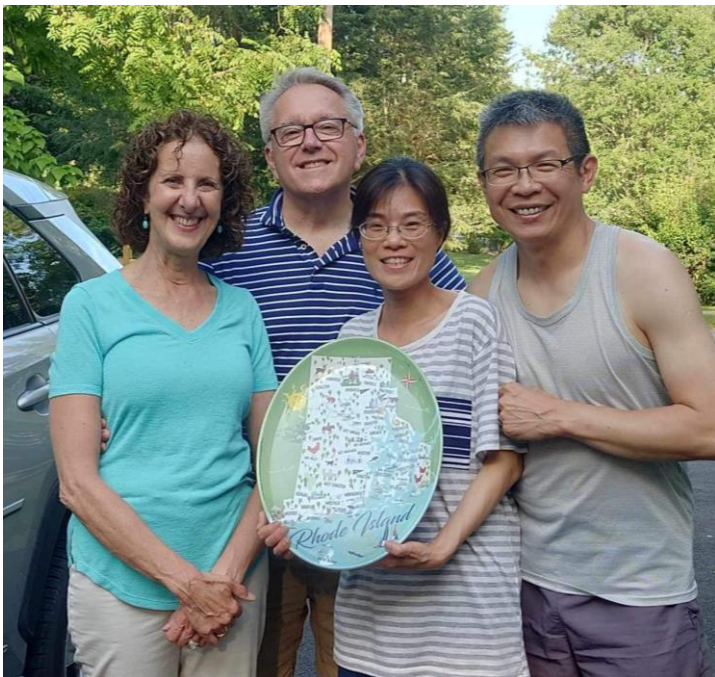
Executive Director
Mary Carol Kendzia
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“Autumn and fall are used interchangeably as words for the season between summer and winter. Both are used in American and British English, but fall occurs more often in American English. Autumn is considered the more formal name for the season.”

www.merriam-webster.com

Learn the difference with this video from *English with Teacher Britt*. [Click here!](#)



Saying Goodbye Lois, Cliff and Amanda

LVWC tutor Lois had to say goodbye to Cliff, Amanda and their son Chau Wei. While Cliff was at URI as a visiting scholar, he and his wife Amanda worked with Lois to improve their English. Lois even took them to a URI basketball game. The Kang family went back to Taiwan this summer.



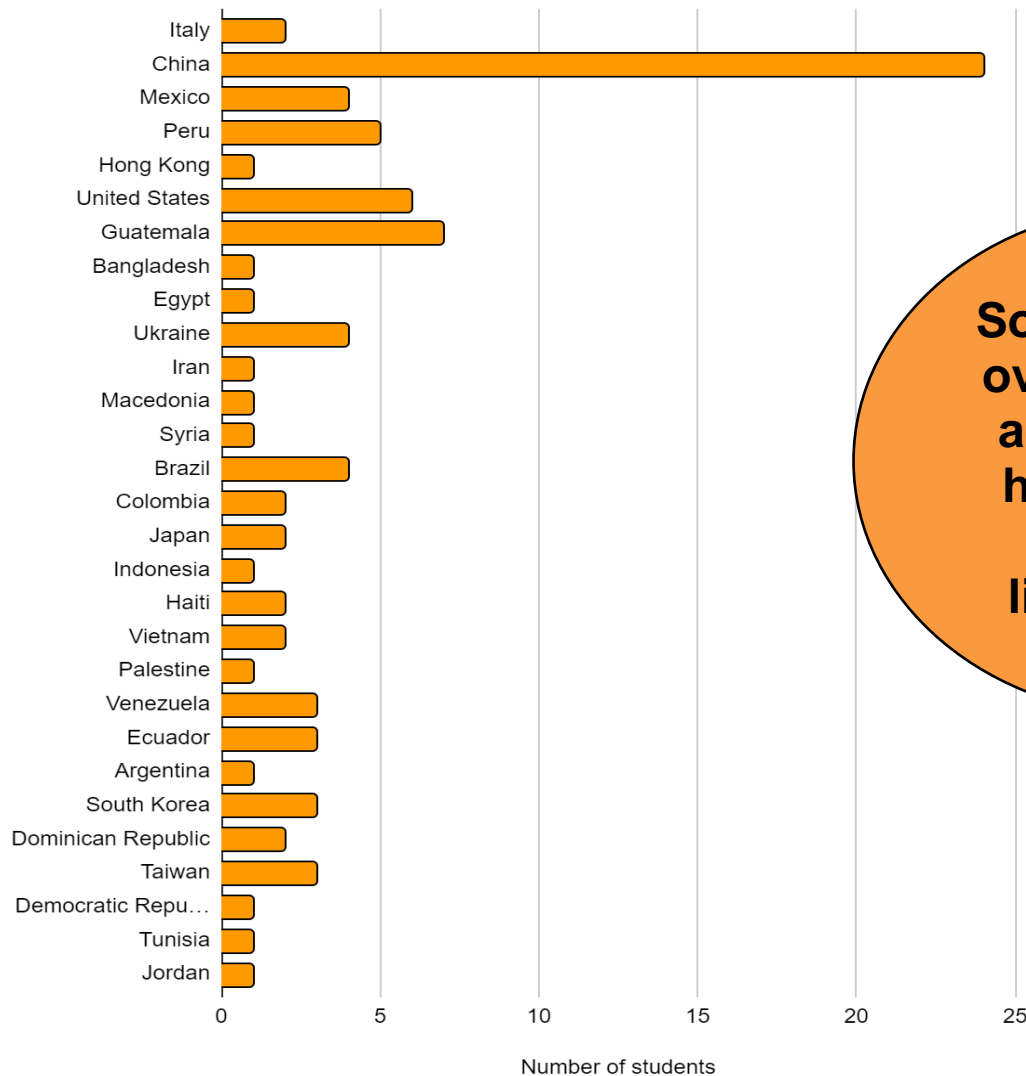
Announcements & Events

- Closed Monday, October 9 (national holiday)
- Open Tuesday, October 31 (Halloween)
- Closed Friday, November 10 (Veterans Day)
- Closed Thursday & Friday, November 23 & 24 (Thanksgiving)



Our Students Where are they from?

Where our students are from:



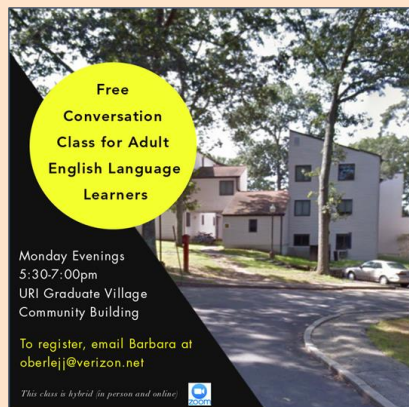
**So far this year,
over a hundred
adult learners
have come to
LVWC for
literacy help!**



Current Classes

These classes are for adult English language learners.

Visit www.literacywashingtoncounty.org/classes-gatherings for current offerings.



URI Graduate Village Conversation

Type: Conversation Class—HYBRID (in person and Zoom)

When: Mondays 5:30-7:00pm

Where: URI Graduate Village Community Center,
2900 Kingstown Rd, Kingston, RI 02881

Email: Barbara at oberlejj@verizon.net to register

LVWC Center

Type: Conversation Class—IN PERSON

When: Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 11:00am-12:00pm

Where: 7 Elm Street (Christ Church) Westerly, RI
at the LVWC Center

All levels welcome—No registration required



Conversation Classes

for adult English language learners
Tuesdays & Wednesdays

11:00am-12:00pm



All levels
no registration required
7 Elm Street, Westerly,
RI 02891



See our website for more information
www.literacywashingtoncounty.org/classes-gatherings



Mystic-Noank Conversation

Type: Conversation Class—IN PERSON

When: Fridays from 10:15-11:30am

Where: Mystic-Noank Library, 40 Library St, Mystic, CT 06355

Email: Kathy at kbusse6@gmail.com to register

Tutor Tips

By Barbara Heuer

“You can observe alot just by watching.” - Yogi Berra

Welcome tutors! Whether you are returning after the summer, or have been meeting all summer or are new to LVWC, this column is for YOU. In every newsletter I aim to provide you with strategies or ideas for working with adult learners. Many of these are very familiar to you. Consider this a refresher. If you have suggestions for future columns, please let us know...we welcome those too.

Here's this season's question: In your tutoring, how do you know your students are making progress toward their goals? (Note: I'm throwing in some terms often used in education circles, which you may or may not be familiar with...that's OK either way.)

As you know, LVWC is “student-centered.” We tailor sessions to meet individual, self-declared needs. We consider where the student is now and where she would like to be. Obviously, this means we do not have a “one-size-fits-all” template for tutoring. While this individualized support serves the student best, it is rarely a clearly delineated process. It requires us to be continuously alert and responsive to the student's learning. What vocabulary word or pronunciation does he understand? What did her phone app translate that needs further explaining? Is the official-looking document she received in her, mail asking for a payment, legitimate? You, as tutor, meet their diverse and unpredictable needs as they arise. And I bet you know the moments when they understand. Yea!

When a student comes to us with a concrete goal, like getting her GED or passing the citizenship interview or

drivers test, proving their mastery of information is straightforward. With these prescribed goals, the tutor can “teach to the test” (that evil term 😏). We have in hand all the preparatory materials, and passing these tests is a widely recognized mark of their knowledge. Of course, we celebrate!

But achievements are much harder to capture when the goal is less well-delineated. If, for example, the student wants “to be able to communicate in English,” how do we gauge when his communication skills have improved? As mentioned in the last newsletter, we know the road to fluency is filled with detours, wrong turns and potholes. The ability to understand, speak, read and write American English (even Rhode Island English 😊) varies from individual to individual. English language

Tutors, don't forget to submit those hours.

The screenshot shows the website for 40 Years of Literacy Volunteers of Washington County. The header includes the organization's name, address (7 Elm St., P.O. Box 245, Westerly, RI 02891, (401) 596-9411), a 'Donate' button, and social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn. A language dropdown menu is set to 'English'. The navigation menu includes HOME, ABOUT US, STUDENTS, TUTORS (highlighted), RESOURCES, EVENTS, and CONTACT. The main content area is titled 'Tutors' and contains two sections: 'Want to register as a tutor? Fill out this form.' with a 'Registration Form' button, and 'Off-Site Tutor Reporting' with a form for reporting hours. The reporting form includes fields for Tutor Name, Tutor E-mail, Date of Meeting, Meeting Length (1 hr, 2 hr...), and Student Name. A note states: 'Please report your hours with this online form if you do not meet at the literacy center in Westerly or do not use the LVWC Zoom account. This information is very important. Thank you! *required information'. There are also several photos of volunteers and students.

Tutor Tips continued...

learning is especially challenging with its inconsistent pronunciations and ever-changing contextual meanings.

You may notice we downplay aspects of formal “school” at LVWC. Rather than large classes, we uniquely offer one-to-one tutoring (usually). Our space in Westerly is arranged more like a brightly lit coffee house than a classroom. Heck, we even have coffee, cocoa and tea on hand, supplemented occasionally with treats! We strive to make our adults feel safe and comfortable creating an environment conducive to learning.

Our words and language reflect this informal, non-school, practical approach. We don’t have a set “curriculum.” We don’t require “lesson plans.” We don’t “test” students (who doesn’t suffer from “test anxiety?”). Does that mean we don’t keep track of progress toward their goals? In the same way that we collect “quantitative data” from the hours you report to Theresa, you collect “qualitative data” from every time you meet with your student(s).

As you try to meet the needs of your student, you are noting what your student tells you, either in words or body language. You probably do this instinctively. You listen and can sense when your

student understands. You have them repeat what needs reinforcement. Hopefully you end each session with your student feeling some sort of success, however small, like a correctly pronounced new word or new idiom. What you are doing in “educationese” (made-up word) is called “informal assessment” (also, sometimes “formative” as opposed to “summative” assessment). You are evaluating your student’s progress as the two of you go along. During the process of learning a language, this is the most accurate “finger on the pulse” indicator of improvement.

As you well know, adults come with different life experiences that they can build on. Their new learning is going to be equally diverse and uneven. In your sessions with your student, you are in the best position to see and evaluate their progress. We hope both your student and you are reassured that you are making strides towards fluency, step-by-step, over time. We hope you continue to share this “qualitative data” with us. We welcome any and all of your reflections on and questions about your student’s progress.

As always, thank you for your good work.

Barbara Heuer 🗣️



We are here to help!

**Theresa, Barbara and
Mary Carol**

Tutor Gatherings Coming Up This Fall

October 30 at the Kingston Free Library, 11:30am-12:30pm

November 27 at LVWC, 11:30am-12:30pm