

BEYOND THE PAGE



ADVOCACY . NETWORKING . EDUCATION

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF MAINE . VOLUME 1 . SUMMER 2007

WHY ADULT LITERACY?

Brian Deveaux, Board President LV Maine



With so many worthy causes for us to devote our attention to, why chose adult literacy? For me it's simple. Everyone knows the proverb, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him

for a lifetime." I'd suggest that you take it one step further by adding, "Teach a man to read and he can teach himself how to fish, or vote, or get a job, or follow a prescription label, or...the list goes on and on. This is the power of reading.

As a tutor, affiliate board member of Greater Sanford and board president of LV Maine, I have been fortunate to see first-hand the power that reading has to transform people's lives. It is truly amazing, and is only possible due to the incredible work that is done on a daily basis by the volunteers and staff of the Literacy Volunteers network here in Maine. Thank you all.

WELCOME TO OUR PREMIER ISSUE!



Literacy Volunteers of Maine is proud to launch our first quarterly newsletter for our growing community of affiliates, learners, friends and all those who support literacy services and learning opportunities for Maine adults. We appreciate your feedback as we work to make this publication an informative and useful resource for communicating news of literacy developments in and around Maine.

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Volunteers, learners, donors, affiliates and programs that contribute to our LV Family



Volunteer Tutor: Halorie Rintel and a Call to Action Creek to College

Kristen Stevens, Executive Director
LV Greater Portland



Volunteer Tutor Halorie Rintel, LV Greater Portland (above) started a new college prep program for incarcerated youth. Read this inspiring story about her hard work, passion and commitment to helping young people overcome obstacles through learning.

While Halorie Rintel was tutoring at Portland's Long Creek Youth Development Center, she sought more strategies for teaching reading, especially to young people with learning disabilities. She then completed the Basic Literacy training at Literacy Volunteers of Greater Portland. From this modest beginning one year ago, Halorie helped launch an innovative college preparatory group at the Center called *Creek to College*.

It was Halorie's concern over the "two million people incarcerated in the United States--almost ten times as many as in any other industrialized country in the world," that moved her to action to become a volunteer tutor at Long Creek. Last spring, she was matched with a young man to help tutor him in reading and the SATs. As his skills improved, she helped him apply to college, making him the first Long Creek resident to attend college classes offsite. "He just completed his first semester as a full time student at USM and made the Dean's List!"

Halorie's work with this student took another positive turn when he asked if she would start a group for other residents who were interested in pursuing their education. "It was his idea," she recalls, as "he dragged friends into our tutoring sessions, begging me to talk to these boys about college. It was because of his great enthusiasm and concern for others that I agreed to start the group."

In just one week, so many residents asked to join that two groups formed, with a waiting list. When residents join, individual goals, career and educational options are shared. Each youth is assigned a volunteer tutor who meets with them individually for 1-2 hours a week, to help the student advance learning goals

such as: completing a college application, SAT preparation, tutoring reading or math, or helping with homework for a course at Southern Maine Community College, University of Southern Maine, or online.

While Halorie asserts that tutoring at Long Creek has many challenges, it is also "a lot of fun and the rewards are definitely greater." *Creek to College*, as a new concept, faces many hurdles related to incarcerated residents pursuing higher education. "Financial issues -- paying for college -- are endless. The lives of these young people are obviously very complicated. The successes make it all worthwhile. Watching these kids develop positive goals and gain self-esteem is incredibly rewarding. I always look forward to both my tutoring sessions and group meetings."

"Watching these kids develop positive goals and gain self-esteem is incredibly rewarding."



Funder Profile



Literacy Volunteers of Maine is proud to announce **IDEXX Laboratories** as one of our newest donors. The largest technology company headquartered in Maine, IDEXX develops, produces and sells pet health products and services to veterinarians. IDEXX has 40 global locations and 3,800 employees, with 1,400 in Maine.

Beyond IDEXX's generous financial donation, **T.J. Dupree**, IDEXX Corporate Vice President and Literacy Volunteers tutor, is working with the LV Maine Board to facilitate strategic planning on key issues, including statewide resource and capacity development. "We support LV Maine because it's the right thing to do," says T.J. "IDEXX and our employees are members of the community. As such, we believe that people in our community who would benefit from improved literacy skills need access to services that can help them. With access, those in need can better pursue their professional and personal goals. And, as a local employer, we feel that literacy is a basic skill we need to invest in."

Through this unique partnership, IDEXX is helping Literacy Volunteers of Maine meet its short-term financial goals, and foster a sustainable long-term vision for the organization.

Art and Literacy Collaboration: Out CAST Players at Farnsworth Museum

Elaine Tselikis, Program Coordinator LV Maine

In March, Literacy Volunteers of Mid-Coast Maine's (LVMCM) innovative Learner's Theater program, the Out CAST Players, interpreted artworks in well-received performances at the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland. This art-literacy partnership began when LVMCM board member **Keith Wass** met **Lora Urbanelli**, Farnsworth Executive Director, at the Rockland Kiwanis. Formerly, Ms. Urbanelli was Interim Director and Assistant Director of the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, where she established a collaboration with the local literacy council. Upon contacting LVMCM Executive Director **Beth Gifford**, she was enthusiastic about the Out CAST Players performing at the Farnsworth.

The museum dramatizations, entitled "Pictures from an Exhibition: Relationships" started with the Players selecting three paintings they all responded to from the vast collection. Lively discussion ensued on works by **Neil Welliver**, **George Bellows** and **Andrew Wyeth**, and Out CAST Director Gifford helped create a script of actions, movements and sounds the Players would use to convey their interpretations of the paintings.

Image theater, originally developed by Brazilian director **Augusto Boal**, calls for actors to use the human body to express universal feelings, ideas and relationships. Through this medium, LVMCM learners and tutors become uniquely engaged with each other to form trust, deepen self-confidence, and strengthen literacy and critical thinking skills.

Learner's Theater was spearheaded as a pilot program by theater-trained director Lorraine Brown when she worked for LV Maine. Now an important literacy development vehicle for LVMCM, Beth Gifford affirms of the Out CAST Players, "Everyone has a great time! This talented crew worked very hard to get the performance to this amazing level of appearing at a museum of

the Farnsworth's stature. They were all nervous and excited at the same time! It is my hope that this event marks the beginning of a long-standing relationship that could evolve into many forms."



Out CAST Players: Wes Knight, Linda Knight, Rosemary Moody, Mary Seavey, Nancy Kimball, Estelle Rackliff, Evelyn Van Dyne, Delores Demmons, Diane Gifford and Director Beth Gifford (back row, center). -- Tselikis staff photo



English Language Civics Education Tutor Resources

Abbie Embry Turner, Program Coordinator LV Maine



In June 2006, LV Maine received a federal grant to fund development of tutor resources for English Language Civics Education (EL/Civics). I am working closely with our grant-funded advisory board: **Mary Marin Lyon** of Literacy Volunteers of Bangor, **Mary Schneckenberger** of Literacy Volunteers of Androscoggin and **Kristen Stevens** of Literacy Volunteers of Greater Portland, to develop materials relevant for LV learners.

The EL/Civics materials are designed to decrease the gap between limited English language skills of non-native learners and the increasing demands they face as citizens (naturalized or not) in the United States. The resources include four units: *Working and Living in the U.S.*; *Education in the U.S.*; *Consumer Affairs*; and *Civic Participation*. Each unit includes four lessons focused on basic literacy and civics skills as well as tools for self-advocacy and civic engagement. Lessons are designed around practical content that adults face everyday. The tutor resources use the Equipped for the Future (EFF) standards, the Maine Quality Curriculum Evaluation Rubric and the CASAS competencies as a guiding framework. These sources offer standards-based direction to the resources. All of the lessons and materials will be field-tested by LV tutors and students as part of the development process.

The EL/Civics resources will be ready for distribution in the fall. LV Maine and the advisory board are designing an in-service training for tutors to ensure ease of use. We look forward to sharing these resources with the LV network, and are excited to get them out in the field! For further information, please e-mail me at abbie@lvmaine.org or call 207-773-3191.

Affiliate Accreditations



Congratulations to the following affiliates who have received ProLiteracy accreditation: **LV Mid-Coast Maine, LV Greater Augusta, LV Greater Saco/Biddeford, LV Greater Sanford and LV Greater Portland**. To reflect LV Maine's commitment to the accreditation process, we provide \$200 in funding to each affiliate that completes their site visit to help defray costs. To all accredited affiliates, and those which are exploring accreditation, we applaud your hard work and commitment to quality literacy services and organizational practices!

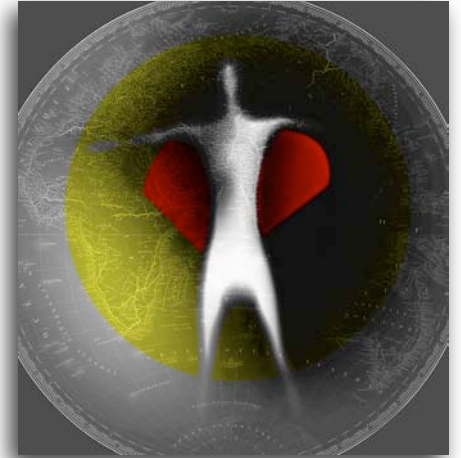


Meeting our Mission: Building Capacity

LV Maine's vision includes a far reaching network of affiliates that are well-funded, sound organizations, with sufficient capacity and top quality training to meet the needs of their communities. However, as we all know too well, funding opportunities that support capacity-building efforts are few and far between. As a first step toward our vision of a well-funded network, LV Maine is making \$2,000 in grants available to affiliates this year to help provide funding for capacity-building projects.

Grant applications will be released in May and proposals are due in early June. There will be one \$1,000 grant and two \$500 grants. All LV Maine affiliates are welcome to apply. Because LV Maine promotes and supports accreditation, grants will be organized around program aspects that align with ProLiteracy accreditation standards. For program year 2007, funding requests should be focused on needs in these areas:

- Student Recruitment & Intake (\$1,000)
- Organizational Planning (2 @ \$500)



"We are very pleased to be able to offer funding of this type. This is just one part of the nearly \$12,000 LV Maine will provide directly to affiliates for program year 2007."

We are very pleased to be able to offer funding of this type. In fact, this is just one part of the nearly \$12,000 LV Maine will provide directly to affiliates for program year 2007. In addition to these grants, we are providing funding for accreditation, and a model resource library valued at nearly \$400 for each affiliate. We are also continuing to include affiliates in grant proposals, a model that began with our Verizon-funded *Teach Mentor Care* project. This year, the Androscoggin, Bangor, and Portland affiliates are working with LV Maine to help design, review and field-test EL/Civics tutor resources. In exchange for their participation, each affiliate will receive \$850 to help defray the costs of staff time and travel. A total of \$2,550 will go to affiliates, which is 25% of the entire grant amount. This is a new way of working for us, and we are excited to be able to direct these resources to affiliates.

This type of partnership is once again evidence of LV Maine's goal to support affiliates and build capacity in the network. By finding ways to share resources, we are making the most of our statewide presence. We look forward to your proposals!



Waiting to Learn

Stella Hernandez, Executive Director LV Maine

Literacy made headlines this winter when the *New York Times* published an article titled, “Demand for English Lessons Outstrips Supply.” The article highlighted the waiting lists for ESOL services in many states, with some ranging up to two years and with thousands of learners.

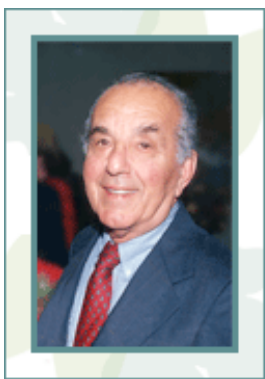
As we all know, when students and tutors inquire about services or training, we need to respond quickly or risk losing their interest. A waiting list is a sign that the capacity doesn’t exist in an organization to support the demand for services. ProLiteracy recently completed a project to look at best practices for keeping potential learners and volunteers engaged while they are waiting for a tutor or training opportunity. To find out more about it, visit http://www.proliteracy.org/proliteracy_america/wl_resources.asp



Funding Approach

What further complicates this situation is that it takes capacity to implement these great ideas. If you do have a waiting list, have you considered approaching a funder about helping your organization reduce its waiting list of students or tutors?

1. The case for funding is clear: if you don’t reduce the wait list, you will lose learners and the volunteers who serve them.
2. To determine a budget, you can estimate the resources needed to hold that extra training, add more hours for your staff, or implement some waiting list solutions suggested by ProLiteracy to set the required funding amount.



Sam L. Cohen

Foundation Profile: The Sam L. Cohen Foundation (founded 1983)

With these funding needs in mind, there are several foundations that focus their giving on Maine organizations and on education specifically. The Sam L. Cohen Foundation’s mission is “to ensure that all people have the opportunity to develop their potential in order to realize healthy, productive futures for themselves, their families and their communities.” Among the many interests listed on the foundation’s website are supporting the under-served and disadvantaged and providing access to educational opportunities. The foundation’s giving focuses primarily on Southern Maine, with most awards going to organizations from Portland south. Applicants must first submit a letter of inquiry to have their proposal considered. The foundation will then invite specific organizations to submit an application. Applications are accepted in two cycles with

letters of inquiry due either by February 1st or August 1st and applications due on either March 1st or September 1st. To learn more, visit www.samlcohenfoundation.org.



Transitions: Stella Hernandez Leaves Post as LV Maine Director

Stella Hernandez, Executive Director LV Maine



As I wrap up just over four years with Literacy Volunteers of Maine, I want to thank all of our volunteers, tutors, board members and staff across the state for giving me what has truly been one of the most rewarding work experiences of my career. While I am leaving to focus on our family business and on growing our family, I will always be an advocate for literacy. I am grateful that people like those involved with our network are out there every day moving the mission of literacy for Maine adults forward, and it gives me great pride to know that I was a part of that effort.

With each transition comes the opportunity for positive change and new ideas. I know you will welcome my successor with the same warmth, intelligence, and creativity with which you greeted me. This is a challenging role – creating a statewide resource and presence with a small staff and an ever-increasing accountability. But it is also a role that provides the opportunity to meet the needs of so many, and to create a lasting resource for Maine. Early on in my tenure, I worried a lot about preserving the legacy of an organization that had been a trusted resource for 35 years. But we have a truly incredible team – in the office and throughout the state – that made that work possible and rewarding.

I owe a special thanks to our board of directors, who gave me the freedom and the support to implement change here at LV Maine, and to Abbie and Elaine, who do the hard work every day with intelligence, humor and commitment. The pleasure has been all mine.

New Affiliate Directors Join LV Network



Suzanne Gastaldo, Program Coordinator Tri-County LV

Suzanne Gastaldo joins Tri-County Literacy Volunteers as Program Coordinator. She holds a BA in Psychology and is continuing her education at the University of Southern Maine. With deep Maine roots, Suzanne grew up on a farm in Newcastle and is an active volunteer in her community. Prior to Tri-County LV, she managed the Mobius Day Program Center for developmentally challenged adults and supervised its residential program. Additionally, she has worked several years as a reading teacher for Union 74's *No Child Left Behind* program. Suzanne is enthusiastic about a successful year with Tri-County.

Amy Safford is the new Executive Director of Literacy Volunteers of Greater Sanford. With an MFA in Creative Writing, she is a former freelance marketing consultant and copywriter, and was an Account Executive at Maine Credit Union League. Amy is also an adjunct writing instructor at the University of New England. With her background in teaching, tutoring and writing, she looks forward to working collaboratively with over 60 tutors in her affiliate to help them meet learner goals and aspirations.

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HOW TO SUBMIT NEWS ITEMS

E-mail articles directly to the editor, elaine@lvmaine.org with "Newsletter Item" in the subject line of the e-mail message. Attach jpg or tiff format photographs if desired.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

Monday, July 30

LV MAINE CALENDAR

MAY 2: ANNUAL MEETING
Stars in Literacy Celebration

MAY 10: HALL OF FLAGS
Legislative Day

JULY 15: PORTLAND SEA DOGS
Family Literacy Day

JULY 30: NEWSLETTER ITEMS DUE



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