Year in Review

Literacy Volunteers marked a few milestones in FY17 with a record number of students and tutors. But, we are interested in quality as well as quantity, and we were able to maintain our record of meeting all Virginia Department of Education targets for educational gains, with students advancing in fluency and acquiring workforce credentials.

We remain the only provider of citizenship instruction in the area. Although our federal grant from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) came to an end in December, we were able to continue service to those in the process, with 37 of them participating in a class and 54 of them taking the oath of citizenship this year. Through the generosity of individual donors, we will continue our citizenship program as many immigrants and refugees are looking to solidify their status in the United States.

We believe that the volunteer opportunity we provide is part of our mission, so we increased the number and quality of our in-service training opportunities, including a full-day retreat. We believe this additional engagement from our volunteers contributes to our high volunteer retention rate. While we had expected to end the year with 368 tutors in our program, we had 391 in our program, because more tutors than expected signed up for an additional year. Tutors are the heart of our program and our greatest resource, and the number of students we can serve is based on the number of

(over, please—)

FY17 Numbers at a Glance

- Total number of students: **463**
- Total number of tutors: **391**
- Type of instruction provided:
  - Basic Literacy 9%
  - ESOL 91%
- Number of volunteer hours: **31,074**
- Total economic value of volunteered hours: **$750,126**
- Annual Budget: **$461,923**
tutors we have in our program. Recruitment and retention of our volunteers is critical to our students’ success.

Since being at the Jefferson School these past five years, our program has gained in popularity. In the last five years, we have seen a 68% increase in the number of students served, a 90% increase in number of tutors in our program, and a 100% increase in volunteer hours donated. Volunteers donated over 31,000 hours to LVCA in FY17. To put this in perspective, this is the equivalent of 15 full-time staff people!

Our community engagement and fundraising has also increased; in FY17 we had 201 new donors to LVCA with 716 gift transactions.

However, the need in our community is still huge. Out of the 522 inquiries for help, we could only accept 221 new students in FY17. Please contact us if you have ideas for acquiring more volunteers or funds. We greatly appreciate your support.◆

Ellen Moore Osborne, Executive Director

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**Upcoming Tutor Training Events**

As our community continues to attract and absorb non-English-speaking individuals, the need for our services will continue to rise. In addition, our workforce development programs are attracting more Basic Literacy students (English Speakers) than ever before. We are now offering 11 new tutor training events each year to keep up with the demand.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a volunteer, call our office at 434-977-3838 to register:

- **Saturday, December 9**
- **Saturday, January 13**
- **Tuesday & Wednesday evenings, Feb 20 & 21 (must attend both evenings)**
- **Saturday, March 24**
- **Saturday, April 21**
- **Saturday, May 19**
- **Saturday, June 16**

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**LVCA Tutor Demographics**

In FY17 LVCA trained 168 new tutors resulting in 391 total tutors for the year.

The tutor retention rate, those who returned for 2 or more years, was 64%.

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91% of all tutors are **college educated**. 51% are in the **labor force**.

**How volunteer time is spent:**

Instructional hours.........................16,699 hours

Training and planning ..................... 11,539 hours

Non-tutor volunteer hours ............... 2,836 hours

(event planning, office assistance, etc)

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My favorite part of being a tutor is when my student gives me a big smile or lights up on a topic we’ve been struggling with. Then I know we’ve succeeded in breaking some new ground for him.

—Tutor Jerry Shea

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If you have two hours a week, you can help. There’s such a demand. There are so many people waiting. It’s so important.

—Tutor Carol Diggs
When war broke out, they lived as refugees for 18 years. Now they call Charlottesville “Home.”

Twice a week Rogatien Mpandja-Mbogo can be found seated behind a computer in the LVCA office quietly concentrating and perfecting his pronunciation. As a former teacher himself, he finds his computer work essential to improving his success and, according to his former tutor, he’s passionate about learning.

In June of 2015 Rogatien arrived in Charlottesville with ten of his 13 children. The family is orginially from The Democratic Republic of the Congo. When war broke out, they fled to Burundi where they lived as refugees for 18 years. Rogatien worked as a secretary and radio operator for United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF). There he sought donations for Burundi refugees and because of this work, he was targeted by the military when the war began.

“It was a pleasure for me to come here [the United States],” said Rogatien. “There are many countries, Australia, Norway, England, the UN agents chose what country. They told me in U.S. there is a place for you and we accepted.”

Since arriving he found work in housekeeping at U.Va. Although he taught French in the DR Congo he would prefer to return to working as a secretary.

“When I finish studying I would like to be a secretary, maybe at a high school,” Rogatien said. “I’m a good typist,” he adds.

It was his son Gideon who first came to LVCA for English help. Four more of his siblings later enrolled and all were given tutors. Earlier this year Gideon encouraged Rogatien to also register.

On almost any day of the week you can find either Rogatien or one of his children in the LVCA office meeting with tutors, working on the computers, or participating in a conversation class. Given the circumstances that brought them here, they are always smiling and hard at work.

“I’m grateful for the center,” said Rogatien. “I’m grateful for all the volunteers who come to help us without a salary. I appreciate it so much.”

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**Student Demographics**

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**Employment Status**

- Employed: 330
- Unemployed: 28
- Not in labor force: 94
- Retired: 4

**Level of Education**

- Less than 12th: 257
- High school diploma: 74
- Some college: 37
- College degree: 85

**Ethnicity/Race**

- Asian: 114
- Black/African American: 73
- Hispanic/Latino(a): 179
- Middle Eastern: 80
- White: 17
Citizenship Program Updates

This year Literacy Volunteers continued to offer assistance to those seeking help navigating the naturalization process. At this time, LVCA continues to be the only organization offering citizenship preparation classes in the community.

A twelve-week class was offered starting in January and then another session ran through the summer. As the demand for these services continues, LVCA will continue to offer classes for those seeking to secure their place in our community through U.S. citizenship.

Here are other updates on our citizenship program:

- In FY17, 54 additional people who originally came into the program under the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services grant between 2014-2016 have taken the oath and become citizens. This brings our total of naturalized citizens to 168 from this grant!
- In FY17, 37 people participated in our citizenship classes, taught by Paige Zelikow, LVCA Citizenship Coordinator.

LVCA is continuing to apply for grants and to request funding from individuals to ensure the citizenship program continues. As the only provider of citizenship classes in the area, the demand for this service has grown.


Student Outcomes and Achievements

Numbers represent the number of students who achieved each goal.

- 60 Entered employment or got a better job
- 48 Improved employability skills
- 47 Entered other education and/or training
- 105 Improved score on standardized test
- 151 Met a work-based goal
- 10 Registered to vote/voted for the first time
- 15 Obtained a driver’s license
- 34 Increased involvement in community activities
- 91 Increased involvement in children’s education
- 71 Attained consumer skills
- 51 Attained wellness and healthy lifestyle

Sixty-eight students were recognized at the FY17 Student Achievement Ceremony. Jose Martinez and Palwasha Mohammad Asif, two completers of our program, were our student speakers.