



**Literacy Volunteers
of Somerset County**

Executive Director's Annual Report

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Prepared by Aimee Lam, Executive Director

Growing & Thriving Together

- ▶ 2023: last year, we announced a return to pre-pandemic levels of service
- ▶ 2024: this year, we're celebrating significant expansion
 - Doubled space
 - Doubled staff
 - Increased programming to reach more students
- ▶ To support this growth:
 - Budget has nearly doubled since 2020



Growing & Thriving Together



When LVSC is successful, students succeed. Well-trained, supported tutors help students learn English and achieve life-changing goals. Adequate funding ensure we have the space and staff to provide programming.

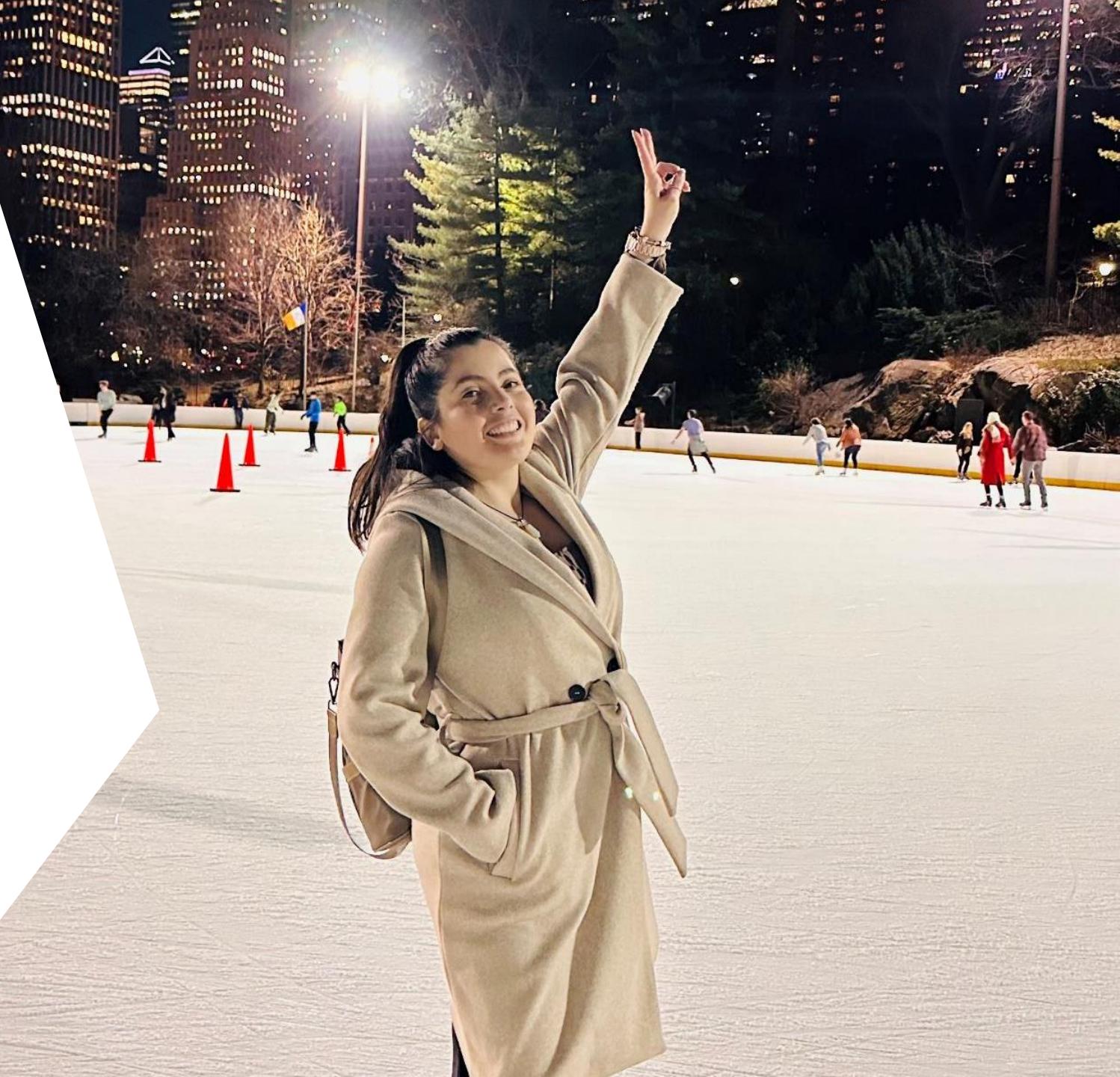
Celebrating a team effort:

- ▶ Amazing students
- ▶ Dedicated volunteers
- ▶ Generous donors
- ▶ Caring partners

Welcome New Students

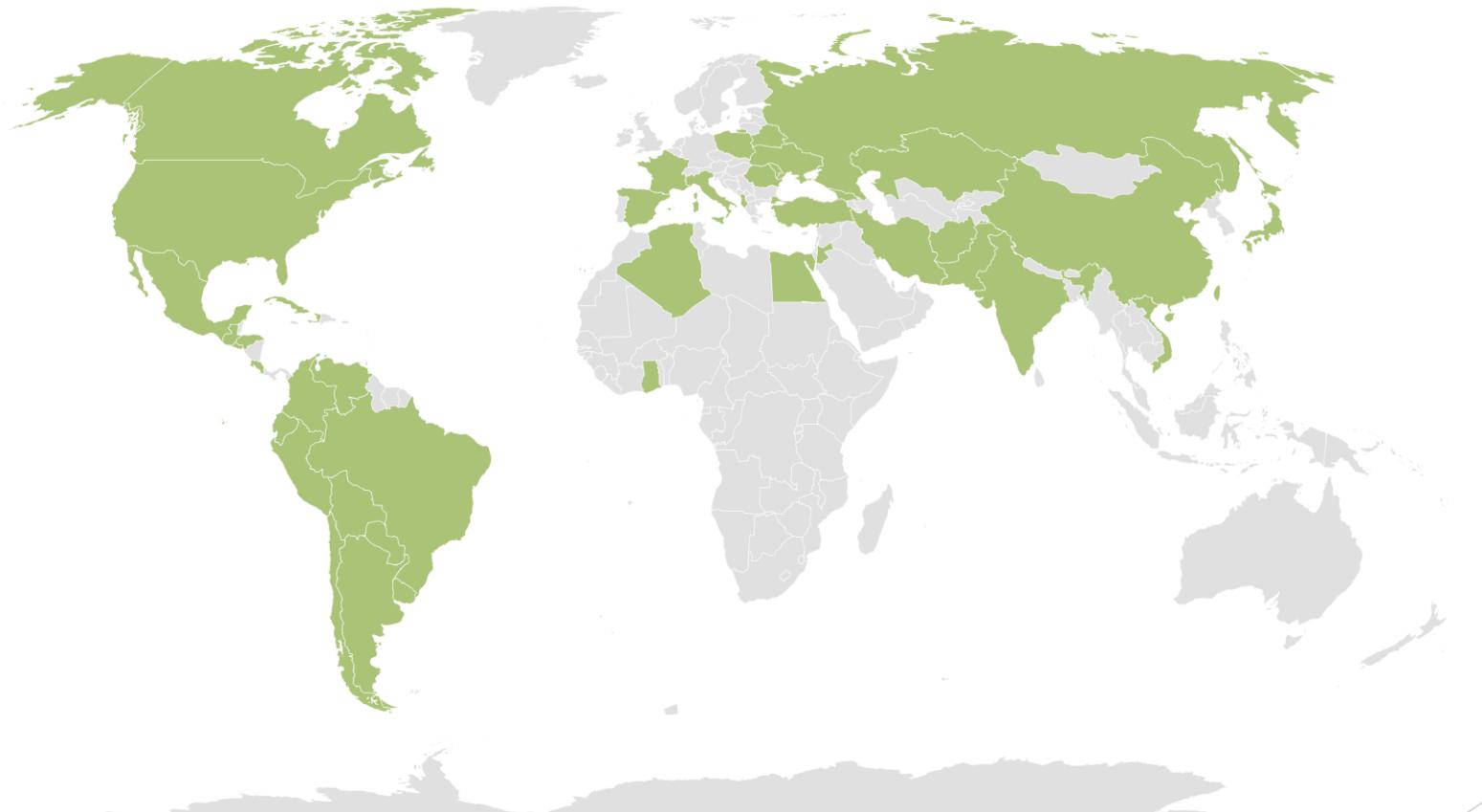
We are seeing an increase in student applications:

- ▶ 202 assessed
(142 prior year)
- ▶ By 16 volunteers - 140 hours of service!
- ▶ During 30 assessment sessions



Students Come from 47 Different Countries

(represented countries are shaded in green)



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Powered by Bing



We are serving more students

500+ unique students served! (400 prior year)

- 293 worked with a tutor
- 104 attended a conversation group (12 offered)
- 72 attended a beginner class or small group led by LVSC tutors
- 156 attended a class offered through *First Steps Basic English* pilot partnership
- 28 received US citizenship preparation support
- 40 students contributed to 3 great issues of *Connections*, a student-run newsletter

Congratulations, Students!

So many accomplishments. Here are a few:

- ▶ 146 achieved employment goals
- ▶ 124 got more involved in the community
- ▶ 101 became more informed citizens
- ▶ 97 increased involvement with children's education
- ▶ 49 entered training programs
- ▶ 44 became more knowledgeable consumers
- ▶ 43 improved health knowledge
- ▶ 18 became U.S. citizens
- ▶ 10 attained computer skills

... plus, hundreds improved their English skills!



Welcome New Tutors

To meet demand for services, we are recruiting and training more volunteers.



- ▶ 76 new tutors trained (64 prior year)
- ▶ 20 tutor information sessions
- ▶ 3 tutor training workshops
- ▶ Plus, summer workshop planned – in-person!

So Many Amazing Volunteers

195 volunteers (175 *prior year*)

- ▶ 180 active tutors
- ▶ 12 conversation group leaders
- ▶ 6 U.S. citizenship preparation tutors
- ▶ 16 assessors
- ▶ 5 event volunteers
- ▶ 1 office assistant
- ▶ 5,400+ hours of volunteer service: \$180,000 value



Student Success Center

- ▶ First Full Year
- ▶ Welcoming Place
 - ▶ Tutoring
 - ▶ Weekly Conversation Group
 - ▶ Student Assessments
- ▶ Increased Tutor Support
 - ▶ Starter kit for new tutors
 - ▶ Quarterly tutor reach-out
 - ▶ In-service workshops (7)
- ▶ Lending library of adult ESL resources
 - ▶ 350+ materials available
 - ▶ 65+ materials loaned
- ▶ Funded by grants & donations



First Steps Basic English – The Pilot



- 18-month pilot to expand access to free beginner-level English instruction
- Funded by Somerset County American Rescue Plan Funds
- Partners:
 - ▶ Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board - Oversight
 - ▶ Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County-Lead Agency
 - ▶ Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission
 - ▶ Raritan Valley Community College
 - ▶ Libraries throughout Somerset County

Enjoy this First Steps Video



First Steps Basic English – The Program

- Reaching 156 new students
- 6 classes taught by experienced teachers, 4 hours/ week for 18 months.
 - ▶ Bernardsville
 - ▶ Bound Brook
 - ▶ Franklin (2)
 - ▶ North Plainfield
 - ▶ Raritan
- 10 small groups taught by LVSC tutors



First Steps Program Partners



L V S C

**Literacy Volunteers
of Somerset County**

Greater Raritan
Workforce Development Board

SOMERSET
ESTD 1688
COUNTY
MAKING VIBRANT CONNECTIONS
NEW JERSEY

**RARITAN
VALLEY**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The logo for Franklin Township Public Library, featuring a stylized blue and green leaf or book icon next to the text "franklin TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY" and the tagline "Where Ideas and People Meet".

The logo for Bernards Township Library, featuring a green leaf icon and the text "BERNARDS TOWNSHIP LIBRARY".

The logo for Bernardsville Public Library, featuring a green arched window icon and the text "BERNARDSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY".

A circular badge that reads "A Nationally Ranked SC NEW JERSEY Star Library".



Clarence Dillon Public Library
Your Community Center



First Steps Basic English- LVSC's Role

As Lead Agency, LVSC:

- Coordinated Project Team & Defined Goals
- Hired Literacy Navigator, Stella Nieves:
 - Conduct community outreach, student assessment & enrollment.
 - Support student participation and success; liaison between instructors and students.
 - Connect students with relevant community resources.
- Developed Beginner Bootcamp Training for LVSC Tutors:
 - 16 tutors trained to teach beginners & use online curriculum



Cultural Connections – Phase 2



6-Week ESL Writing Workshop

- ▶ Promoting cross-cultural communication and understanding
- ▶ 12 student & 4 tutor participants

Reflections Booklet

- ▶ Students' written stories published
- ▶ [Read the booklet](#)

Luncheon and Panel Discussion

- ▶ Project celebration
- ▶ Student and tutor panelists
- ▶ 70 attended: volunteers, students, and supporters

Funded by:

NEW JERSEY COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES



**Literacy Volunteers
of Somerset County**

Behind the Scenes

Thank You, Staff!

Susan Engelstein, Program & Events Manager

Stella Nieves, Literacy Navigator

Lauren Randolph, Tutor Trainer

Lisa Ries, Student Success Manager



**Literacy Volunteers
of Somerset County**

Thank You, Board of Trustees

- 14 members strong
- 5 current/former tutors
- Diverse expertise
- All volunteers

Information
Technology

Actuary

Librarian

Financial
Advisor

CPAs

Immigration
Attorney

Local
Government

Workforce
Development

Pastor

Corporate
Communications

Social Policy
Foundation
Chair

Business
Development



**Literacy Volunteers
of Somerset County**



Welcome New Trustees

- ▶ Dana Ponciroli, Syensqo, Director – Employee Communications
- ▶ Peter Russell, CPA Inactive, Prudential Financial Retiree
- ▶ Cathy Peckens, MBA, Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine, Head of Technology - Cardiovascular

Thank You, Community Partners



Community Partner



Thank You, Donors

(July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)



\$1,000-\$2,499

- Exxon Mobile
- Pheasant Hill Foundation
- PSEG Foundation
- Thrivent Financial
- United Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills

\$2,500-\$4,999

- J&J Somerset County Companies HealthCare & Basic Needs Fund
- Nora Roberts Foundation

\$5,000-\$9,999

- Matching Gifts & Volunteer Grants*
- The Fred C. Rummel Foundation
- Ullmann Family Foundation

\$10,000-\$14,999

- Munich Re America
- New Jersey Council for the Humanities

\$15,000-\$19,999

- The George H. and Estelle M. Sands Foundation

\$20,000 - \$29,999

- Billian Family Charitable Foundation

\$30,000+

- Individual Donors
- Somerset County - American Rescue Plan Funds (Covid-relief funding)

*Matching Gifts & Volunteer Grants

- Exxon Mobile
- Johnson & Johnson
- Munich Re America
- Nationwide
- Prudential
- Thrivent Financial
- Verizon Foundation



Three FUNdraising Events
Net income: \$27,000

What's Next? Continue Growing, Together...



Move from Pilot to Program: First Steps Basic English. Seek continued funding. Operationalize program.

Keep on Training: Recruit and train new volunteer tutors. Expand pool of citizenship tutors and beginner-level tutors.

Continue Enhancing Tutor/ Student Support: Through Student Success Center programming.

Fund Development: Seek and maintain stable sources of funding to support operations and growth.



**Literacy Volunteers
of Somerset County**

*We are grateful to the
LVSC community and look
forward to another
meaningful year ahead.
Thank you!*