

Message from the Executive Director

“[Building your resilience](#),” published by the American Psychological Association, starts like this, “Imagine you’re going to take a raft trip down a river. Along with slow water and shallows, your map shows that you will encounter unavoidable rapids and turns. How would you make sure you can safely cross the rough waters and handle any unexpected problems that come from the challenge?”

“Perhaps you would enlist the support of more experienced rafters as you plan your route or rely on the companionship of trusted friends along the way. Maybe you would pack an extra life jacket or consider using a stronger raft. With the right tools and supports in place, one thing is sure: You will not only make it through the challenges of your river adventure. You will also emerge a more confident and courageous rafter.”

Resilience is defined as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress. It’s a learned behavior that can be developed. Short-term, it can cause emotional distress but the long-term benefit can be profound personal growth.

Building connections, taking care of your health, finding purpose in helping others, embracing healthy thoughts, and seeking help are all useful in building resilience.

I see evidence of organizational resilience at LVFV as tutors reimagine English lessons, students complete lessons, staff members develop supports, and board members navigate the program through the narrows.

It’s an amazing process to witness and I am sure we will be even stronger in the end. I’m honored to be part of it.



Peg Coker, Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

TUTOR TRAINING

MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS
SEPTEMBER 14, 16, 21, AND 23
6:30 PM TO 9:00 PM
POTTAWATOMIE COMMUNITY CENTER
ST. CHARLES
LIMITED TO SIX PARTICIPANTS SO SOCIAL DISTANCING CAN BE ACHIEVED

TUTOR TRAINING

TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS
OCTOBER 13, 15, 20, AND 22
6:30 PM TO 9:00 PM
POTTAWATOMIE COMMUNITY CENTER
ST. CHARLES
LIMITED TO SIX PARTICIPANTS SO SOCIAL DISTANCING CAN BE ACHIEVED

DONORS’ BREAKFAST

NOVEMBER
CANCELLED

TRIVIA BEE FOR LITERACY

TENTATIVE DATE: SATURDAY
MARCH 27
9:00 AM TO NOON
FONA INTERNATIONAL
GENEVA

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley

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 Find us on Facebook!

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 ProLiteracy

Students benefit from community support

Jose is a restaurant worker. He lives with his brother, sister-in-law, and their small child in a Batavia apartment complex. When the pandemic hit Kane County last March, Jose's brother contracted COVID-19 and was hospitalized. Jose, his sister-in-law, and his nephew were quarantined. Everyone lost their jobs. There was no source of income.

The story is not unique. Many of our students have faced or are still facing unemployment, food insecurity, and potential eviction as the pandemic continues. Thank goodness for the safety net of social services available in our community.

To help Jose, we reached out to Batavia United Way to see if they would deliver emergency groceries. Our program coordinator checked with local agencies to make sure they were in a position to help then gave Jose information about Batavia Interfaith Food Pantry and the Society of St. Vincent DePaul at Holy Cross. A week later, she followed up to see if he had luck getting through. Jose's tutor helped too and remained a constant source of encouragement.

We want to thank the agencies who provided services to our students in the spring and continue to provide services today. We also want to thank the Fox Valley Grant Makers COVID-19 Response Fund. This esteemed group of donors raised \$600,000 to provide rapid-response grants to nonprofit organizations so they could maintain operations and support the increased demand for services. While Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley did not receive funding, we benefited when we were able to direct our students to the agencies that the COVID-19 Response Fund kept afloat.

So what happened to Jose? His brother recovered. Jose did not contract COVID-19 and he was able to secure a job as a dishwasher at a Geneva restaurant. May all of our students have happy endings.

LVFV welcomes Amanda Kaiser joins the board



"I believe in the mission and wanted to be involved on a practical level." That's what guided Amanda Kaiser's decision to join the leadership team at LVFV. She was elected to the board of directors at our annual meeting last June, which was held electronically.

Amanda is technical services manager at the St. Charles Public Library. Everything the library lends passes through Amanda's department for cataloging.

Previously, she consulted to nine libraries through her work with the Library Integrated Network Consortium (LINC) and taught at College of DuPage. Early in her career, she established the library at the new Museum of Contemporary Art building in Chicago and supported museum curators in their research.

This blend of creative thinking and technical discipline makes Amanda a valuable board member. She has already applied her expertise to the Trivia Bee audio/visual presentation and offered countless ideas to our efforts.



A tutor who prefers to remain anonymous used her stimulus check to purchase 50-\$25 Aldi gift cards. She asked LVFV staff to send them to the students who needed them the most.

Board of Directors adopts COVID-19 safety guidelines

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley has adopted COVID-19 safety guidelines and health forms for staff, students, and volunteers. You will find them at <http://www.lfvv.org/volunteers/tutortools>

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley
COVID-19 Guidelines for Volunteers

These guidelines apply to volunteers who will meet with others on behalf of LVFV at inside or outside locations. They are adapted from Phase 3: Recovery, Restore Illinois Office Guidelines issued by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and were approved by our board of directors on 6/17/2020.

I'm OK, you're OK
Monitor Your Health

Before meeting another person, conduct a self-assessment to make sure you are not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.

1. Take your temperature before leaving your home. Do you have a temperature of 100°F or higher?
2. Within the past 14 days, have you experienced cold or flu-like symptoms that are associated with COVID-19 such as: fever, cough, body aches, or difficulty breathing?
3. Within the past 14 days, have you been in close contact with a person who is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or has been diagnosed with COVID-19?
4. Within the past 14 days, have you been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have you been asked to self-quarantine?

If the answer is yes to any of the questions above, postpone your visit for at least 14 days after the start of your symptoms. Contact our program coordinator. Contact your health provider if your symptoms get worse. Volunteers should not work on behalf of LVFV if sick or asymptomatic.

CAUTION BE ALERT

If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, you must inform our program coordinator immediately and provide a list of the people you have come in contact with for volunteer purposes for the past 14 days so they can be notified. You may return to volunteering with a doctor's release.

The Basic Five General Guidelines

Continue to follow Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines:

1. Wear a face covering over your nose and mouth when you are within six feet of others. *Exclusion: You do not need a face covering when you are with the support of the program coordinator.*
2. A social distance of at least six feet should be maintained between individuals who do not live in the same household.
3. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.
4. Sanitize the chair, table, or work area you will be occupying by wiping it down with disinfecting wipes.
5. Follow any other guidelines that have been adopted by the library, park district, business, or other building location that you are visiting.

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The guidelines suggest ways to monitor your health before leaving home to meet with anyone on our behalf. The health form provides a checklist that leads to a declaration of good health. The form is available in English and Spanish. If a tutor and student would like to translate the form to another language, we will gratefully accept your offer!

Once you reach your destination, the basic practices found in the document will help you limit the spread of germs.

Staff members, students, or volunteers who have been diagnosed or exposed to COVID-19 should inform our program coordinator so she can inform the people you met (within HIPAA privacy rules). We also ask you to quarantine.

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley is following advice issued by the CDC and "Restore Illinois." Guidelines will be updated as Illinois' COVID-19 situation changes. A little extra effort will keep all of us COVID-free.

Tutors find alternatives to indoor lessons

When libraries and other public locations closed their meeting rooms in March, our tutors were left without indoor teaching space but this didn't stop them. Tutors and students are finding ways to continue their lessons.

Video Conferencing - Our program coordinator is familiar with Zoom, What's App Video, and FaceTime. She can help get tutors and students connected with these free apps as long as they have the appropriate hardware and internet access.

Meeting Outdoors - There are many places that tutor/student pairs can meet al fresco. Parks have picnic tables and relaxing views. Local cities have blocked streets and set up dining tables that are empty at certain times of the day. Some libraries have outdoor seating. To hold a "tailgate lesson" a tutor and student will toss a couple of chairs in the car, scout out an empty parking lot, pop the trunk, and social distance six feet using their car as a measure of width. Have classroom will travel!

Cooler weather will soon drive tutors and students indoors. Realizing that libraries may not open their meeting space by October, we are seeking alternative indoor meeting space. We would also like to purchase some computers that we can loan to students for longer periods of time. If you can help, contact peg@lvfv.org.



Rosemary Henders and her student meet at a dining table in Batavia.

We ask tutors, “How have your lessons changed in recent months?”

“I met Elly at one of the community picnic tables downtown this morning. I was pleased that she had not lost any ground during our hiatus. We just picked up right where we left off. She has been one busy lady. Not only is she still working for the bridal shop (when they closed down she took 40 dresses home with her to work on) but she has started a custom face mask business. She’s absolutely unstoppable.” R.H.

“Olga and I did not meet during the stay at home phase of COVID. We began meeting again in July. Her vehicle needs repairs, but there is no money to fix it right now, so meeting at McDonald’s means she can walk the two blocks to meet for class. Olga was post-tested in June and found to have lost a lot of her English. I guess a couple of months of no class really impacts it! We have been working on questions, which she really needs for work and communicating with her chef. She wants to be able to understand her boss at work and communicate with people at numerous doctors’ offices she has been to lately.” A.K.

“Having Eric as a student has been a true godsend during this pandemic. I’m very cautious about leaving my home but weather permitting, we meet on my front porch. As neighbors pass by walking their dogs, I try to engage him in sidewalk chatter. He is fairly comfortable listening to me, but needs practice with others.” S.M.

“I would say that we meet more regularly with these remote meetings – childcare is not a problem for Sinan. Initially, we were working on a vowel sound each week so for 10 weeks we reviewed flashcards I made and then I sent a video on the phone so she could review them during the week. Right now, our main focus is working out of ‘All New Very Easy True Stories.’ We are doing a unit a week. She doesn’t know when she might be able to take the citizenship test again because of COVID.” M.S.

“Being a fairly new citizen, Miguel has never voted in a U.S. election so I brought him information about requesting a mail-in ballot for himself and his children. I know he would be much more comfortable and confident voting from home on paper rather than facing strangers and figuring out voting machines. I will be following up with him next week to see where he is in this process and if he has any concerns. As of now, things are going smoothly (meeting outside) but not sure what we are going to do once the weather turns.” A.L.

“FaceTime was good because both my students had iPhones. But the images on FaceTime are smaller (phone size). It’s easy to jostle or drop your phone and the images keep blipping out when you get a text or news update. Zoom was better. Juanita has been working through ‘More True Stories’ and ‘Even More True Stories.’ She told me she feels her vocabulary is growing. Before the pandemic, we did many other activities but True Stories is our primary source during the pandemic.

“As for Katarine, FaceTime worked fine for her, and I’ll bet Zoom will, too; however, she opted to take July and August off because she is busy with her children who are home for the summer. She plans to try to resume in the fall when her children return to (virtual?) classes.

“As with all things, we’ll adapt to whatever the pandemic throws at us next.” L.Z.

Want more information about Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley?

For more information about:

- Being a tutor
- Being a student
- Making a financial donation
- Sharing your ideas

visit our website www.lfvf.org and click on **Contact Us**.
We look forward to hearing from you!

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