

lovetoread News

Volume 6, No. 2 Fall 2007

Literacy: Breaking the Cycle of Poverty & Crime

Not being able to read almost ruined the life of an LVT student recently. Already more than a little familiar with the legal system, “Joey” had a close call, caused just because he couldn’t read.

When he was released from prison a year ago, Joey signed some papers that he couldn’t read. These papers said that he had to report to a probation officer once a month. Because he couldn’t read, he didn’t realize this. A year later, he received an affidavit in the mail for his arrest.

Simultaneously, his disability checks had stopped without his knowing why, and because he couldn’t pay his rent, Joey was in danger of being evicted and homeless.

At this point, he had an LVT tutor, who pointed him to the library and assistive technology designed for people with reading and writing disabilities.

The computer scans documents and then reads them back aloud. With the information he learned, Joey sought help. Both his landlord and the LVT Basic Literacy Program Manager



Illiteracy: Can we really afford it?

wrote letters on his behalf, explaining that he was not able to read at the level required to understand the documents he had signed. Thanks to these letters, the judge ruled that Joey should be allowed to continue on probation rather than return to prison.

Low literacy is a root cause of poverty and crime

Illiteracy is crippling our country and the consequences are dire. Some 70% of prisoners in the state prison system are illiterate. At least half of all adults who live in poverty are functionally illiterate. Of the homeless, 65% have an eighth-grade education or less. In Arizona, nearly one in five adults can’t read well enough to understand the instructions to fill out a job application. Nationally, 43% are at the basic or below basic level of literacy, yet 80% of the fastest growing jobs require some post-secondary education.

Success from mom (or dad)

In a paper presented at a national family literacy conference in March 2007, Tom Sticht, an international consultant in Adult Education, analyzed research over the past 35 years. He concluded that evidence overwhelm-

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Time is running out...

... the window of opportunity closes December 31, 2007!

Are you 70 1/2 years old and required to take a minimum distribution from your traditional or Roth IRA? Then you don’t want to miss the opportunity to minimize the taxes you have to pay this year AND help Literacy Volunteers at the same time.

The “Pension Protection Act of 2006” created a new way for you to give to charity, but only for tax years 2006 and 2007. Since 2007 is almost over, it’s time for you to act.

You need to check with your tax professional to be sure, but here are a few of the basics:

- You may take **up to \$100,000 from your IRA** and give it to your favorite charity(s).
- You must be **at least 70 1/2**.
- Donations must be in **cash** (no securities, merchandise, etc.).
- Your IRA custodian-administrator must make the **donation directly from your IRA to the charity(s)**. (The

check must be payable to the charity and mailed directly to the charity.)

- The amount you donate is applied to your minimum required distribution.
- The amount you give via IRA Rollover **reduces your adjusted gross income** on your 1040. Depending upon your personal financial situation, the IRA Rollover may be more advantageous than claiming a deduction on Schedule A. You may only claim it once, on the

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Our Mission

Literacy Volunteers of Tucson believes that everyone should have the opportunity to learn to read. We exist to improve, free of charge, the reading, writing and English-speaking skills of adults who read at or below the sixth grade level. We bring together dedicated adult learners and committed, well-trained volunteers who provide instruction to address the individual needs and goals of the students in a confidential manner.

To Help Children, You Have to Help Their Parents...



Did your grades in school make a difference in your life today? Mine certainly didn't, but the education I received *has* made a huge difference. My life would be unrecognizable today without the excellent education I received, which is the basis for literally everything that I do.

Here at Literacy Volunteers of Tucson we are focusing on assisting adults to learn in order to improve their lives. Neither they nor we are very concerned with grades or grade levels. When students report that their English is now good enough that they are no longer afraid to shop alone or that they are now able to talk to their child's teacher or doctor, we know a life has been improved. When we know that a student has gotten a job or a better job, we celebrate! Improving lives is the core of our mission.

As exciting as each student's progress is, what is even more exciting is the ripple effect caused by their learning. As parents learn, doors open not just for them but for their children. Dr. Thomas Sticht, an adult education researcher, recently

said that, "The best educational investment for at-risk children is to invest in the education of the adults in their lives." We are so very grateful to our volunteers and donors whose investments of time and money are doing this **double duty** as LVT's students improve their lives as well as those of their children. Is there any more rewarding return on an investment? Not that I have experienced.

If you are not already feeling the joy of this investment, I hope you will consider tutoring or making a donation. Join me at the lovetoread Fundraising Breakfast on November 7 (see p. 3) and hear directly from one of our adult learners how her life has changed—yours might, too!

Betty Stauffer, LSW
Executive Director

Bad News & Good News

Andy Davidson, LVT's Volunteer/Community Resources Coordinator, has left due to health reasons. We miss him and his wonderful, warm smile and personality and wish him the best and a speedy return to health.

We are happy to introduce **Lisa Kemper**, who began in early September as LVT's Volunteer/Community Resources Coordinator. Most recently Lisa was the Manager of the Green Valley Community Food Bank, where she



worked with 150 volunteers annually and increased significantly the services provided to clients. Before moving to Arizona she directed a small arts organization in Missouri, which she moved from struggling to thriving. Literacy is one of Lisa's passions as she herself has struggled with reading and needed a tutor to complete college. We look forward to incorporating her skills and energy into the programs at LVT.

www.lovetoread.org

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LVT is an accredited affiliate of ProLiteracy America, a non-profit organization that combats illiteracy through a network of community volunteer literacy programs.



LVT Holds Annual Fundraiser

No golf tournaments, no banquets, no silent auctions. Literacy Volunteers of Tucson has one event a year to raise money, its **lovetoread** breakfast, underwritten totally by Bookmans.

We would like to extend an invitation to all our donors, including tutors, to join us at 7:30 a.m. on November 7 for breakfast.

This year, we've moved the event to the **InnSuites**. With this move, we hope to facilitate parking. We'll also have a regular hot breakfast.

If you'd like to attend, please call the LVT office at 882-8006 **no later than October 29. If you don't have a reservation, you won't have a breakfast!**

You're Invited!

Our Annual *lovetoread* Breakfast

Who: Anyone interested in supporting LVT's mission

What: **Breakfast**, with our new film and a student speaker who will talk about the difference LVT has made to her

Where: InnSuites, 475 N. Granada Ave., Tucson (Copper Room)

When: **Wednesday, November 7, 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m.**

Why: To provide funds for recruiting, training and supporting tutors for LVT

Thanks: To Bookmans for its support of this breakfast.



Reserve your place by **Oct. 29** at 882-8006.

LVT extends its gratitude to
Pima Federal Credit Union
for its ongoing support.



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Literacy: Breaking the Cycle of Poverty & Crime

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ingly supports investing in the education of adults to improve the education of children. His full presentation is available on our Website (lovetoread.org). Here are a few of his findings:

For 30 years test scores for our young people have been essentially flat. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics show students were no more literate in 2004 than in 1971, though many billions of dollars were spent to improve reading skills.

Many studies since the 1972 National Assessment of Educational Progress have shown a direct relationship between parents' education and the reading skills of their children. Regardless of the type of reading skill assessed, as parents' education increased, their children's reading proficiency increased.

Adult literacy education has a "multiplier effect" on health, community activities, productivity at work and on children's attitudes toward education and their achievement in school. Investments in adult literacy education give "double duty dollars".

Together we can make a difference

The Tucson Regional Town Hall in May 2007 placed literacy among its priorities. Participants intend to "adopt the goal of making everyone literate regardless of immigrant status."

Our community is beginning to understand that illiteracy is a cause of poverty and crime. As the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona, Social Venture Partners, Barbara LaWall and the Pima County Attorney's Office, the Chamber of Commerce and other key players in our community embrace our vision that everyone should have the opportunity to learn to read, we have the power to effect change.

Joey now has visiting rights with his children. Before, he didn't know what to do with them. Thanks to his work with LVT, he now takes his children to the library on their visiting days.

With the support of tutors, donors and the community, LVT can continue to help people like Joey **before** they go to prison. *-Bobby Rothschild*

Tutor Training Schedule	
At the LVT office, 1948 E. Allen Rd.	
(Registration required!)	
ELAA Tutor Training	10/6, 9-3 * 10/13, 9-3 * 11/10, 1-4
Basic Literacy Training	10/20, 9-12:30 10/27, 9-12:30 11/17, 9-12:30
Orientation	10/23, 5:30-7 11/13, 5:30-7 12/4, 5:30-7
Basic Literacy Training	12/6, 1-4:30 12/13, 1-4:30 1/5/2008, 9-12:30
ELAA Tutor Training	1/12/2008, 9-3 * 1/19, 9-3 * 2/16, 9-12
*30 minutes for lunch. Bring your own!	

New Year, New Cost

Effective January 1, 2008, the cost of LVT tutor training for Basic Literacy and for English Language Acquisition for Adults (ELAA) will be \$50.00 a person, with no membership fee.

For those who want the training but do not tutor with LVT, the cost will be \$100.00 a person.

For those who are not able to afford the cost of training, a scholarship will be available.

The increase is necessary to cover costs of materials, now that LVT has left State funding. As only a part of the actual training cost is offset by the fee, LVT will happily accept additional contributions.

We Celebrate Our Students

At this year's Celebration of Learning on September 29, the recipients of the **Dick & Jane Student Achievement Awards**, in honor of Dick & Jane Evans, longtime LVT supporters and retired teachers, were:

English Language Acquisition for Adults (ELAA):



Gloria Torres, left, and Lourdes Quintero, right, both students of Patty Urbanski at Lynn/Urquides Elementary School (Photos by Patty Urbanski)



A difficult decision for the ELAA award, Dick and Jane chose two, both from Patty Urbanski's class at Lynn/Urquides Elementary School. Gloria Torres is best described as the model student, completing homework, helping others in class, asking tough questions. Lourdes Quintero is a storyteller who put others in the class at ease and got them talking, giving Patty ideas for approaches to teaching.

Basic Literacy:



Irene Montiel (left) has been working with tutor Pat Ackert for more than a year to improve her writing skills.

Honorable mention goes to Terry Ruiz (tutor: Pat Pyron) and Mary Bergbigler (tutor: Sharon Hunter).

Literacy Volunteers of Tucson named its Students of the Year:

Basic Literacy:



Doug Hardesty has tutored with Bill Hanson for about four years. After dropping out of school after the tenth grade and not being able to hold a job, Doug has had the same job for more than four years, has had a promotion, and has completed his GED. Now, it's on to college.

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ELAA:



Nam Hee Kim has worked with Jackie Conrad for about four years. A radiologist in South Korea, she arrived with her husband, a UA doctoral student, with very limited English. Now, she speaks and writes much more fluently. Both her daughters were born here.

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**English in the Workplace:
 A Success Story**

An after-hours English class at Arizona Post Tension is providing another “win-win” situation for Literacy Volunteers of Tucson: successful students better able to communicate (in English) at work, a happy tutor, and a supportive company that understands the value of workers who can express themselves well.

Last year LVT received a call from Tammy Curtiss, the office manager at Arizona Post Tension, a Tucson company that helps build structures to last. Before a house or other building is begun, cables are laid out and then tightened. Concrete is poured over the cables for the slab. This technique prevents the foundation of the building from cracking. In one case, Tammy explained, the earth under a corner of a house was washed away, but the building remained intact, thanks to this technique.



Students on the job cause their English was not good enough. Tammy felt these were hard-working men and wanted to help them, so she called around until she found LVT. Classes began in January 2007 with 12 employees.

To work with the group, LVT sent Karen Kivel, a part-time grade-school teacher. Karen had high praise for Tammy and John Hensley, the owner, who were most supportive and helpful. “Some supervisors have noticed that the men under-



Students at Arizona Post Tension celebrate tutor Karen Kivel's birthday. (Photos: Tammy Curtiss)

stand better,” Karen said. This, even though the class only ran five months and met two times a week for an hour and a half.

And Tammy has also noticed a tremendous improvement in several of the students. “They’re more apt to try and speak English,” she said. “They’re now better able to communicate in the field, with inspectors, job superintendents and foremen.”

“It was a group of such nice men, who wanted to learn and who *did* learn,” Karen beamed. “I had a lot of fun.” The site began again September 17. Following last year’s success Karen will have a second tutor, Roger Funk, helping her this year.

LVT Has New Partner

LVT becomes one of the first two investees of the newly formed Social Venture Partners of Greater Tucson (SVP). Through a competitive grant process SVP selected LVT for a capacity building partnership because of our vision for growth over the next three to five years and our ability to embrace collaboration with the high-level volunteers from SVP.



Mark Your Calendar
Bookmans Super Event
 Nov. 3, Reid Park

Literacy Volunteers of Tucson participates in most **United Way** campaigns, including Combined Federal Contributions (CFC), Pima County and Tucson ECAP and UA Cares.

Acknowledgements & Memorials

In Memoriam

LVT has received donations in memory of the following:

David Berkey
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 Christine Peters
 Aurelia R. Preciado
 Beth Ellen Slee
 Beth K. Stocker
 Myrna Strelinger
 Raymond E. White, Jr., PhD



We gratefully acknowledge donations in honor of:

Christine Ballew
 Claude Cunningham's
 100th Birthday!
 Dr. Leonard Plotkin
 on his 82nd birthday
 Diane Senders
 Mary P. Wixted



Time is running out...

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Schedule A *or* as the IRA Rollover, but not both. Ask your tax advisor.

You win big because you may significantly reduce your adjusted gross income and reduce your taxes in 2007. We win big because your generosity will help others learn to read and write.

More details are available from the Center for Planned Giving at the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona, Lori Hoby, Executive Director, 545-1117, ext. 107, or Mary Billings at LVT, 882-8006.



Leave a Legacy of Literacy

You can provide a lasting legacy to literacy, a gift that continues to give. After you've taken care of your loved ones, support your community by becoming a member of the **LVT Literacy Legacy Society** and remembering LVT in

your estate plan! Just call Betty Stauffer or Mary Billings at 882-8006 for details.

Our thanks to those who have participated or are participating in LVT's Literacy Legacy Society.

Literacy Volunteers of Tucson thanks current Literacy Legacy Society members:

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Estate of Jean D. Harle
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