



Literacy of Northern New York St. Lawrence County Office

Winter 2012

January 1, 2012

Recognition Celebration Scheduled

*A belated wish for the
Holiday Season*



*May the New Year be
a time of happiness
and good health for
you and those you
love.*

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Our **annual recognition celebration** will be held in the Potsdam Community meeting room on **January 28 from 9:30 AM—noon**. All tutors are invited and encouraged to bring their learner. There will be social time to meet and chat with others, entertainment, some “fun and games” and even a time for questions.

We'll begin with a pot luck brunch; beverages will be provided. Plan to bring your favorite dish to share, and learners, too, may bring a contribution if they wish. In past years, some ESL learners have brought some tasty and interesting “ethnic” foods. This is a chance to get acquainted with oth-

ers who participate in adult literacy and to celebrate our successes. You may not know other people who share your interest in helping someone improve their literacy skills, and this is your opportunity to become acquainted with some other wonderful tutors and with the terrific learners we are helping. It's also a time for the learners to see that they aren't the only ones receiving help.

Please RSVP before January 25 by calling Bobby at 265-0194, emailing us at lvastlaw@hotmail.com, or by mailing a note to Literacy of Northern NY, 2 Park St. , Potsdam, NY 13676. Let us know

whether you'll be able to come, and also whether your learner can attend. You are welcome with or without a learner, and learners can come even if their tutors can't join them. So if you can't make it, you should still invite your learner and tell us who's coming



Three cheers for you and your student!

Tutoring Hours are Due

At the end of each quarter, we ask all tutors to let us know how things are going with their students. Among the information we ask for is how many hours you spent with the student, how much time you spent preparing for your meetings,

and how much time spent in travel.

In addition, we ask about what you're doing together, and whether your student has obtained a job or a better job, entered any kind of training, gotten a driver's

license or library card or experienced any major changes in his/her life. If you've not already done so, please go online to our website, or email this information to us **BEFORE the END of January**. THANKS so much for your help.

St. Lawrence County Office to Offer Revised Version of Tutor Training

Literacy NY, our state adult literacy organization, has revised and improved the method for training new tutors. Four St. Lawrence County trainers recently spent three days in Syracuse learning to provide this training here in the North Country. Bobby Gordon, Jutta Fitzsimons, Leah Zelkowitz and Robin Rhodes-Crowell will co-teach interested St. Lawrence County residents how to use research-based techniques for instruction of adults.

We're very excited about being

able to offer this revised version of the training. It will give the new tutors even better preparation for helping adults to improve their reading, writing, math or oral English skills. In addition the new version includes superior information-gathering methods so tutors will receive more information to help them provide the best instruction for their students.

It is possible for previously trained tutors to attend the revamped training for a refresher if

they wish, but this is not required. Anyone with questions about the new training is welcome to call the literacy office at 265-0194.

We need a laptop, projector, portable screen, and some other materials in order to be able to do this new training in our county. We are seeking funding so we can purchase these items.

Our website—better than ever

If you haven't visited our website (www.proliteracynny.org) lately, take a few minutes to do so. You'll find lots of help when planning lessons for your student. Among the resources on the website are links to techniques for instruction in reading, math and ELL. There are also excellent "tutor tips" - ideas for maintaining your learner's involvement, starting a lesson, teaching

phonics, etc. Technology and online learning websites and links are also included. Looking for a great recipe? You can even find some of those on the website. Information is presented about ongoing and upcoming events, what's happening with some of our tutors and students, and opportunities for improving your tutoring skills. Don't miss out on something that could

make your tutoring life easier and more fun.

Literacy of Northern NY's website is updated regularly and is YOUR resource for what's new and exciting in adult literacy in St. Lawrence County.

Coming Soon

Online course to help you improve your student's computer skills

In the near future, we will be sending you information about going online to be trained so you can help your student become computer literate. Not computer literate yourself? Well—this free online resource could be just what you've been looking for. Tutors have the opportunity to take an online training course to learn a new computer curriculum to teach basic skills to your learner.

The course only takes a few hours to complete and you can do it from home. Then you are ready to work on basic computer skills with your learner. If you are interested, contact Bobby by email or phone.

If you're in or near Potsdam, you may not know about the free computer classes at the Potsdam Public Computer Center, which is in the library building. There are classes or one-to-one help.

They help with basic computer functions, job searches, resume writing and more! At the center you and/or your student can learn how to use the internet, Microsoft Office programs or many of the free open source software programs that are available. Contact the center with questions by calling Potsdam Library at 265-7230 or visit their website through a link on the Potsdam Public Library website: www.potsdamlibrary.org

Restaurant gift certificate raffle

You, our volunteer tutors, are the backbone of this organization, and your hard work makes it possible for us to help our students. Unfortunately, there is a cost associated with recruiting and training tutors, recruiting and assessing students, and supporting the work that you and your student do. The funds we've traditionally received from government sources have been severely reduced, and we must do some fund raising in order to be able to continue to offer free tutoring to the adults in St. Lawrence County for whom these services are so critically important. Last summer, we solicited gift certificates from area restaurants, and then we

conducted a raffle to give away these certificates. Five lucky winners each received certificates worth approximately \$80.



We plan to conduct a raffle again this year, and we need your help.

Gift certificates from all areas of the county are needed, so if you frequent a restaurant in your area and they would be willing to donate a gift certificate, we would like to include it in our raffle. The restaurant would be mentioned in publicity about the event, and of course the restaurant would benefit when the winner of their certificate brings others along when using it.

If you can help with this fund raiser in any way, please let us know.

Congratulations to our December Student of the Month!

Jennifer Duranceau was featured on the Literacy of Northern NY website (www.proliteracynny.org) in December as "Student of the Month." She was chosen for this honor because of her enthusiasm and dedication to her studies. Jennifer began working with her tutor, Odile Lacomb, in February, 2011. She praised her tutor, saying "She can explain things so I can under-

stand it. She's very easygoing and doesn't get frustrated with me." Jennifer is considering the possibility of choosing a vocation, something she previously never thought possible. She recently visited the Department of Labor and had an assessment of her aptitude for various kinds of jobs, and she was encouraged to think that someday she might be a conservation worker or work in food preparation. She always

comes early for her appointments and does her homework faithfully.

Jennifer "works very hard on her own. It's important for her to get things right instead of fast," her tutor said.

What has YOUR student learned? Help us find out.

For the next few months, we'll be busy finding out how much each of our students has learned through working with you. It is *essential* that we do this with each student, even if they've only been tutored for a few months. Everyone must meet with me before the end of June, but we begin this process now to be sure we finish in time. If your student

will be leaving the area, or leaving the program soon, PLEASE let us



know so we can make an appointment with them BEFORE they leave. If your student is going to continue in the program, our meeting with them could give us information that would help you plan future lessons, and we will pass that along to you. Please encourage your student to make and keep an appointment with us sometime soon.

Welcome to our New Tutors

On October 19, 2011, 11 new tutors completed their training and received their certificates of completion. They are all matched with students now and putting their training to use. One of them recently sent us an email, saying, "It has brought great joy to my life, being able to teach again." We sincerely hope all of you are enjoying your experiences with your student.

The new tutors come from many different areas of St. Lawrence County, and we hope future trainings can also include people from various parts of our area,

since our students live in many different sections.

If you know anyone who might enjoy tutoring, either basic literacy or English Language Learning, PLEASE encourage them to give us a call (265-0194) or email us at lvastlaw@hotmail.com to let us know they're interested and to ask any questions they may have. We will be training a new group of tutors in late winter—early spring, and as always, the demand for tutors exceeds the supply. If you would consider working with an additional student, please let us know, as we have a waiting list and would like to be able to match these people soon.

The new tutors, pictured here with some of those who participated as trainers, include Pam Boyle, Barbara Cooper, Dawn Merna, Ann Sullivan, Elizabeth McGregor, Kimberlee Hill, Skye Sharp, Justin Bland, Carol Halliday, Kathy Morse, and Michael Roach.



Literacy of Northern NY

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