



VOCAL NEWS



Literacy Volunteers of Illinois



The 28th Annual On the Road to Literacy took place this year at the UIC Campus co-hosted by Literacy Volunteers of Illinois and the UIC Center for Literacy. This particular year drew in a group of over 200 volunteer tutors, adult literacy students, and program staff. During the day, On the Road

attendees would pick and choose from a myriad of 24 workshop topics all with the mindset of improving their tutoring practices, learning creative approaches to storytelling, or becoming more aware of restorative justice practices.



Ben Greer III from Illinois Community College Board delivering the Opening Session Speech

During registration volunteer medical students from New Life Volunteering Society were on hand to check blood pressure, BMI, and glucose. Attendees were invited to make their way to the auditorium. The day of events started with an Opening Session led by Ben Greer III, the Associate Director for Adult Education and Literacy for Illinois Community College Board. Ben Greer was the emcee for the first ever Awards Ceremony at LVI's On the Road to Literacy.

The first round of workshops started promptly and covered topics ranging from pronunciation and fluency

to restorative justice practices inside classrooms. The workshops continued during round two which covered

topics from health literacy to Outcome Performance Measures. After the two workshops, attendees left the rooms buzzing and ready for lunch. During lunch attendees had the option the option of participating in five different lunch topics. These workshops allowed the tutors, staff, and volunteers to engage in more open format discussions about advocacy, volunteerism, lesson planning etc. One of the attendees hailed the lesson planning lunch topic led by Becky DeForest from Literacy Works as the best part of their day.



Becky DeForest from Literacy Works during the day's workshops

The final workshops concluded with topics covering transitions, vision boards, classroom dynamics, etc. All workshops were favorably reviewed by attendees both new and returning. Some of these workshops marked the second speaking engagement for some of our speakers.

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From the Executive Director...

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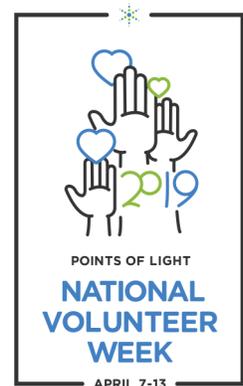
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National Volunteer Week is here !

Celebrate Service is the theme of this year's National Volunteer Week, which is an annual celebration to say "Thank You" to America's volunteers. Typically celebrated during the month of April this year's National Volunteer Week is this week - April 7th – 13th.



For those of us in the literacy field, National Volunteer Week is the perfect time for us to celebrate and say "thank you" to our tutors who, week after week, provide valuable services to our students, as well as thanking the many other volunteers who provide service in so many other ways that helps us keep our programs and organizations strong and vibrant.

National Volunteer Week has been with us since 1974 when President Richard Nixon signed the first proclamation declaring the third week of April Volunteer Week. Every president after him followed suit. The official sponsor of this national celebration is the now global Points of Light (POL) organization, which was founded by President Bush in 1990. The have on their web site a variety of materials for use during National Volunteer Week including downloadable logos, as the one shown above, flyers, banners and a "Toolkit" that offers Media Outreach Tips & sample Media Advisories, Proclamations, and Recruitment Messages—<https://www.pointsoflight.org/nvw-toolkit/>

"We can find meaning and reward by serving some higher purpose than ourselves, a shining purpose, the illumination of a thousand points of light... we all have something to give.."

*President George H.W. Bush,
Founder of Points of Light*

Many host sites may already have events planned for National Volunteer Week. If yours is not one of them, there is still time for you to recognize your volunteers this week, but consider also—beyond this week. The Points of Light offers a daily Point of Light Award—the process is simple and can be done through their web site.

Closer to home, consider nominating your volunteers for a Volunteer of the Week award, which is sponsored by Serve Illinois, the funding body of the VOCAL program,. Every Monday, Serve Illinois highlights the selfless work of one of our state's great volunteers on their web site and social media - Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We've had three of our Jump Start volunteers recognized ! Their process is a simple one as well and can be done on their web site - serve.illinois.gov. View past winners on their site, and, if you're not already connected with them on their social media sites, you can do that through their web site as well.

#NVW is the hashtag for National Volunteer Week.

28th Annual On the Road to Literacy 2019 (Cont.)



Melissa Marie Tuason from the South-East Asia Center receiving the Outstanding Tutor of the Year Award.



Juan Salgado, Chancellor for the City Colleges of Chicago, delivers the Keynote Address during he Closing Session



Araceli Angeles from Literacy Chicago receiving the June C. Porter Student is at the Top Award.

Some of our AmeriCorps members, Timothy White and Aurora Lucas, spearheaded their own workshops on topics such as Restorative Justice in the classrooms and Meaningful Interactions. Aside from our AmeriCorps members leading workshops, there was an AmeriCorps member present at each workshop ensuring all speakers had everything they needed.

After a full day of workshops and lunch time topics, On the Road attendees made their way to the auditorium for the closing session and awards ceremony. Seats were filled and ready to hear the keynote speaker, Juan Salgado - Chancellor for the City Colleges of Chicago. Before this year's Keynote Speaker, Dorothy M. Miaso (LVI's Executive Director) and Ruby Camacho (UIC Center for Literacy Associate Director) delivered opening addresses to a nearly packed room. They both spoke of the longstanding reputation and presence that this conference has in the Adult Literacy community in the city and even across the state.

The Keynote speech at the 28th annual On the Road to Literacy marked one of the first speaking engagements for new Chancellor Juan Salgado. During his speech, Juan Salgado remarked on his past roles at Instituto del Progreso Latino and spoke about his current role as Chancellor, a role which he has held for two years. He ended his Keynote address looking to the future not only of his role but of the educational community at large. The closing session ended with the awards presentation recognizing tutors from different programs across the state. This year's Outstanding Tutor of the Year Award went to Melissa Marie Tuason from the South-East Asia Center. There were a staggering twenty-one volunteer nomination this year. This was the second year that the Student Is at the Top Award in honor of June C. Porter was awarded to Araceli Angeles from Literacy Chicago.

They Keynote Speaker, Juan Salgado, was gracious enough to stick around after the awards ceremony and speak with some attendees. At the end of the conference, attendees went home with new found learning and/or tutoring skills as well as some new reads from the book give-away. One first time attendee was already looking forward to next year's On the Road to Literacy.

Thank you to all the AmeriCorps members, LVI staff and board, UIC Center for Literacy volunteers and staff, and the OTR Planning Committee for making the 28th annual On the Road to Literacy a success.



LVI AmeriCorps members serving at the VFW Rhine Hall



LVI AmeriCorps members serving at the VFW Rhine Hall



LVI AmeriCorps members serving at the Thompson



AmeriCorps Week (March 10th - March 16th) is dedicated to showcasing the work that AmeriCorps members perform throughout the county as well as showcasing the program itself.

VOCAL* AmeriCorps members were able to highlight and bring awareness to work they were doing throughout their service year by participating in a recruitment effort as well as a service project.

AmeriCorps encourages interconnectivity during this week by sharing the stories of our service across different networks. VOCAL member were able to participate in raising awareness, as well as encourage this interconnectivity by participating in the 12th Annual Recruitment and information Fair at the James R. Thompson Center. Twelve different LVI host sites were represented by members: Literacy Volunteers of Illinois, Jump Start at the IYCs, Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition, Centro Sin Fronteras, Chinese Mutual Aid, Waubunsee College, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Centro Romero, Anixter Association House, Literacy Chicago, Literacy Works, and World Relief Chicago, Aurora and DuPage. In addition to these organizations, LVI invited other AmeriCorps programs to participate in this recruitment effort, joining LVI at the Thompson Center were Public Allies and Chicago Hopes for Kids.

The goal of the 12th Annual Recruitment Fair was to promote national service in our community while also giving host sites a platform through which they could raise awareness for their host site and increase volunteer and student learner recruitment. During that day AmeriCorps members were able to engage with over 50 community members. Besides these 50 engagements, the presence of AmeriCorps members allowed for visibility of the program in a high traffic area.

The following day, on March 12th, at the Rhine VFW post 2729 six VOCAL* AmeriCorps member took part in a clean up project as a part of AmeriCorps week. This was the same site where VOCAL* AmeriCorps completed their service project as a part of the Serving those who Served initiative. The day started early as members

mopped, swept, and dusted around. The veterans were glad to have the help and it was a great opportunity to showcase the VOCAL* AmeriCorps program. This not only helped AmeriCorps member complete their service project but fostered the relationship between LVI and the Rhine hall.

AmeriCorps members across the state were building visibility for their programming and AmeriCorps at large. Members from Kewanee were at the Salvation Army and YMCA during AmeriCorps week playing a part in the collected efforts of members across the country.

Member Spotlight



Olivia Landon was born and raised in Evanston but attended University in Los Angeles. She recently moved back after graduation from school and she is currently serving as an Adult English Instructor at Instituto del Progreso Latino. Apart from teaching ESL classes, Olivia also teaches Computer Literacy classes and Citizenship classes on Saturdays. She keeps her classes interactive by introducing a variety of activities, such as games, TV shows, and YouTube series. She notes that they are particularly fond of *The Bachelor* and *Jane the Virgin*. In this way, Olivia is not only exposing them to spoken English but also to a new culture, specifically a culture that is so heavily based on visual information.

Before her time at AmeriCorps, Olivia was attending college at Occidental College having majored in Critical Theory and Social Justice and minored in Media Arts and Culture. She heard about AmeriCorps through her college. For a while she worked at a public school but it was not her preferred environment, she enjoys working with adults. In her current position, it is these adults that make up an environment where relationships can thrive. One of the highlights of Olivia's work is the relationships she has made not only with her students but also with her fellow AmeriCorps members. She also loves seeing her students feel proud of themselves as they both learn more about each other and the world. When asked about the challenges she faces, Olivia said she likes to focus on the positive and is always looking for ways to improve instead of focusing on the challenges.

Outside of her work with AmeriCorps, Olivia enjoys dog walking and is even excited about starting her own dog walking business in the near future. She also enjoys painting and drawing. After her time at AmeriCorps, Olivia would like to continue serving in a teaching capacity. She is looking to get ESL certified and teach all over the world. She sees herself receiving ESL certification abroad through an American University sponsored program in Latin America.



Instituto del Progreso Latino is an educational organization whose mission is to contribute to the fullest development of Latino immigrants and their families through education, training and employment. With offices on the southwest side of Chicago and several different service locations, IDPL offers a continuum of adult education services from learning how to read in Spanish to the GED and onto college level classes ABE and pre-GED classes are also offered, as is English literacy for students with less than a 6th grade education in their first language. Also offered are computer literacy programs, internet access and employment-readiness and job placement assistance.



Aurora Lucas, originally from the Philippines, grew up in Chicago after coming to the city at nine years old. Aurora is a first term VOCAL* AmeriCorps member. Before her current AmeriCorps term, Aurora was working with an organization that travelled across the US showing the country to youth from Mexico. Before participating in this youth program, she taught English in a small town in Costa Rica. After teaching abroad and working with Mexican youth in the States, Aurora wanted to work within her community back home. Aurora heard about the VOCAL AmeriCorps program through a college friend who was actually an VOCAL* AmeriCorps member based at Literacy Works. She had also heard of AmeriCorps in general from Peace Corps members while in Costa Rica.

Aurora holds a Masters from SIT Graduate Institute in Vermont. Before that she completed her undergraduate degree from Roosevelt University. Aurora is serving at Instituto del Progreso Latino as an Adult English Instructor. She took this position because she wanted to serve an immigrant community in Chicago instead of serving a community abroad.

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Member Spotlight Cont.

She feels a strong connection with the students she teaches because she shares a similar background with them, they are all immigrants in America. Aurora highlights the two-way nature of teaching, it is not only her students that learn from her but she is also able to learn through them. The community learning sparks joy on both sides. Aurora also enjoys the connection she is able to foster among herself and the students, she has been able to create a family feeling. Apart from the rewards of teaching, Aurora recognizes the fatigue some teachers can feel. However, she says that as soon as she steps into the classroom that fatigue dissipates.

Aside from AmeriCorps, Aurora enjoys writing. She is particularly social media savvy and writes for different social media platforms: blogs, Linkdln, Instagram etc. After her current term with AmeriCorps at Instituto del Progreso Latino, Aurora wants to continue teaching and serving abroad through a fellowship. She sees herself continuing to teach in any capacity.



Alex Ramirez, is a first term AmeriCorps member at Instituto del Progreso Latino. At Instituto he holds the title of Adult Education Teacher and teaches ESL and Citizenship classes. He is a recent graduate of Judson University where he majored in Media Writing and minored in Film. Before his time at AmeriCorps, Alex was working at an office through a temp agency but wanted something more service oriented. He heard about AmeriCorps through a friend who recommended it on the basis that it was a service and people oriented position.

As an ESL and Citizenship instructor, Alex manages three different classes. This is one of the challenges which Alex faces, how to go about planning three different classes with new groups of students. Alex notes that with citizenship classes it is possible to see quicker results, there is a goal ahead but with ESL classes it can be harder to see immediate results. As far as rewards, it is the students themselves who are the reward for Alex. He finds it the most rewarding when students are able to realize how much they have retained without being entirely conscious of it. He also loves sharing experiences of growth and revelation with his students.

After his time with AmeriCorps, Alex wants to stay in Chicago. He specifically wants to focus on comedy writing and delve deeper into the comedy and theater scene in the city. In his free time, he currently participates in improv groups, standup, and writes sketches. He does stand up at various open mics in the city such as Schubas and Dirkens. He does improv with iO theater and a group called Generation Latinx as well as takes classes with Comedy Sportz Theater. He also reads in his free time, having recently read *This is How you Lose Her* by Junot Diaz.



LVI Moves To The Third Floor

Literacy Volunteers of Illinois moved this past February to their new offices on the third floor of the Literacenter. Same building, new floor. This new floor of the Literacenter is being dubbed the Lit Lounge. The Lit Lounge is complete with new co-working spaces, conference rooms, and event space. LVI looks forward to holding future Quarterly Meetings and Trainings in this new space.

Upcoming Dates

April 7th-13th

National Volunteer Week

*Sponsored by the
Points of Light Foundation*

May 3rd

9:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

Life After AmeriCorps

LitLoft

Mango & Broomzeville Rooms

May 27th

Memorial Day

Trainings

Mental Health and the Adult Learner (Literacy Works)

Tuesday, April 23, 2019

6:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Literacenter

641 W. Lake Street, Chicago, IL

Adult Mental Health First Aid Training (Literacy Works sponsored by Amita Health)

Friday, April 26, 2019

8:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Literacenter

641 W. Lake Street, Chicago, IL

LVI's SOCIAL NETWORKS



@literacyvolunteersofillinois



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and click the "like" button.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ICOVA 2019

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE ON
VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

AUGUST 9, 2019

illinoiscova@gmail.com

★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY!

Galina Khartulari-April 18th

Emily Erland-April 24th

Kayla Thomas-April 30th

Happy Belated Birthday:

Mackenzie M. Mirocha-March 5th

Jasmin Reyes-March 20th