



The Partners Press

TOMPKINS LEARNING PARTNERS

FALL 2022

A Message from...

Martille Norton, Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program Coordinator

GREETINGS! Here at Tompkins Learning Partners, we have been busy bringing in new students, training new tutors, and adjusting to all of the challenges that come with changing from the TASC to the GED. This includes updating our resources for tutors and students, as well as providing training opportunities to learn new information.

We have also been encouraging students who are transitioning from the TASC to the GED to return to in-person tutoring. We found that some of these students needed help with transportation, so we applied for a Women Building Community Grant from The City Federation of Women's Organizations. We are happy to report that they awarded us enough funds to purchase bus passes so we can now readily meet students' requests for passes

Tompkins Learning Partners was also able to apply for a grant from the United Way Youth and Philanthropy (YAP) Program to purchase books for our students' children. This was to promote reading in the home and help our students connect with their children through literacy. Our adult learners and their tutors also benefitted from books that were purchased with grants from The Social Service League of Ithaca and The Friends of the Tompkins County Public Library.

We look forward to a new fiscal year and the goals we can accomplish together. We hope to bring in more volunteer tutors as well as more students. We appreciate all of the support from the community!

Helen Ranck, English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Coordinator

VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF TLP! Volunteers have always been the heart of TLP, providing the majority of instruction for our adult learners, serving on our board, keeping our in-house library in tip-top shape, and helping us with administrative tasks like mailings and preparing study materials. Though they tend to shy away from the spotlight, we'd like to give them special recognition for being absolute superstars amidst all the changes that the pandemic brought upon our organization. Their time, support, and care help TLP students achieve their dreams.

Here are just a few of the things students and staff have said lately about TLP volunteers:

"Math isn't easy for me, but I don't give up. My tutor doesn't give up on me."

"My tutor is very helpful to me. She helps me with reading and writing and explaining every word that I don't understand."

"I love my tutor. Before, I never like[d] school."

"The library is so awesome now. The librarians really made it easy to find the books I need to use with [my student]. It's cozy too."

"There is no way we would be ready for tutor workshops, special events, mailings, and other projects without our office volunteers. They make mountains of work manageable and they're fun to be around too."

"I say 'thank you' to my tutor. I learn with her. I know more English words. I [can] talk to my boss. I [can] talk to the school."

"I study for my citizenship test with my tutor. I learn things about this country, like presidents and Congress. I learn history and how to talk in my interview. We practice reading and writing. It's so good!"

TLP respects the privacy of our students. We never use students' full names or photos without their permission.

A MESSAGE FROM Dave Smith

IF you have ever thought about becoming a TLP volunteer tutor, the time to act on that thought is now. As always, we have more students who need tutors than we have volunteers. Take a look at the TLP website (TLPartners.org) and see what is involved in becoming a TLP tutor. You can also use the website to contact us about joining our tutor corp. We hope to hear from you!

David H. Smith

We believe the ability to read and write is critical to personal freedom and the maintenance of a democratic society.

2022 Fall Appeal!

Each year TLP makes two donation requests to donors and potential donors, one in the summer and one in the fall. This summer's request brought in just under \$8,000. In addition to our newsletter, we have enclosed our fall appeal letter with the hope that we can reach our 2021 goal of \$20,000. Reaching that goal, or even surpassing it, is especially important so that we can balance our budget.

If you would like to give but did not receive a request, a simple way to do so is by PayPal/credit card through our website at www.TLPartners.org. You can also donate through United Way—just indicate on the form that you would like to designate your donation to Tompkins Learning Partners.

A special thank you for your support this past summer and thank you in advance for your support this fall!

"VOLUNTEERING is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." —Unknown

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Susan Sandritter, *Adult Literacy Instructor*

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TLP's Mission

Our mission is to help adults who live or work in Tompkins County meet their personal literacy goals, free of charge, by improving their ability to read, write, speak English, and use math and computers. Students achieve these goals by working together with professionally trained and supported volunteer tutors.

Tompkins Learning Partners

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United Way
of Tompkins County
Funded Partner



Tutor Meet-Up

This past summer, we held an in-person meet-up for TLP volunteers. They caught up with each other and with TLP staff while enjoying some great weather and tasty snacks. Here's a picture of some of them sharing stories and tips for working together with their students.

2022 Grants

Tompkins Learning Partners appreciates the support we receive from community partners. Grants ensure that we have the resources and staff needed to continue providing quality literacy and language instruction for adults in our community.

So far in 2022, we received grants from Friends of the Tompkins County Public Library; NYS Office for New Americans (ONA); The Social Service League of Ithaca; The United Way Youth and Philanthropy (YAP) Program; Vector Magnetics; and The City Federation of Women's Organizations/Women Building Community Grant. These grants help supplement the funds we receive from Tompkins County, the City of Ithaca, the NY State Education Department, and the United Way of Tompkins County.

Thank you to all our partners for supporting our mission to help adults who live or work in Tompkins County meet their personal goals, free of charge, by improving their literacy abilities in reading, writing, math, computers, and English speaking skills.



TLP Board Treasurer Grace McMenamin accepts a check from Visions Federal Credit Union's Craig Parker, featuring proceeds from Visions' employees participation in their Denim Days program.

Books for our Library

The Little Free Library outside our office on Buffalo Street is very popular with our neighbors! If you have any books you would like to donate (no text books or religious tracts, please), you can bring them in to the office during business hours, or you can leave them on the covered porch to the right of our front door any day and time. Thank you!

Crossword 2022

*Dear Friends...
We all did it again!*

Not only did our community persevere throughout another year of masking, social-distancing, isolation, and the now persistent COVID threat, but we did it with aplomb. We worked (when possible), we played (when possible), we sent our children to school, we masked, we were vaccinated and, just to kick the naysayers and cynics in the backside, *we raised a bundle for TLP by solving crossword puzzles.* And these were not just any crossword puzzles. As in years past, this year's puzzles were specially constructed by the brilliant Adam G. Perl to support Tompkins Learning Partners at its unique annual fundraiser and popular community event, The Finger Lakes Crossword Competition.

To quote myself: *Once again, we have looked COVID-19 in the eye...and it blinked! It may close our businesses and our schools, jam our hospitals, halt international travel, etc., but we'll be darned if it can stop us from the innocent pleasure of solving crossword puzzles with friends and family.*

Congratulations on refusing to surrender this simple indulgence, a diversion that pales in the face of our everyday trials and responsibilities. Take a deep breath, pat yourself on the back, and be grateful. We are all winners!"

Last year, I closed this report with, "So, let the powers that be throw their worst at us. Come "heck" or high water, see you all next year." The powers tried, but we were virtually here. Virtually, as in "almost entirely, for all practical purposes."

See you all next year.
Gary Weissbrot, Chairperson,
Finger Lakes Crossword Competition