

Wishing you and yours a  
healthy & happy holiday  
season!

The Literacy Solutions' Staff

Pictured right is CEO & President, Patricia Rajala (front center),  
with some of the crew behind everything we do!



## Citizenship Coaching Strikes a Chord with Literacy Tutors!



### New City Library - October 2019

Judging by the number of people in attendance, the workshop entitled "How To Coach for Citizenship" found favor among Literacy Solutions' Tutors. Two veteran citizenship specialists gave an overview of what's involved in the process; Nancy Newfield covered civics content and Jane Lemkin covered the naturalization application known as the N400.

"We typically average sixteen tutors for the various programs we offer throughout the year," said program manager, Christina Mandara, "but the Citizenship Coaching event drew over 45 people. There was such energy in the room. Many of these awesome individuals expressed to me a particular soft spot for new arrivals to our country."

Each attendee left with enough information to get started with a naturalization candidate as he or she becomes available. Today, there are **25 citizenship coaches** working with naturalization candidates in the following RCLS libraries.

Finkelstein Library = 3 candidates  
Haverstraw KD Library = 4 candidates  
Nanuet Library = 5 candidates  
New City Library = 7 candidates  
Pearl River Library = 3 candidates  
Suffern Library = 2 candidates  
Valley Cottage Library = 1 candidate

**Five of these candidates have recently become US citizens.**



**Come visit the Literacy Solutions'**

## **Citizenship Coaching Center**

**in collaboration with  
the New City Library!**

**Assisted by a grant from the  
Ramapo Catskill Library System (RCLS)**

The LSNY tutor office located on the premises of the New City Library has obtained valuable resources made possible in part by a grant from the Ramapo Catskill Library System for the creation of a Citizenship Coaching Center.



The grant assisted Literacy Solutions to stock its shelves with civics & literacy workbooks, civics flashcards, more copies of EZ English News and materials focused on the content of the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) exam and interview. These materials are being used by literacy tutors who are coaching for citizenship.

**Thank you, Ramapo Catskill Library System!  
Thank you, New City Library!**

**Spotlight**  
**Citizenship Coach**  
Allan Rubin  
Pearl River Library



“My professional background is in Architecture and Construction Management and as a result many of my friends have asked me where did I get the experience to tutor. My answer is simple. You use a bit of common sense and the experience of being a native English speaker and then apply this to what my student needs. As for citizenship coaching I had previous experience as a merit badge counselor for The Boy Scouts of America working and tutoring boy scouts working towards merit badges for Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation and Citizenship in the World. While the requirements for citizenship were different in detail from the Boy Scout merit badges it was easy for me to adapt to what is required for an

Pictured above from left to right is tutor Allan Rubin, new citizen, Luz A., and Pearl River Library Director, Eugenia Schatoff.

individual to learn to enable them to pass the United States of America citizenship interview." - Allan Rubin

Tutor since 2014  
Retired - Architect and Construction Management

## Spotlight Literacy Tutor

Julianne Mendez  
Haverstraw Kings Daughters Library



Pictured above is tutor Julianne Mendez. Top right is student Eli (left) with Julianne.

Tutor since 2017  
Design Consultant & Sales Executive  
The Design Library



"Since Eli communicates in English at an intermediate level, our time spent together is focused on advancing her conversational ease. Each week, we talk about various topics- always working to expand her vocabulary and comprehension. We have spent time working to further her professional development, including updating her resume and writing cover letters. More recently, we began reading our first English novel! While it is a challenge, it is also a lot of fun to work through together. The tutor program allows students an outlet to begin feeling comfortable using English every day. As more time is spent together, the more the student is able to open up to learning and trying new things. I am very lucky to call Eli my friend, and am so proud of how far she has come." - Julianne Mendez

## Spotlight Citizenship Coach

Helen Libow  
New City Library



Pictured above, left, is tutor, Helen Libow, with new citizen, Hanan (right). Top right is New City librarian Brian Jennings (back left) with Helen and Hanan (right).

Tutor since 2009  
Retired - Elementary Education



"I never dreamed that doing volunteer tutoring with adults could be so rewarding. Both the student and volunteer in my situation have gained tremendously, in new skills, self confidence, goals achieved, and much happiness from the relationships formed, and the tutor's joy that comes from helping someone become an American citizen.

My student passed her citizenship interview & test on her first attempt, after a series of tutoring sessions with me. Thank you for the physical materials you provided to both me & my student, the opportunity, and the tremendous encouragement!

It has been a wonderful revelation to me to discover how different & gratifying it is to do volunteer work with adults from abroad, especially for someone like me who taught elementary education in the New York City Public Schools for about 30 years."  
- Helen Libow

## Spotlight Literacy Tutor

Carole Mills  
Nanuet Library



Pictured above from left to right is tutor Carole Mills with student Maria.

Tutor since 2018  
Retired - Theatrical and Corporate  
Talent

"As a graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, and previously, one year majoring in Speech at Fordham University, proper pronunciation of the English language has always been important to me. At the suggestion of my dear friend, I started tutoring at Literacy Solutions. I never realized that I, with no teaching experience, would be the catalyst, enabling and instilling confidence in my student.

Her goal was to adequately and capably express, to her children's respective teachers, her concerns ensuring that they receive the best education and guidance in their formative years. How thrilled I was to see Maria's happy and animated face, when relating those conversations she had with each teacher, and that they agreed to see that her concerns would be addressed.

Lastly, my student said she remembered our discussion and my instructions on how to present herself, and her feelings, in those forthcoming teacher meetings. Apparently, my theatrical training made an impression on her, and instilled in her a belief in her own capabilities!" - Carole Mills

Pictured below is Patricia Rajala with Ruth Colvin (right) at Ruth's 100th birthday celebration in 2016.



### Correction from September 2019 Issue.

In the last issue of Tutors In Touch the name of the Founder of Literacy Volunteers was spelled incorrectly. Her name is Colvin, Ms. Ruth Colvin.

Ruth Colvin, who will turn 103 this month, is the mother of the adult literacy movement in the U.S. She began Literacy Volunteers of America in 1962.

\* \* \*

Eisenstadt, M. (2016, November 30). Happy birthday, Ruth Colvin: a Syracuse icon, who taught the world to read, turns 100. Retrieved from [https://www.syracuse.com/news/2016/11/happy\\_birthday\\_ruth\\_colvin\\_a\\_syracuse\\_icon\\_who\\_taught\\_the\\_world\\_to\\_read\\_turns\\_10.html](https://www.syracuse.com/news/2016/11/happy_birthday_ruth_colvin_a_syracuse_icon_who_taught_the_world_to_read_turns_10.html).



### DECEMBER HOUR LOGS ARE DUE.

The goal of our tutor program is to provide 30 hours of tutor

instruction per student during our academic year which is July 1 - June 30.

Tutor sessions should last between 1 1/4 - 1 1/2 hours weekly to reach 30 hours in an average of six months time.



### Coming in 2020!

The Literacy Solutions office located in the Yonkers Public Library will be expanding its tutor program in Westchester County.

More to come....

Pictured above from left to right is Tutor Program Manager, Jennie Mosquera, Citizenship Tutor, Joe Nolan and ESL Teacher, Teresa Avila, from our Westchester office.