

Partner Profiles



United Way of the Tri-Valley Area

Lisa Park Laflin, Executive Director

Editor's Note: This article is part of an ongoing series that demonstrates the community impact of the United Way of the Tri-Valley Area (UWTVA), its funded Partners, and recipients of donor-designated funds. To learn more about how you can give, advocate, or volunteer in your community, or to view the article archive, visit www.uwtva.org. To contact staff, call (207) 778-5048 or e-mail info@uwtva.org.

Literacy Volunteers, with dependence on volunteer tutors, strives to foster literacy, language development, and education among the adults in the communities of Franklin and Somerset counties who want to improve their literacy skills in order to reach their full potential. Literacy Volunteers (LV), also promotes English for speakers of other languages and fosters literacy among children, teens and families. All of the incredible volunteers receive training and give of their time and skills to improve or establish the reading skills of others. This spotlight on Literacy Volunteers is to coincide with the upcoming National Volunteer Week, April 18-24; and to detail the individuals that rely upon the dedicated volunteer tutors to provide these services to help improve their literacy skills. Featured below is one individual who is committed to improving her literacy skills by participating in Literacy Volunteers:

Matilda, her real name, has been a literacy student with Literacy Volunteers for more than ten years and has had several tutors during that time. She has changed from a shy person who barely spoke to one who reads aloud during 'New Books New Readers,' a book club for beginning adult learners, which she likes attending because "of the people there and getting to read new books". She wants to give back to Literacy Volunteers and has agreed to be on the LV Board of Directors, one of two students who serve. She also enjoys attending Literacy Volunteer state and local functions; such as state fundraisers in Portland and local annual meetings. Her reading level has improved and she is reading more on her own, keeping a book by the side of her bed which she reads from each night and writing in a journal at least once a week.

Matilda is a multi-talented woman who is proficient in woodworking, sewing, and knitting. She says there is not a craft she does not enjoy doing and is currently working on a doll house made out of plastic canvas. She has gained more self-confidence, has shown much growth, and is turning her life around.

This fall, the Maine State Literacy Volunteers had a promotional and fundraising activity called, "Faces of Literacy: Voices of Courage" and each affiliate chose students and tutors to tell their stories and be photographed by students from the Maine College of Art. This innovative exhibit of 20 photographs will be shown at venues all over the state of Maine. If you would like to volunteer as a tutor, or are interested in improving your own literacy skills, contact Joan Moes at (207)778-3460.

The United Way of the Tri-Valley Area's (UWTVA) mission is to improve people's lives by focusing the caring capacity of our communities. One of 10 United Ways in Maine, UWTVA conducts an Annual Fundraising Campaign, contributions to which are reinvested in Greater Franklin County, by supporting programs run by area 501 (c)3 health and human service organizations. UWTVA also coordinates the Emergency Food and Shelter Program and collaborates with area volunteers and organizations to conduct initiatives that support the community, including food drives and homeless prevention activities.