

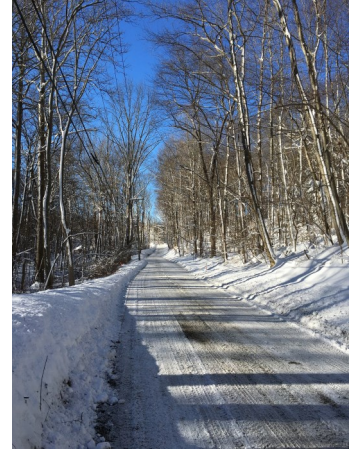


Driving Vermont's rural roads, delivering education ~ Louise Mastin

"I was hired to do home tutoring in five towns in Franklin County," Louise said. "I was driving 350 miles a week. People didn't have driver's licenses and stayed close to home. 'Going to the city' meant traveling to St. Albans."

Many of Louise's students, from those days in the late 1970s, were farmers, Francophone Canadians who moved to Vermont from Quebec. All of her students were adults. She drove from home to home, teaching them to read, write and perform basic math in preparation for the GED Exam. Louise would go on to serve as a regional director and director of center operations before retiring from VAL.

Today, you will find students at VAL working towards their high school diploma or preparing for the GED, New Americans practicing speaking and writing in English, aspiring college students building math and writing skills, participants attaining workforce readiness and adults learning to read for the first time. We offer learners second chances to succeed.



Mission Statement

Vermont Adult Learning's mission is to create an innovative, inclusive and equitable learning environment that provides personalized opportunities for education and career development for Vermont residents by building relationships, strengthening communities and fostering life-long learning.

From our Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Expectations create reality. My grandmother worked as a bookkeeper. When I was a kid growing up in the Bronx, she'd show me a bank book with my name on it and say she deposited part of her weekly earnings into it for me, "for college." My dad interrupted his high school education to serve in World War II; he earned his GED while in the Navy. From an early age, he made it clear that I was going to college.

To me, education is a ticket out of poverty. VAL offers basic literacy and math instruction, high school diploma and GED completion and ELL classes. It's about credentials. It's also about workforce training. It's about moving on to college. It's about thriving. Please reach out to me if you'd like to learn more.

Hal Cohen, hcohen@vtadultlearning.org

Vermont Adult Learning Centers

Central Office

46 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05676
802-244-0634

Addison County

282 Boardman Street
Middlebury, VT 05753
802-546-0879

Chittenden County

29 Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401
802-846-7245

Franklin & Grand Isle Counties

5 Lemnah Drive
St. Albans, VT 05478
802-524-9233

Rutland County

16 Evelyn Street
Rutland, VT 05701
802-775-0617

Windham County

90 Birge Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-257-9449

Windsor County

White River Junction Location
225 Maple Street, Ste. 6
White River Jct., VT 05001
802-281-4311

Springfield Location
100 River Street
Springfield, VT 05156
802-546-0876



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**"If you judge a frog
by its ability to climb
a tree, it will think
it's stupid."**

**A 17-year-old
VAL Student**

Volunteer Spotlight: Nancy Mark

Nancy Mark's interest in volunteering with English Language Learner (ELL) students stems from her many years as a Vermont school principal.

"We served a number of families who moved here from Mexico and Central America," Nancy said. "They helped keep our dairy farms running and were essential members of the community."

Nancy is intentional in her reading choices for students. She assigns articles that touch topics in education, history or culture---areas that offer valuable insights and perspectives on life in the United States for these new arrivals. She captures students' interests, paving the way to enhanced grammar and vocabulary skills.

"I usually meet one-to-one with students with instruction focused on reading, writing and speaking," Nancy said. "I often choose an article that is a bit of a 'stretch' for a student."

"As an educator, I've always believed in the importance of equal opportunity for everyone---kids and adults---and to make sure it's not inhibited," Nancy said.

Thank you, Nancy, for your service to VAL!



Your donations in Action

Rev. George Keeler of the **North Springfield Baptist Church**

delivered two backpacks filled with school supplies to our teacher, **MJ Trask**, at our Springfield, Vermont office. Our students will put these items to good use. Thank you!

Thank you to **LAURA McCUTCHEON**, Graphic Arts Intern from Castleton University, and **WHITNEY LAMY**, VAL staff, for helping to design our new, quarterly newsletter!

WAYS TO SUPPORT VERMONT ADULT LEARNING:

- Giving by Check or Credit Card
- Employer Matching Gifts
- Gifts of Stocks, Securities, etc.
- Gifts of Goods and Services
- Tribute & Memorial Gifts
- Lifetime Gift Planning

Please contact Katherine Stamper, Development Director, at kstamper@vtadultlearning.org or (802) 735-1670 to discuss any of these options. Thank you!



**Leave a Legacy:
Remember
Vermont Adult Learning
in your will.**



Success Story: Meet Holly, an aspiring Dental Hygienist

"I love all the teachers. They're just great. I was encouraged to do my best when my teachers told me I was doing good work."



Holly takes pride in being a very involved parent to her five-year-old son. She loves spending time with him whether they're coloring, biking or simply playing outside. She also enjoys helping him practice writing his letters and numbers.

"He is my world. He is my heart. He is my soul," Holly said. "I just like watching him grow and learn."

As a single parent raising her son in Burlington, where housing is expensive, Holly has learned to stretch her finances. She dreams of being able to take a real vacation with her son, "someplace warm and sunny with sandy beaches."

She is on a track to realizing her dream. It hasn't always been easy. Holly was raised in Vermont. At sixteen, she left home to live with an aunt and uncle. She enrolled in a new high school, joined the cheerleading squad and got a customer service job at Kinney Drugs. She liked her art class, especially creating pieces in black ink and charcoal. It still wasn't enough to keep her engaged. She dropped out at seventeen.

"My cheerleading coach encouraged me to stay in school," Holly said. "She said, 'You can live with us.' They were a foster family. I just wasn't ready."

Holly moved again to live with another aunt and uncle. She resumed her studies. Here home life was a bit challenging. As a teenager, she was expected to provide many hours of childcare for a younger cousin. She began hanging out with the wrong crowd. She dropped out of school again.

Holly entered the workforce, working entry-level jobs to support herself. She became a mother at age thirty. It was then that she resolved to complete her education. She enrolled in the High School Completion Program at VAL's Burlington site.

"My first two years at VAL, we focused mostly on math. My teacher met with me every Thursday for two years," Holly said. "He worked with me and made sure I got it. I love all the teachers. They're just great. I was encouraged to do my best when my teachers told me I was doing good work."

Holly earned her high school diploma in June 2019. She is presently enrolled in a medical terminology course in the **Allied Health Preparation Program** at the **Community College of Vermont**. She plans to transfer to **Vermont Technical College** to become a certified dental hygienist. She volunteers at VAL's Burlington office two days a week.

Holly earned a nickname while enrolled at VAL: "The Holly Monitor." She'd be the student encouraging her peers to go to class.

When Holly settles down to do her college homework, her son, often sitting beside her, will say, "Yeah, I have homework just like you do, Mom."

That family vacation, someplace warm and sunny, is within reach.





Vermont Adult Learning

46 South Main Street
Waterbury VT 05676

Growing Vermont's Workforce



"I'm hoping to get these young adults to where they want to be."

Chrispin White, YouthWorks Coordinator-Rutland

Vermont Adult Learning is running skills-based workforce development programming from our Rutland and Middlebury offices. **YouthWorks** targets young adults, ages 18-24, who experience barriers to employment. The Integrated Education and Training (IET) program helps participants develop basic skills and soft skills with the added benefit of hands-on training. The **Vermont Department of Labor** provides key support.

The curriculum is comprehensive, covering everything from writing to interviewing strategies to personal finance. The skills side of the equation includes hands-on introductions to hand tools and power tools. Industry certifications in CPR, First Aid, Food Handling and Forklift add value to the experience. These are not just skills for work. These are skills for life.

The Middlebury cohort recently partnered with the **Charter House Coalition** to prepare and serve a meal at a free community dinner hosted by the **Middlebury Congregational Church**. Participants learned valuable culinary skills while providing food and fellowship to community members, some of whom, experience food insecurity. Truth be told, **YouthWorks** is also about building community.



Email kstamper@vtadultlearning.org to receive this newsletter via email. Type GO GREEN in Subject Line.