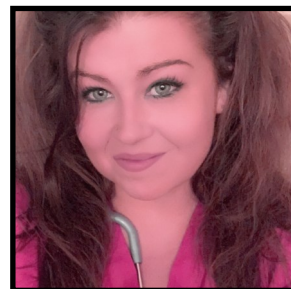




Meet Christina, a Vermont Health Care Professional

Christina is a graduate of Vermont Adult Learning (VAL), CCV and Castleton University where she completed a nursing degree in May 2021. She is a Clinical Case Manager at Bayada Home Health in Rutland, using her nursing skills to help Vermonters across the age spectrum receive care in their homes.

"I left school at sixteen to be self-supporting," Christina said. "I wanted to be independent, so I moved out. I worked two jobs, at a kennel and as a housekeeper."



"Once my kids started school, I knew I needed to make a change. I wanted them to know the importance of education. How could I tell them to do their homework if I didn't live up to those expectations? When I put my foot in the door at VAL, I was ashamed. I felt like an adult with no education. VAL's teachers were so welcoming! They know there are barriers—they're always willing to listen. Everybody is there to help students strive and achieve their goals. I'm so grateful and I love my job!"

Our Work

Vermont Adult Learning (VAL) helps students, ages 16+, build assets for success. We provide reading, writing, math, financial literacy, English Language Learning, academic & career advising, workforce development, and high school completion services. Our services are FREE!

Visit us at www.vtadultlearning.org.



From our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As spring approaches and COVID-19 case counts drop in our service areas, we are seeing a surge of new students. Our learning centers are open, offering in-person, online and hybrid options.

for high school completion and transition to training and/or college.

Energy Works, our integrated education and training program in Rutland, is recruiting students for our next free session in weatherization that starts March 28th.

Onward we go. Thank you for supporting our work!
Be safe and be well,

Hal Cohen

Executive Director

hcohen@vtadultlearning.org

Vermont Adult Learning Centers

Addison County / Central Office

99 Maple Street, #18
Middlebury, VT 05753
802-388-4392

Chittenden County

77 College Street
Burlington, VT 05401
802-846-7245

Franklin & Grand Isle Counties

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

Rutland County

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

Windham County

999 Putney Road
Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-257-9449

Windsor County

White River Junction Location
225 Maple Street, Ste. 6
White River Jct., VT 05001
802-299-2469

Springfield Location
100 River Street, Ste. 102
Springfield, VT 05156
802-546-0880

Billing/Correspondence

P.O. Box 539
Waitsfield, VT 05673
802-560-4057



"VAL helped me achieve my academic goals and be a better role model for my children!"
~ Linda

Board Of Directors

Martha Adams
Edmund A. Booth
Jim Coutts
Paul Dragon
Dee Gilbert
Ashley Griggs
Tuipate F. Mubiay
Marcy Stephens
Richard Tulikangas
Hal Cohen, *Ex-Officio*

Thank you to our recent supporters

INDIVIDUALS

-Ruth Allard
-Valerie Allen
-Mara Arico
-Lynn Bondurant
-Paula & Michael Clay
-Alan & Ann Charron
-Hal & Shelley Cohen
-Don Collins
-James Coutts
-Richard Cowperthwait
-Millard & Laureen Cox
-Marion Cushner
-Nancy Davis
-Thomas & Robin Davis
-Nancy Davila-Groverman & Jon Groverman
-Barbara Deal & Ann Crocker
-Frank & Joan Donath
-Adrien Durenleau
-Chip & Susan Evans
-Hideko Furukawa
-Hadley & Gladys Hall
-Diane Harris
-Gale Hurd
-Bruce & Marita Johnson
-Rachel Jolly
-Peter & Paula Joslin
-David Justice
-Aggie & Tom Kurtz
-Pixie Loomis
-Kathleen Martin
-Cecelia Mooney
-Nancy Moore Mark
-Kathleen Martin
-Nellie Mathews
-N.H. Pelsue, Jr.
-Judy Pendell & Warren Azano
-Garth & Clara Peterson
-Joe Przyperhart
-Brianna Reed
-Casey Romero
-Matthild Schneider
-Peter Shumlin & Katie Hunt
-Aleksandra Stamper
-Katherine Stamper
-Richard Tulikangas

-Sally Waldron
-Jimmy Warner
-Sharon & Lee Weltman
-Cheryl Wilfong
-Peter Young
-Toby Young

ORGANIZATIONS

-Bowse Health Trust
-Freeman French Freeman
-Francis T. & Louise T. Nichols Foundation

IN MEMORY OF

-Cindy Mills
-Larry Sudlow

We appreciate your support!
Please contact
Katherine Stamper
kstamper@vtadultlearning.org
if your name was left off of the donor list in error.

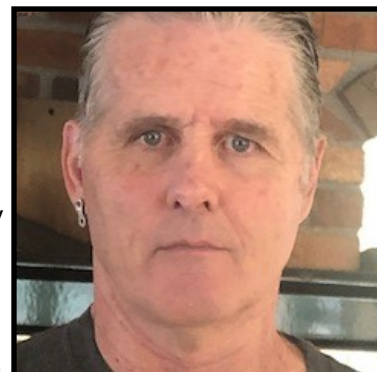
Ways to Support VAL

Check or Credit Card Gift;
Employer Matching; Stocks,
Securities, etc.; Goods and
Services; Tribute or Memorial
Gift; Lifetime Planning

Volunteer Spotlight: Thank you, Larry Buck!

Larry graduated from Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, where he completed an interdisciplinary engineering program. He studied Energy Systems—the scientific, political and environmental questions regarding energy production. Larry was working as a building contractor in Addison County, Vermont, in 2009 when he experienced a life-changing health crisis. Larry contracted the Swine Flu which triggered a stroke, weakening the left side of his body and compromising his problem-solving abilities while prompting early retirement. Larry has embraced volunteering in retirement with great gusto!

"I put students in the position of being the teacher, where they explain their work to me," Larry said. "You haven't learned it until you can explain it. I might say, 'I don't quite understand how you got that answer. Can you walk me through and show me how?' Asking that question SLOWS THEM DOWN so they can think and solve the problems more accurately."



Are you interested in
volunteering at VAL?
Contact Katherine at
kstamper@vtadultlearning.org



Misha: From Belarus to Burlington by way of Manhattan

"I feel welcomed. VAL gave me this whole community! ~ Misha

Misha, a Vermont-based professional graphic artist, is an English Language Learning (ELL) student at VAL. She was born in a small village near the city of Orsha in Belarus' northeastern corner. She earned a Master's Degree in Graphic Arts at the Vitebsk State Technological University. She speaks Russian, Belarussian, English and a little Polish.

"I arrived in the United States in 2014," Misha said. "My family had been trying to emigrate for over fifteen years."

Belarus, a former Soviet Republic, is ruled by President Aleksandr Lukashenko, whose authoritarian government forces many to flee. Misha's family lived under the weight of economic and political pressures forced upon a country deeply scarred by World War II and decades of communist rule. She was a toddler when Mikhail Gorbachev resigned office on December 25, 1991, triggering dissolution of the U.S.S.R. Turmoil ensued as former republics sought standing and stability as newly-formed, independent nations.



"Belarus is a very narrow-minded place," Misha said. "It's also a country of shared trauma. You learn to figure out how to get what you need. Survival is in our DNA. It was hard for me as a creative child. I always had to fight. You don't really dream about things in Belarus. Watching a romantic movie about Paris reminded me that it was equally impossible to go to Mars as it was to go to Paris. You cannot plan. You cannot dream. Something inside told me I could question that!"

Misha's path to Vermont was winding. As a young woman, degree in hand and experience as a graphic designer, she announced she would try to travel to England, "for a vacation." This was not an easy task. It was unclear if she'd be granted a UK visa and, if she was, if Belarus would let her leave. There was also the cost with weak conversion of Belarussian Rubles to British Pounds. She worked "like crazy" to save travel money.

Misha spent a year in England and Ireland, developing beginner English skills before coming to the U.S. She spent time in Denver before moving to Brooklyn where she biked to her office at a Manhattan advertising firm.

"I had a good job in New York City, but I was kind of lonely," Misha said. "The lack of human connection felt wrong. I wasn't finding 'my' people. I traveled around. I had a vacation in Vermont four years ago and fell in love, immediately. I made it my goal to do whatever it takes to move to Vermont."

Since moving to Vermont, Misha has become a Naturalized U.S. Citizen while continuing her freelance work. She also left an abusive domestic partner. Misha, as a survivor, now advocates for other survivors via Uplift Vermont, a program of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. Misha credits Steps to End Domestic Violence and VAL for helping her fight for her rights and regain personal freedom.

"Beverly and Meg's (VAL teachers) classes helped me a lot with writing endless motions for my cases," Misha said.

Encouraging and Supporting Achievement



Adult Education and Literacy services help people build the assets they need to successfully move out of poverty. Academic and job skills achievement builds the confidence to strive for that educational credential, certification, or job training to establish a foothold to advance one's self and one's family.

VAL helps students identify concrete goals and, very importantly, the steps needed to achieve those goals. What do our students say?

"VAL never gave up on me!"

"When 'life' got in the way and I needed to take time away from my studies, I knew VAL would always welcome me back so I could continue from where I'd stopped before."

"Going back to school as an adult was one of the best decisions I ever make."

"I don't know where I'd be today without VAL."

"My life is so much better than I imagined it could be."



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



Vermont Adult Learning

P.O. Box 539

Waitsfield VT 05673