



April 2025

Vita Education Services *Bringing Learning to Life for Over 50 Years*

Vita Honors our Dedicated Volunteers!



April marks Volunteer Appreciation Month, and Vita extends heartfelt gratitude to our more than fifty committed volunteers who help make our work possible.

From our Board of Directors who govern the organization, to tutors who teach English as a Second Language and Adult Basic Education classes, to Corrections volunteers who work with incarcerated

individuals on career preparation, to committee members who provide guidance and offer practical support - the Vita staff recognizes and appreciates the skills and expertise our volunteers bring to everything they do.

To celebrate the remarkable contributions of Vita's volunteers, we held our 2025 Volunteer Appreciation Celebration April 25 at the home of Board Member Tanya Casas.

The event was a terrific opportunity for attendees to get to know more about each other and for staff to personally thank volunteers for their time, efforts, and dedication to our work and mission.

April is Second Chance Month

To help celebrate national **Second Chance Month** in April, the **Bucks County Reentry Coalition** sponsored two Reentry Simulation trainings facilitated by staff from the Bucks County Adult Probation & Parole Department.

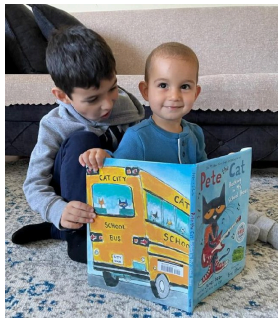
Vita staff and Board members participated in this unique experience, during which participants are provided with the identify and resources of an individual transitioning from incarceration back into the community. Participants come to

understand the struggles and challenges reentrants experience as they strive to regain stable footing, including difficulties finding a residence, lack of reliable transportation, and barriers to employment.

The Reentry Simulation is an eye-opening and valuable experience. Vita is proud to be a member of the Reentry Coalition and to provide education and jobs readiness skills that aim to make reentry more manageable for those returning to the community.



One Book at a Time



Family Literacy students at Vita's Croydon location receive one book every month to add to their home libraries. In class, parents first listen to the story, then practice reading it themselves. Lessons focus on specific reading skills,

such as sequencing, rhyming, using character voices, and making connections between the text and the word.

Parents then bring the book home to their children and read it together while practicing their learned skills through a shared activity. By the end of the year, families have a terrific collection of books and memories of reading together!

This month's book was *Pete the Cat - Rocking in My School Shoes*, by Eric Litwin & Kimberly Dean and illustrated by James Dean.



Vita Achieves Candid Gold Transparency



Candid, a nonprofit that provides comprehensive data and insights about the social sector, also serves as a respected charity rating organization. Vita is pleased to have earned Candid's **2025 Gold Transparency Seal**, recognizing our commitment to financial transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. Click the link to check out our nonprofit profile and to keep up to date with our impact.

The Bucks County Foundation Generously Supports Vita

Vita is thrilled to have received funding through the Grant for Bucks County program in the amount of \$7,500 from the **Bucks County Foundation** for the design and creation of a new website! Our new website will feature clear language, translations, and intuitive graphics, all of which will ensure the website can be easily navigated by our students.



Vita's ED, Heather Giampapa, Board Chair, Ellen Happ, and Executive Coordinator, Christine Serino, were pleased to thank Bucks County Foundation Board Chair Grace M. Deon and Executive Director Mandy Mundy for their generous support.

Vita Vibes

In this month's Vita Vibes, Board Member Will Kadri shares his inspiring story about his father, Ben, and the challenges he faced as a newcomer in America.

My initial encounter with Vita took place during their 50th Anniversary Celebration at Delaware Valley University. It was there that I found out about the vital services Vita has been offering to the community for decades. The education Vita provides throughout the county's correctional system hit home, given the many people I've seen enter the justice system feeling hopeless of how to build a future for themselves.



But even more, Vita's ESL classes made me think of one of the most important people in my and many individuals lives, my father. Hearing about Vita's foreign-born students' experiences brought back memories of my father's struggles with the English language when he first arrived in this country.

At 30 years old, my father, Ben, emigrated from Tizi Ouzou, Algeria, to the United States. Along with a few close friends, he discovered a supportive community in sanctuary cities like New Hope, PA, and Lambertville, NJ. Within three years of arriving, he married my mother, who was originally from the Main Line, just outside Philadelphia. A year after their wedding, I was born, and a few years later, my brother joined our family.

It wasn't until adulthood that I understood some of the frustrations my dad had shared with me as a child. In his home country, he worked as an accountant, which explains why he was hesitant to help with homework unless it involved mathematics. But when he came to America, his degree and early job experience were not recognized by US businesses. When asked what held him back the most from furthering his education or trying to interview for more relevant jobs to his skillset, he always said it was his difficulties with English. His unease with the language was apparent in every social situation — attending back-to-school nights, scheduling doctor appointments, or building relationships with other parents.



Now at the age of 33, I often tell my dad how incredible it is that he speaks 5 languages fluently. I remind him that I struggle to be at the very least bilingual, let alone multilingual.

My father's story reminds me how important the work Vita does is, and how the ability to communicate confidently and efficiently is something everyone should possess. Vita's students strive every day to support their families and enhance their quality of life, just as my father did.

Join the Vita Team

We Are Hiring!
Digital Literacy and Assessment
Specialist/English as a Second Language
Instructor - Full Time.
Vita Family Literacy
Childcare Worker- Part Time.

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