



February 2025

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

A Message from Vita's Executive Director and Board President

Thank you for reading Vita's monthly newsletter. We appreciate your belief in and support of Vita's mission to provide impactful educational programs for Bucks County's adult learners. Vita was established over 50 years ago by a grassroots collaboration of community members dedicated to strengthening their neighbors through education, and we remain committed to that goal today.

The past few weeks have been unsettling for many organizations that receive federal funding, including Vita. Staff and Board are closely monitoring potential funding changes and how they might affect our programs. Approximately 40% of Vita's funding comes through federal grants that support our High School Equivalency, GED prep, and English as a Second Language students. While we are hopeful that our programming will not be interrupted, we remain vigilant about potential developments and we will share any updates with you.

Even in these uncertain times, Vita's staff, Board, and volunteers remain focused on our students and helping them reach their educational goals. Classes are being held, students are learning, and successes are being celebrated every day.

The collaborative community that founded Vita is still an important part of the organization and we thank you for being a part of it. Please reach out should you have any questions or concerns, or to learn more about any of our programs and how they're making a difference in the lives of our students.

With gratitude,

Heather S. Giampapa
Executive Director

Ellen Happ
President, Board of Directors

Vita in the News!

Vita is thrilled to be featured in the [Bucks County Herald Newspaper](#) with an important article highlighting Vita's powerful Jobs Readiness Program in Bucks County's Correctional Facilities. For over 20 years, Vita has been at the forefront of assisting the county's incarcerated men and women successfully prepare for and secure employment upon their release. [Read the article here](#) to learn more about the program and how it helps participants succeed while reducing recidivism.



VITA EDUCATION SERVICES
Maxine is one of two women who teach VITA Education Services' Jobs Readiness course at Bucks County Correctional Facility.

Vita teachers help Bucks inmates build a stable future

Kathryn Finegan Clark incarcerated individuals with the essential skills and support they need

Love Your Library

February is National Library Lovers' Month, a time to celebrate the invaluable role libraries play in our communities! Vita is thankful for its partnership with the [Bucks County Free Library](#) system, which enriches our shared commitment to fostering a love for reading and lifelong learning.



We encourage everyone to show appreciation for their local library!

A Student's Inspiring Message



Margaret (Marji) Burke, a longtime Vita Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language Instructor recently shared an inspiring message from one of her students. Marji is currently teaching a Basic Math class, which is essential for students who struggle with math. It can be challenging for adult learners to begin at such a fundamental level in any subject. However, through hard work, perseverance, and the dedication of our instructors, students can progress and gain valuable insights into their learning.

That "aha" moment happened to one of Marji's students, and she excitedly wrote to share her moment of realization.

Below is the original email that Marji received from her student.

Hello Marji,

So after class tonight I was extremely disappointed in myself as I know I am smarter than this. I came downstairs and vented to my husband, as I always do about math lol. I was telling him about class tonight and during our math conversation I realized that for me it is about retention. And the way I retain things is to utilize them immediately. To Physically practice hands on in the moment, over and over until it's cemented I'm my brain. I asked myself "what did I learn tonight" So I went upstairs and I did a few problems of my own. Being someone who never gives up, and always pushes, I decided to do a few big multiplication math problems. Using the rules/tools /lessons we learned tonight, I am super proud to say that I was able to tackle some really big problems by hand, with no calculator. I sat down, breathed and it clicked. I did it. I'm sorry for the long email but I'm just super excited and had to share. Thank you for listening. Thank you for all you do. I really really appreciate you and this class!

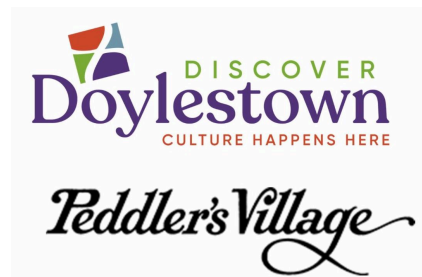
*Sincerely,
T.K.*

Marji says, "This is why I stay in the game. What a beautiful surprise to get this email today." We're grateful to Marji for staying in the game and making moments like this happen for her students!

Thank You to Our Community Partners

Vita is grateful to be a part of the Bucks County community, and we appreciate our supportive partners who do so much to celebrate the place we call home.

Thank you to [Peddler's Village](#) and [Discover Doylestown](#) for your generosity and your investment in our students' futures.



The Doctor is In



Vita's Family Literacy class in Warminster welcomed guest educator Lisa Borine, Family and Children Outreach Liaison with [Doylestown Health](#). Ms. Lisa facilitated an engaging workshop called the *Teddy Bear Clinic* for young Interactive Literacy Activity participants.

During the workshop, children had the opportunity to be a "doctor". Ms. Lisa provided real stethoscopes, bandages, syringes, scales, and even a model of

an X-ray machine. Each young doctor was assigned to take care of their patient, a small teddy bear.



The children were fully engaged in this hands-on educational experience, and were even able to take their teddy bears home to continue the learning, caring, and healing process.

Vita Vibes

Pat Stansfield, Vita's Literacy Tutoring Coordinator, spent the last week of January in Copapayo, El Salvador, where she utilized her teaching skills in a new environment. Pat traveled with her husband, Hal, and seven other members of [First Presbyterian Church of Ambler](#) to help install and maintain a water purification system and promote a health education program. This was Pat's first trip to the region, but it marked the fourth community in El Salvador that the church has supported in this way. All of these communities are located near the city of Suchitoto, which is approximately two hours north of San Salvador.



The water project consisted of three main components: Administration, Operation, and Education. Pat and her teaching partner, Debi Ferrarello, led the education team, collaborating with five community members. With the help of interpreters, they taught the local trainers who will then educate their friends and neighbors to promote proper handwashing and the responsible use of purified water within the local community. The interpreters, natives of El Salvador and fluent in English, were provided by [Living Waters for the World](#), a Tennessee-based organization that inspired, trained, and supplied materials for this project.



During breaks, the educators shared inspiring stories about their lives while guiding Pat around the city. They showcased the town's beauty and introduced her to a wonderful museum, [La Memoria Vive](#). What stood out most to Pat was the town memorial which honors the victims of the massacre that occurred in October 1983, when more than 100 residents lost their lives during the brutal [Civil War](#).

The operations team (Americans and locals), worked side by side to build, install, test, and run the water system. By the last full day in Copapayo, everyone's hard work paid off: the system was ready to go and the operators produced 48 5-gallon bottles of purified water. The community celebrated with a toast using the newly purified water!

Pat found her work in El Salvador to be deeply rewarding. The people of Copapayo were warm and welcoming, and Pat was extremely impressed with their commitment to the success of the water project. Pat reflected, "The welcome we received was particularly striking given that US was involved in the troubled history of El Salvador. El Salvador is a beautiful country. It was a privilege to go there, meet the people and see its beauty. I can't wait to go back."

Join the Vita Team



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

Click here to visit Job
Opportunities on our website
for more information.

Volunteer Opportunity: Resume Writing

Vita is seeking volunteer resume writers for participants in our Jobs Readiness program at the Bucks County Correctional Facility. For more information, please visit our [job opportunities webpage](#) and scroll down to the Volunteer Opportunity.

For information, visit www.vitaeducation.org or click below

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