



February 2026

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

## Vita Welcomes PA Department of Education



PDE & Vita Staff

Vita recently went through a routine monitoring review by the **Pennsylvania Department of Education** (PDE). Reviews typically occur every 5 years (although Vita had not had a full monitoring of all programs for about 10 years) to ensure agencies are fully compliant with federal and state requirements and to assess how the **Division of Adult Education** staff can provide technical assistance.

A great deal of effort went into preparing for the monitoring, and Vita's staff, instructors, tutors, and students helped to ensure the process was a smooth one. We're proud to report that PDE commended Vita for two Noteworthy Practices:

- Vita has a strong sense of community and support among staff and students.
- Vita's ABE and ESL Tutor Coordinators provide strong assistance and support for tutors and tutored students.

These Noteworthy Practices reflect the skill and care demonstrated by every Vita team member in teaching our students and helping them achieve success every day. Special kudos to Pat Stansfield and Douglas Green, Vita's Tutor Coordinators, for leading a tutoring program that goes above and beyond what is typical at other agencies.

Vita is grateful to PDE for its guidance, and we look forward to continuing to provide Bucks County with impactful free adult education programs for many more years to come!

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## Celebrating ESL Attendance All-Stars!

This month we celebrated Vita's English as a Second Language students with an 85% or higher attendance rate since classes and tutor groups began

in early October, and we're thrilled by the large number of students who were recognized!



### ESL Instructor-led Classes

- 58 students with 85% or higher attendance
- 10 students with 100% attendance.

### ESL Tutor-led Groups

- 18 students with 85% or higher attendance
- 3 students with 100% attendance

Vita's students attend morning or evening classes in addition to working, caring for family members, and dealing with inconveniences and challenges we all encounter every day. We're proud of the effort our students put in every week, and especially grateful to these students who have achieved such consistent attendance.

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## Corrections-Based Parent Book Club

You may remember us sharing information in our [October newsletter](#) about Vita's Parent Book Club for men and women in Bucks County's Correctional Facilities. We're excited to report that the Parent Book Club continues to be a great success, with 16 participants in two clubs held this month.

And we've expanded the program at the participants' request to include a traditional reading discussion as part of the course. In addition to selecting books to share with their children, participants receive a short story from Vita's program facilitators to read and discuss. The February selection was [The Lottery](#), by Shirley Jackson. First published in 1948, *The Lottery* is an iconic short story that lends itself to interesting conversations and

interpretations. Story discussions were lively with different views and opinions expressed. If it weren't for the participants' jumpsuits, you could have easily confused the jail classrooms with a public library meeting room.

We look forward to continuing to offer Parent Book Club participants not only the opportunity to share the joy of reading with their children, but also with each other.

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## Our Thanks to BLBB Charitable

Thank you to **BLBB Charitable** Director Diana Doherty for choosing to support Vita by recommending a very generous \$5,000 Director Discretionary Grant to support general operations. Diana has been integral in bringing Vita's work to the attention of BLBB Charitable and helping to share our mission with the wider community.



Vita Executive Director Heather Giampapa & BLBB Charitable Director Diana Doherty

We're grateful for this grant and all it will make possible for Vita's students and clients!

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## Join Our Team



### Digital Literacy Assessment Specialist/English Language Learning Instructor

- Full Time
- Flexible/Hybrid Schedule

### Transitional English Instructor/Adult Basic Education Tutoring Coordinator

- Full Time
- Flexible/Hybrid Schedule

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## Vita Vibes

Literacy Tutoring Coordinator Pat Stansfield and her husband, Hal, recently returned to El Salvador, a year after **their last trip**. Once again, Pat and Hal traveled with fellow volunteers from First **Presbyterian Church of Ambler** in partnership with **Living Waters for the World**, a Spring Hill, Tennessee nonprofit.



This year's trip started in the village of San Luis II, a small community about 2.5 hours northwest from San Salvador. San Luis II is nestled close to El Salvador's mountains and lies within the coffee-growing region. During their

stay, the team toured a local coffee processing facility. The area's natural beauty and cooler temperatures stood out.

San Luis shares the same problem seen in other communities the church has worked with – residents do not have clean, safe drinking water in their homes. The goals for Pat's team were to evaluate whether San Luis was a good fit for Living Waters' program and to come to an agreement to install a water purification system within the coming year. The team was successful on both counts and a trip to install the system will be scheduled as soon as site preparations are completed.

Acquiring a water system from Living Waters from the World is a multistage process: potential sites are screened by both the in-country coordinator and a U.S. team; the community meets with a US church team meet to determine if the project is a good fit for both groups; and installation begins once site preparations are complete. After installation, the community receives support for a minimum of three years through online communication and yearly visits known as Sustainability trips.

During the San Luis visit, Pat and her local interpreter, Brandon, met with community members who want to educate their friends and neighbors about using purified water. Pat will continue to connect with the local educators via What's App while the site is being prepared. The educators are extremely eager to get started!



After signing the formal agreement to install a system, the team said goodbye to the people of San Luis II and traveled to Copapayo, the town Pat traveled to last January, for a Sustainability visit, during which they received a great deal of good news.

After a year in operation, water sales are strong, records are faithfully kept, and the system is well-maintained. The team was delighted to hear that the community school has integrated thorough handwashing and consistent use of purified water into the school culture, resulting in the school experiencing zero absences due to gastrointestinal illness among students who also drank the purified water at home. Relocation of educators and individual health problems caused a temporary setback in community education, but steps to reestablish consistent programs are underway.

Pat continues to find her work with the water project to be deeply rewarding. "The people of El Salvador are wonderful hosts, and their country is beautiful. In addition, I get to use my professional skills in a different setting. I also get to help transform lives through access to purified water. I can't wait for our next trip."

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**Thursday, April 9, 2026**

*The Pearl S. Buck House  
Perkasie, Pennsylvania*

*Please join us for an evening in support of the programs of  
**Vita Education Services.**  
Enjoy a cocktail reception celebrating literacy, opportunity,  
and the transformative power of education.*

*Ticket information available soon.*

Email [eshapiro@vitaeducation.org](mailto:eshapiro@vitaeducation.org) to learn about Sponsorship Opportunities.

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For information, visit [www.vitaeducation.org](http://www.vitaeducation.org) or click below

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