

INSPIRED TO GIVE BACK: WHEN LEARNING COMES FULL CIRCLE



LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF
THE MONTACHUSETT AREA



At Literacy Volunteers of the Montachusett Area, we often talk about the power of tutoring—how one-on-one support can change a person’s confidence, opportunities, and future. But sometimes, the impact goes even further than we expect.

Recently, one of our students shared something that truly stayed with us. As she continues working hard to improve her English with the help of her volunteer tutor, her eldest son has been watching closely. Seeing her dedication—and the support she’s receiving—he told her that he wants to volunteer as a tutor himself one day, so he can help others the way his mother is being helped.

That is the ripple effect of literacy.

We see this story more often than you might think. Several of our current tutors were once in similar positions—growing up in families where English was new, where parents worked hard to learn, and where volunteers played an important role in that journey. As children, they watched their parents navigate a new language and a new culture. They saw the patience, encouragement, and kindness of volunteer tutors.

And they never forgot it.

Now, as adults, they return—not as students, but as tutors. When we ask them why they volunteer, their answers are often deeply personal:

- “Someone helped my family when we needed it.”
- “I saw how hard my parents worked to learn English.”
- “I want to give back in the same way.”

These tutors bring something truly special to their work. They understand the challenges their students face, not just academically, but emotionally. They know what it means to build a life in a new language. And they know firsthand how powerful it is when someone takes the time to help.

For the son who is just beginning to imagine himself as a future tutor, the journey is just starting. But his desire to give back is already a powerful reflection of what’s possible when

communities support one another.

At its heart, our work is not just about teaching English. It's about connection. It's about dignity. It's about creating a cycle of support that continues across generations.

One student becomes a confident learner.

One child becomes inspired.

One day, that child becomes a volunteer.

And the cycle continues.

By: Zwanieke Visser