



ADULT LEARNER SUCCESS STORY

Jessica Zhang | New York



Adult education gave Jessica the skills to communicate and connect with the people around her. Because of her limited English ability, Jessica could not connect well with the English-speaking people around her. Besides being socially isolating, it also affected her ability to communicate with important people in her life—such as her daughter’s teacher or her own doctor. It was extremely frustrating for her. When she heard about the adult literacy program at Queensborough Community College (QCC), she decided it was time to take action.

As she studied, she began to grow in confidence while communicating in English. Her teacher, Sarah, held the class to high standards, but she always did so in an encouraging, supportive way. In the beginning, Jessica was always hesitant to speak, however, through high-interest content and constant support, Jessica’s confidence steadily grew. Some classes were centered around controversial topics or current events, and the students were from many countries, so English was the only language they had in common, and they had to use it to express their opinions on each topic. This style of learning worked well for Jessica, and she excelled.

These classes also piqued Jessica’s interest in pursuing college—something she had not considered before. She had always believed that education has the power to open doors for many people, but she did not realize she was one of them. Today Jessica has so many possibilities before her, and adult education was the catalyst that sparked hope in her to dream bigger and feel more confident in her abilities. ■

Inspiring educators so adults succeed and communities thrive