

During a brief program, Anibal Gomez Toledo, Head of the Consular Section of the Embassy of Mexico, welcomed guests and announced the initiation of the new 'Plaza Comunitaria' program at Language ETC, which offers Mexican students the opportunity to obtain a certificate from the Mexican Ministry of Education that paves the way for a GED in Spanish or if possible, in English.



Event Co-Chairs Amy Berger and Jennifer Browning. Head of the Mexican Consulate, Anibal Toledo-Gomez

After greetings by the event's co-chairs, Amy Berger and Jennifer Browning, the teacher honorees were presented with gifts and remarks by Mercedes Lemp, LETC's Executive Director. In a moving and heartfelt address, Carlos Martin, one of the teacher honorees, recalled how he was often called upon by his immigrant parents to translate from English to Spanish, and the pain and embarrassment that often caused them. Like so many volunteers at LETC, Carlos's motivation stems not only from a sense of civic duty, but from a very personal connection to his students.



Volunteer, Carlos Martin

No gathering of LETC supporters would be complete without hearing from a student. Mizan Werede from Eritrea wowed the crowd with both her excellent English and her enthusiasm. Thank you Mizan!



Student, Mizan Werede

Finally, a new short film about LETC, produced by Stone Soup Films, was shown. We are so grateful to Stone Soup for this wonderful video that provides a glimpse into our school. You can see the video at [www.stonesoupfilms.org](http://www.stonesoupfilms.org), under completed projects.

The evening was a great success in every respect, raising close to \$90,000 for programs at LETC.

Thanks to all who attended. We are looking forward to next year, when we will celebrate LETC's 20th Anniversary! Stay tuned...

has also recently facilitated two teacher training workshops for our volunteers here at Language ETC

We are grateful to benefit from the expertise of the following **Advisory Board members** who have agreed to work with Language ETC:

**MaryAnn Florez**, Coordinator at Fairfax County Schools Adult ESOL. She previously served as Director, Professional Development Center at DC LEARNs and Lead ESL Specialist at Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP).

**Louise Krumm**, Expert Consultant at the Peace Corps. Ms. Krumm served as Country Director in Togo and Niger with the Peace Corps and prior to that as the Director of the Center for Language Education and Development at Georgetown University.

**Nina Liakos**, ESL Teacher at the International Language Institute at the University of Maryland and Lecturer on English as a Second Language at University of Maryland College Park, Maryland English Institute.

**Donna Moss**, Program Specialist, Arlington Public Schools, Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP). Ms. Moss has been an adult ESOL teacher, trainer, curriculum developer, and consultant. She has taught teacher education courses at American University and the University of the District of Columbia and is a contributing author for the series Collaborations: English for Our Lives. She holds a master's degree in adult education with a specialty in TESOL.

**Jawee Perla**, Senior International Student Advisor, International Student and Scholar Services at American University. Mr. Perla earned his MA in Linguistics at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where he taught Introduction to the Study of Language, General Linguistics, and Language and the Mind.

The Academic Advisory Board will also include Mary Janice Dicello, Chair of the Language ETC Board's Program Committee, and Ashley Lipps, LETC's Program Director.

WHO WE ARE

With nearly 2000 students annually,

LETC provides practical and affordable English language education in a diverse and welcoming environment. Our proven student-teacher partnership approach to education removes barriers, giving students the confidence to fully participate at home, work and in society. Our small classes with two teachers and extra-curricular activities empower students to become self-sufficient.

As a leading, nonprofit school and advocate for adult education in the Washington, DC region, our volunteer teachers help our students achieve success. With 70% of our students improving at least one literacy level each year, we have greatly exceeded the national average of 40%.

Our organizational focus is the successful integration of each individual immigrant into his or her community. Students come from 75 different countries on five continents, bringing different backgrounds and life experiences.

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE!  
[www.languageetc.org](http://www.languageetc.org)

SCHEDULE

Language ETC is open 6 days a week.

- HOURS:** MONDAY & WEDNESDAY: 1:30 PM – 8:00 PM
- TUESDAY & THURSDAY: 9:30 AM – 8:00 PM
- FRIDAY: CLOSED
- SATURDAY & SUNDAY: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

IMPORTANT DATES:

- JULY 4: CLOSED FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY
- JULY 14: TEACHER TRAINING FOR SUMMER TERM
- JULY 16: BEGINNING OF SUMMER CLASSES
- AUGUST 26: END OF SUMMER TERM
- SEPTEMBER 3: CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY
- SEPTEMBER 8: TEACHER TRAINING FOR FALL TERM
- SEPTEMBER 10: FALL TERM BEGINS
- OCTOBER 8: CLOSED FOR COLUMBUS DAY

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION,  
CALL LETC AT 202-387-2222.

LANGUAGE ETC NEWS

2200 CALIFORNIA STREET, NW  
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LANGUAGE ETC NEWS

Improving the lives of immigrants through education.

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LETC Honors Teachers at Spring Gala



Front row from left to right: Mary Janice and Frank Dicello, Susie Bennet, Georgia Martin, Mercedes Lemp, Susan Hattan  
Back row from left to right: Vicki Burton, Fran Butler, Lucy Hamachek, Bob Kanchuger, Ron Castaldi, Jennifer Browning, Carlos Martin and Suzanne Rosenthal.

On Monday evening, May 21, 2012, LETC hosted close to 200 distinguished guests at the gorgeous Mexican Cultural Institute for its annual spring gala. This year, Language ETC honored thirteen teachers who have volunteered at LETC for ten years or longer. They are: Susanne Bennet, Jennifer Browning, Vicki Burton, Fran Butler, Ron Castaldi, Frank Dicello, Mary Janice Dicello, Lucy Hamachek,

Susan Hattan, Bob Kanchuger, Carlos Martin, Georgia Martin, and Suzanne Rosenthal.

While enjoying margaritas, tacos, and passed hors d'oeuvres, guests viewed the soaring wall murals in the stairwell, visited the exhibits on the first and third floor, and met and mingled with the many LETC friends and supporters in attendance.

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LETC ANNOUNCES ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD

LETC is excited to announce the creation of our Academic Advisory Board. We're in the final stages of recruiting English language teaching professionals from the Washington area to serve on the Advisory Board and advise us on ways to strengthen our program. Language ETC strives to create the best curriculum and environment for our students to achieve their

goals in learning English while supporting and training our volunteers to be the most effective teachers and tutors they can be. The members of the Academic Advisory Board will look at our organization with a keen eye and use their expertise and experience to ensure that our program reflects best practices in English language teaching.

The board is being spearheaded by

Brock Brady, whose impressive resume includes stints as president of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Organization and co-director of the TESOL teacher education program at American University. Currently serving as Education Programming and Training Specialist for the Peace Corps, Mr. Brady

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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Visit Our Website – [www.languageetc.org](http://www.languageetc.org)

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\*The Language ETC Board of Directors thanks Sharyl Patillo and Phil Baker for their service and welcomes Thea Mason and Diane Mooney to the Board.



## New Developments!

While LETC's main focus has always been our English as a Second Language (ESL) program, we have also offered computer, citizenship and Spanish literacy classes. In the past few months we have developed some exciting partnerships to help us improve these classes.

Thanks to a partnership with Byte Back, computer classes are now available in English as well as Spanish. We've also added daytime and evening computer classes during the week as well as classes on weekends. In the coming months we will be updating the curriculum and hope to add more advanced levels of computer instruction.

We have also partnered with the Mexican Consulate to greatly improve our Spanish Literacy classes by becoming one of a few organizations in the Washington area to offer a curriculum supported by the Mexican government. The curriculum, called "Plaza Comunitaria," provides web-based Spanish elementary and secondary education coursework. Students can log in to the system from any computer and move at their own pace to improve their literacy and education skills. Once students have completed the coursework they are eligible to receive high-school diplomas from the Mexican government and/or move on to test for their Spanish GED.

A record number of volunteers this past term has allowed LETC to expand our ESL program as well; we've added free writing classes and additional drop-in conversation groups. In addition to their regular English classes our students have open access to the Language Lab and now may take part in any of the free conversation groups and writing classes offered several times during the week and on weekends. And we are currently in discussions that we hope will lead to offering ESL classes off-site in the fall, in a Columbia Heights apartment building and in a school building in College Park.

At our annual gala (more on the gala in the article on page 1), I had the chance to talk to several volunteers who have been with Language ETC over ten years. One of the most gratifying things I heard from them was that they felt the organization has continued to get better and better every year, even after 19 years! This is certainly our goal and we hope all of our volunteers and students feel that this year has been no exception.

As we close out our academic year we are excited about all our accomplishments, including:

Record number of students! – over 700 each three-month term

Record number of volunteers! – over 350 each three-month term

New classes and partnerships – Returning Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, DC Shaw Library Conversation classes.....And much more!

Thanks to the great LETC staff and Board, our fantastic volunteers, and our inspiration--our dedicated students.

*Mercedes Lemp*

### PEACE CORPS PARTNERSHIP

## Partnership for Peace

LETC CHOSEN BY RETURNING PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF WASHINGTON, DC

We are excited to announce that the members of Returning Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington DC (RPCV/W) have chosen LETC as the organization they will work with in their "Partnership for Peace" initiative. We are grateful for the \$2,000 they have already raised to launch this year-long program of fundraising events and promotional activities.

The partnership extends an already strong relationship LETC has enjoyed with the Peace Corps. Our volunteer base has always included for-

mer Peace Corps volunteers. Other volunteers have come to LETC prior to serving in the Peace Corps to get experience before going abroad to teach English. And both Lee Griffith, our current Weekend Volunteer Coordinator, and Kevin Burgess, our current AmeriCorps volunteer, are past Peace Corps volunteers. During the winter term, Brock Brady, Education Sector Specialist at the Peace Corps, provided training to our volunteers. He will also lead a new ESL Advisory Group that will work with



RPCV/W board members present Language ETC director Mercedes Lemp with a check as part of our new Partnership for Peace initiative.

LETC staff on trainings and program development. We are excited about partnering with the great RPCV/W members in the coming year.

## Language Expo

Many volunteers are attracted to Language ETC because of its multi-cultural, multi-lingual environment. On Saturday, May 12th, Language ETC and the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington DC presented LETC's first "Language EXPO". Returned Peace Corps Volunteers taught 30-minute introductory lessons in Swahili, Kazakh, Guarani, French, and Greek to a group of 20 eager volunteer teachers. They presented introductions, grammar basics, and cultural notes from service in their respective countries.

The event exposed LETC volunteers

to other languages while helping the RPCV/W group fulfill the third goal of the Peace Corps: "Helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans" through language. The Peace Corps volunteers were glowing when speaking of their experiences and adventures, and LETC teachers were eager to jump in. Kathleen Kearney, Sunday AM Language Lab instructor said, "Even if you have studied foreign languages, hearing a new language for the first time is disorienting and a bit frightening. The teacher expects you to understand and to speak right away! A humbling reminder of how vulnerable our students are, especially those in the basic classes. Learning a little about

the history, the structure and the culture of several different languages (in two hours) was both thought-provoking and fun."

Language ETC was chosen as the RPCV/W Partnership for Peace recipient for 2012 because, according to Development Director Chris Robinson, "[we] fulfill a critical need in our local community with a dedicated team of volunteer language teachers."

"Sharing the languages of our host countries with [LETC volunteers] exemplifies the spirit of the Peace Corps," Robinson added.

Preparations are now being made for another Language EXPO, and LETC looks forward to developing this relationship with RPCV/W.

### A small contribution goes a long way at Language ETC.

Donate through [www.languageetc.org](http://www.languageetc.org) (Click on Network for Good on the home page) or use this form. Student tuition is only \$120 for a three month term. Your contribution enables us to offer classes at these low prices and provide scholarships whenever needed.

Enclosed is a donation of \$: \_\_\_\_\_

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