

LETC EXTRA!

APRIL 2004

WHY I STUDY AT LANGUAGE, ETC



Maximo Sosa moved to Washington in 2001 and began taking English classes at Language ETC almost immediately after arriving. His brother had taken

classes at LETC and encouraged him to attend. He began with no English skills at all, having just moved here from El Salvador - now he is in level 4A. Though Maximo works seven days a week, some times working 10 hour shifts, in construction - he makes the effort to come to class four nights a week and is consistently awarded perfect attendance certificates. He has gained much from learning English and has many more goals he wants to attain that drive him to come each night, term after term. His boss has offered to help him become a resident and to send him to carpentry school once he

completes his English classes. Maximo also wants to earn his GED and would like to ultimately start his own business. As many other students, another thing that drives him is the need to send money home. The youngest of 10 children, not only does he send money home to his mother, he often helps out his brothers and sisters as well. The thing he likes most about Language ETC is the atmosphere. He has many friends that also take classes at LETC but it is the dedication he feels from the teachers and staff and the welcoming feeling of Language ETC that keep him coming.

WHY I VOLUNTEER TO TEACH ENGLISH

I started volunteering at Language, ETC four years ago after seeing an ad in the City Paper. I had lived in DC for about six months and was looking to get involved in the community. I had always volunteered when I was younger and on through college - which usually entailed earning points, merit badges, a free t-shirt, or added padding for a resume. I was looking to do something totally different and hands-on. I found that experience at LETC and have already gained much more from the program than I have given. I have learned a lot, met great people - students and teachers, and now know that I always want teaching to be a part of my life.



Tom Frankiewicz

I have worked in the field of environmental policy since graduating from Indiana University eight years ago. Indiana also happens to be where I met my wife, found my dog, and still call home.

I've spent the last 4 years working for the Ozone Transport Commission helping to coordinate state policies in the northeast to reduce smog. I'm starting an MBA program at GW this fall and hope to earn a certificate for ESL

along the way so that I may continue to work in the field of environmental policy and teach.

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From the Executive Director

NEW FACES IN NEW PLACES

Language ETC is a growing family! Now well into 2004, we have some new faces to spotlight.

Suzanne Stackhouse, introduced in our last newsletter as our new Language Lab Coordinator, is now our new Program Director. We feel very lucky to now have Suzanne as a full-time employee, in a position with much greater responsibility and with greater impact on the organization. We also welcome Joy Hunt, our new Weekend Administrative Assistant, and we welcome back volunteer Andrea Santy as our new Language Lab Coordinator.

Last month our Board also welcomed two new Board members introduced to Language ETC during our 10 Year Anniversary celebration – Elizabeth Manresa (our 10 Year event emcee) and Karren DeSeve, who served on our event committee, is an immigration lawyer and neighbor.

A great number of returning students are continuously moving to higher levels, increasing their skills, and helping us welcome and orient new students to the LETC extended family of programs.

The LETC website recently launched two new features,

one that highlights stories by our students and another that offers inspiring experiences as told by our volunteers. Read on in this newsletter to read some samples, but I encourage you to log on to our website (www.languageetc.org) to read more. The stories are all incredibly touching and serve as wonderful examples as to why LETC continues to thrive and make a difference in our community.

Finally, a special thank you to Michele Cona who has produced our newsletter for the past six years. This will be her last issue and we wish her well with her future endeavors.



Mercedes Lemp, Executive Director

From the Program Director

BUILDING ON SUCCESS



*Suzanne Stackhouse
Program Director*

What an incredible first semester at Language ETC! Thanks to the great support of the Board, staff, and volunteers, it has been a smooth transition stepping in as Program Director.

I am looking forward to setting and achieving new goals to bring our programs to a new level. Teacher training will continue to be a top priority on our agenda, both pre-semester for all volunteers and additional

opportunities being offered throughout the year. We will also be conducting more classroom observations to better address the needs of our students and teachers. The information gathered will be a great resource for making improvements. We're also working on further developing the Spanish Literacy curriculum and continually updating our ESL curriculum to reflect the most current research.

The new Test and Quiz file is an exciting addition to the program office and aims to assist teachers with planning and to increase efficiency in our procedures. It is located in my office next to the resource library.

I look forward to working with the Language ETC family this year and making our program the best it can be! We are open to new ideas and suggestions from our volunteers, so please stop by.

Coordinator Comments



Amanda Gonzales
Volunteer Coordinator

In addition to a successful winter term in our ESL and Spanish Literacy classes, our tutoring program saw a remarkable expansion from 10 participating students and volunteers to 60! Students receiving tutoring meet with the same tutor once a week for one-on-one sessions the hour before their class. That extra time outside of the classroom often makes a difference in a student's language development. Also,

one of our volunteers, Mary Sanderson, has been leading a weekly conversation group on Mondays, discussing different news articles with students from intermediate and advanced levels.

A new perfect attendance bulletin board will be located in our language lab hallway and will celebrate those students who attend nightly every month.

With the spring term starting April 19, we are

recruiting new volunteers for our classes. Please recommend our program to a friend or co-worker or any prospective students! We will be sponsoring a volunteer recruitment contest: the volunteer who brings in the highest amount of new volunteers will receive a certificate for a dinner for two at a local restaurant.

I want to thank all the volunteers for their hard work and dedication this term!

Language, ETC is grateful to the following organizations for their continued support: The State Education Agency, The Cafritz Foundation, The Meyer Foundation, The Inter-American Development Bank, the Corina Higginson Trust, The Jovid Foundation, Holy Trinity Church, The Hattie M. Strong Foundation, The Advisory Board, and the United Way Foundation. In addition we would like to give thanks to the hundreds of individuals who make such a great impact with their support.

*Thank
You!*

New Board Member

Our neighbor, LETC Board member Fran Butler, first got Karren DeSeve involved with LETC by asking her to join the 10 Year Gala Auction Committee. Once the Gala concluded it was obvious to us that Karren was a perfect match and she was asked to join the Board. Karren hopes to be able to support and enhance the work of Language ETC through her years of experience at Nationalities Service Center (a language and social services agency for immigrants in Philadelphia), at Community Legal Services, as the founder of its immigration legal services and with her experience of over 20 years of as an immigration attorney. Karren has been a member of and chaired numerous committees of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the Philadelphia Bar Association. She is a member of the Bar of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and the United States District Court for Eastern Pennsylvania. She was recently named among the top 10 immigration attorneys in Washington, D.C. and is listed in *America's Best Attorneys*. In addition, Karren has taught ESL in the past and looks forward to becoming an active board member.

Why I Volunteer (cont'd)

Manishi Prasad: I am currently a health care consultant with a private consulting group in Bethesda. I heard about Language, ETC through my former employer, Corporate Executive Board. I have been a fixture at the school on Monday nights since January 2000 and have taught students in all levels.

My mother enrolled in ESL classes when she first came to the United States nearly 33 years ago. Thanks to her own efforts, as well as those of her teachers, she mastered the English language and now holds an MBA from a university here in the US. None of this would be possible without ESL programs similar to the ones offered by Language ETC. Students at Language ETC give me a taste of what my mother must have been like three decades ago – a bit shy initially but incredibly determined with all of the right ingredients to be successful English-speaking individuals.

What inspires me about Language ETC? The students and their dedication to learning English are a source of inspiration. Anyone who can work a full-time job and then spend 8 hours during the week (or 6 hours over the weekend) learning English has a certain spirit in his/her character from which all of us can learn!



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WHAT IS LANGUAGE, ETC?

Founded in 1993 by Our Lady Queen of the Americas Church, Language, ETC strives to meet the growing demand for English and literacy courses in the Washington, DC metropolitan area by offering low-cost instruction in ESL, Spanish literacy, computer training, and G.E.D. preparation. The Center also provides job placement assistance on Sundays. A computer-assisted Language Lab, open seven days a week, allows students to practice English at times that suit their busy work schedules.

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Michele Cona

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HOW CAN YOU HELP?

A small contribution goes a long way at Language, ETC. \$80 covers the tuition of one student for a full three month term, including books. While our fees are low, there are many students that find it difficult to allocate money to improving their education when faced with more immediate needs such as food and housing. Language, ETC admits all students, regardless of their ability to pay. To allow us to maintain this policy we would greatly appreciate a donation to our scholarship fund.

_____ Please allocate \$80 to the scholarship fund.

_____ Please allocate \$160 to cover 2 scholarships.

_____ Please allocate the enclosed amount of _____ toward the scholarship fund.

From: Name _____
 Address _____
 (cont'd) _____

Please mail to: Language, ETC Scholarship Fund
 2200 California St., NW
 Washington, DC 20008

