

# LETC EXTRA!

## Job Bank Needs...Jobs!

Applications continue to pour in from hopeful job seekers but the pool of position announcements in the Language, ETC Job Bank is thinning out. So, LETC is calling on students, volunteers, and steadfast supporters out there to pass the word along to us about openings - temporary



or permanent - at your company or organization. Volunteer Peter Lenentine staffs the Job Bank every Sunday from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., but feel free to come by and post new announcements on the bulletin board outside the main office.

Typical positions sought are:

- Nannies/babysitters
- Elder care
- Housekeeping
- Seamstress
- Drivers/Chofers
- Gardeners
- Painters
- Construction
- Plumbers
- Mechanics
- Carpenters
- Handymen

## English Learners Gain Better Access to Community Services with EL/Civics

### One Family Fought to Protect their Teenage Son from Violence...and Won

Eight months after Language, ETC launched its EL/Civics class, the students and teachers say they are seeing very positive results. The combination English language instruction and community outreach class, which is funded by a grant from the State Education Agency, offers recent immigrants instruction on basic English skills and an orientation to a variety of social services, such as day care and public safety. Class activities range from filling out forms to going on field trips. This program is unique because it also provides much-needed childcare for the students' children - a service coordinated by UDC's Department of Gerontology, which also provides training for its senior citizen volunteers.

Recently, two EL/Civics students saw firsthand the benefit of being able to access community resources. Roberto and Ana Bernal of El Salvador say that thanks to the help of their EL/Civics teacher, they were able to find a safer learning environment for their teenage son.

He had been attending a local public school when he was attacked by another student. Neither the school administrators nor the police, they say, were able to help them protect their son.

Together with their teacher, they researched

charter schools in DC and were able to complete their son's transfer within weeks. Ana says that it was a very difficult experience all around.

EL/Civics runs Tuesday and Thursday evenings and is taught by Chenentia Gay and Ruth Takushi.



Roberto and Ana Bernal, bottom, attend the EL-Civics course while their youngest son enjoys board games with volunteers.

## LETC at a glance

- Hispanic: 89%; Pacific Asian: 7%; African: 2%;
- Women: 51%; Men: 49%
- Less than 7 years of education: 44%; 7-12 years 38%; 13+ years 18%
- Have 1 or more jobs: 85%
- Ages 16-18: 3%, 19-24: 24%; 25-44: 56%; 45-59: 15%, 60+: 2%



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# From the Executive Director

## First Impressions Meant Everything

This past summer, I decided to make a career change, looking for work that I felt was more fulfilling. Just two months later, I was hired as the new Executive Director of Language, ETC.

As I told friends and family of my new job, nearly everyone I talked to shared how they had either volunteered for the program at some point in the past 10 years (including my sister) or had a friend that had been involved in some way. Once I began in September, I saw with my own eyes the incredible impact of the program.

Of the more than 100 volunteer teachers in our ranks, most are returning teachers,

whose commitment has continued semester after semester, over the course of many years. Not only do they dedicate hours of class time each week, they give additional time in preparation, meeting with their group teachers and spending extra hours tutoring individual students. The difference they make is profound. There are 800 students registered this trimester alone. The majority have advanced to the next instruction level since the last term. I was lucky to have inherited a very competent and committed group of colleagues working behind the scenes. Our new ESL Coordinator, Annette Langdon, has

implemented instructional and procedural changes that are already receiving praise from teachers and students alike.

Ruben Elvis Baca runs a bustling, first-rate computer lab and Antonio Vidal, our Admissions Coordinator, is the glue that keeps it all together.

Over the past ten years, LETC has served the adult immigrant population of the

*Mercedes Lemp, Executive Director*



Washington, DC area with proven success. My goal is to use that record as a foundation for an ever-increasing level of quality in instruction and community outreach for many more years to come.

## ESL Coordinator Comments

### Our Focus is on Teacher Training



*Annette Langdon  
ESL Coordinator*

Greetings! As one of the several newcomers to Language, ETC, let me take a moment to introduce myself. I have lived in Washington, DC for nearly eight years, coming here from Colorado to study at American University. After

receiving my B.A. in International Studies, I decided to stay and complete my M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, eventually leading me to Language, ETC. My experience as a teacher and volunteer coordinator with various adult ESL organizations prepared me well for the enormous, yet rewarding, job of the ESL Coordinator here.

In addition to my arrival in late June, we've also added a new Assistant ESL Coordinator to help with all aspects of volunteer coordination and

training as well as curriculum development. Melanie Boyer comes to us with two years in West Africa with the Peace Corps as well as one year teaching English in Arizona. She is currently pursuing a M.A. in International Training & Education at American University.

We are both excited about the dedicated volunteers we work with on a daily basis. One

of our main goals for this year is to increase the amount of training available for volunteer teachers. Already, we've seen more than 115 volunteers attend



our initial training before classes started in September. It gave us a chance to meet many

volunteers and get a sense of the experience and commitment that keep this organization running strong.

# Student Success Story

## How Noemi Hernandez Finds Motivation

Level 1 student Consuelo Noemi Hernandez remains highly motivated to learn English. With 18 months of living and learning in the U.S. under her belt, she feels more comfortable using English around the neighborhood, and more importantly, at work. While most of her co-workers at Burger King only speak Spanish, after a short while studying English at Language, ETC, she is now able to speak in English to her boss,

who doesn't speak Spanish.

For 18 year-old Noemi, like many students at LETC, the push to learn English also comes from home. She attends class with her 16 year-old brother, Dimas, and they both will soon complete a fourth semester, advancing to an intermediate level. It is thanks to the sacrifice of her older brother, Noemi says, that she is even in the United States. In early 2001, he had been living and working in the District

when he paid the way for his younger sister and brother to leave El Salvador. Unfortunately, limited time and funds have kept their older brother from attending class as well.

Finally, Noemi notes the dedication of the teachers at LETC. If the weather is bad, it's easy for students to say they'll miss a class, but not the



Noemi Hernandez

teachers, she adds, "they come no matter what and that motivates me."

# Volunteer Spotlight

## Carlos Martin: To Instruct and Inspire



Carlos is happily teaching his own class again (Saturday ESL1A-2).

Though Carlos volunteers with many local groups, he gets special joy from teaching with LETC. Because of his bilingual, teaching English feels natural to him. The child of immigrants, Carlos understands the

Carlos Martin began teaching at Language, ETC in 2000, right after moving here from California. He taught on weekends, at first, then became a devoted substitute, filling in at every course level. Now,

power of language to advance in life. He often served as a translator for his parents. Their struggle to carve a life for themselves, inspired him to make sure that no one's voice is left unheard.

Too often, Carlos adds, immigrants are treated poorly at work and in their communities simply because they do not have enough vocabulary or proper grammar, and they lack the confidence to speak up for themselves. When Carlos teaches, he puts a lot of faith in his students to communicate in different ways. They lack the tools, he adds, not the ability.

It is that philosophy that prompts Carlos to teach the basic English levels - to both instruct and inspire his students to continue their studies.

Thank you

**Odeon Cafe**

1714 Connecticut Ave.

sponsor of this month's  
Volunteer Spotlight

Carlos will enjoy lunch  
for two, courtesy of  
Odeon Cafe

want to be a sponsor?  
call 202-387-2222

## Attention Federal Workers!



CFC #8936

The Combined Federal Campaign for 2003 is on and Language, ETC asks you to be a part of the "Caring is Sharing" effort. Just take a

moment to designate Language, ETC as your charity of choice and all these wonderful programs you read about in this

newsletter will benefit the whole year through. With your help, a whole year of charitable giving starts today!



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United Way #8936  
 Combined Federal Campaign #8936

## WHAT IS LANGUAGE, ETC?

**Founded in 1993 by Our Lady Queen of the Americas Church to meet the growing demand for English and literacy courses in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, Language, ETC offers low-cost instruction in ESL, citizenship, literacy, computer training, and GED 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

# SEA Donation Gives Language Lab New Look

*Plus: Special Thanks to United Way*

### WE NEED YOUR HELP!

LETC is always looking for caring people to:

- volunteer to teach ESL, literacy, citizenship, or GED preparatory classes.
- volunteer to tutor individual students.
- volunteer to work on the school newsletter or website.
- volunteer to monitor the Language Lab.
- donate money to continue our mission.
- spread the word among family and friends that we need volunteers.

Thanks to the generous donation of **18 new Dell computers from the State Education Agency (SEA)** of Washington, DC, we were able to unveil a new and improved Language Lab that is now able to accommodate an entire class. The lab has been redesigned to better serve our classes. The higher quality computers have allowed us to provide internet access on all the computers and will ensure a much richer experience for the students. In addition, new software provides enhanced learning opportunities for all ESL levels. To ensure all classes get an opportunity to benefit from the Lab, we have instituted a Language Lab calendar that



will give everyone a chance to experience technology-based learning experience.

In addition to this generous donation, the SEA has also provided, for the third year in a row, program funding, staff development seminars and valuable program monitoring

and feedback. We also thank the **United Way Foundation** for their generous grant.

Our biggest supporters, **our volunteers and Our Lady Queen of the Americas Church**, have made it possible for LETC to thrive for the past 10 years.