



LETC News

Improving the lives of immigrants through education

LETC Hosts First Community Services Fair

Many Language ETC students lack access to critical information about low or no cost medical, dental or social services. So, Language ETC staff reached out to community organizations and invited them to attend the first Community Services Fair on October 14, 2010. Representatives from legal and social service organizations as well as dental providers met with students at the school to discuss their specific needs and to provide further information about their services.

As a result of the fair:

- A student who is facing deportation will be represented by an immigration attorney from **The Patel Firm** on a pro bono basis.
- A student who is homeless learned about temporary, non-shelter housing and legal representation for the homeless from **Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless**.
- Several students learned from **Casa de Maryland** that all workers, regardless of immigration status, have the right to receive minimum wage, receive a paycheck every two weeks, and work in a safe environment free from physical and/or sexual abuse.



Students gather information at the Community Service Fair

- Many students learned that they can go to the **Catholic Charities Dental Clinic** to receive low-cost dental care.
- Many students learned from the **DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs** that, regardless of their immigration status, they have the right to heat as well as other basic necessities.

continued on page 5

DC LEARNS Recognizes LETC Volunteers and Student

DC LEARNS, a coalition of organizations devoted to promoting literacy in the DC area, held its annual Literacy Awards Event on the evening of December 9, 2010. Language ETC took the opportunity to nominate two outstanding volunteers — Mary Janice and Francis (Frank) Dicello — both of whom have made significant contributions to Language ETC and helped many adult immigrants over the past 18 years. One student, José Reyes, won the Mary Harshaw Outstanding Adult Learner Award, which recognizes an adult learner who has accomplished literacy goals, including use of new literacy skills on behalf of other adult learners (see article at right).

Recognizing the achievements made in literacy programs across the District, the event celebrates the impact of literacy leaders, students, and volunteers by presenting three separate awards. We are thrilled that our nominees took two of the three awards!

continued on page 5

Inside

<i>Letter from the Executive Director</i>	2
<i>LETC's AmeriCorps Volunteer</i>	3
<i>LETC Welcomes Embassy Staff</i>	3
<i>Inclement Weather Policy</i>	3
<i>Language ETC Donors</i>	4
<i>LETC Schedule</i>	6

STUDENT PROFILE

José Reyes Wins Award

On the evening of December 9, LETC student José Reyes and his wife attended the 14th Annual Literacy Recognition and Awards Event sponsored by DC Learns with butterflies in their stomachs. José was one of six students from the Washington metropolitan area who had been nominated for the prestigious Mary Harshaw Adult Learner Award. This award was named for a young woman whose determined spirit and hard work helped her overcome a lack of basic educational skills to achieve her goals. In the process, she became a literacy activist and even met President Clinton at the White House.

continued on page 5

Letter from the Executive Director

It may be windy and cold outside, but here at Language ETC it is warm and inviting as students and teachers return for a new term. On January 7, volunteer teachers and tutors gathered for orientation and training in preparation for Winter 2011 classes. Staff has been busy enrolling students who come from around the world, all eager to learn English so they can better their lives. And as noted elsewhere in the newsletter, there is much to celebrate this winter, as volunteers Frank and Mary Janice Dicello and student José Reyes received greatly deserved recognition for their work. [DC LEARNS Recognizes LETC Volunteers and Student and José Reyes Wins Award page 1]



Carolyn Morrissey

Another cause for celebration for our returning students and teachers is our newly refurbished language lab. An important component of our program, the language lab provides students with the opportunity to learn basic computer skills, assisted by one of our able lab volunteers alongside LETC teachers. The lab also provides access to computers to a number of students who are using them for the first time. Students learn how to use a variety of programs to practice English on their own. The lab is open for independent student use seven days a week and is rarely unoccupied. This

fall we were very fortunate to receive "gently used" computers from National Geographic, allowing us to upgrade all 24 stations in our language lab, as well as the 12 stations in our computer classroom. In addition, we received new carpet that was ably installed by staff members Steven White and Lee Griffith. The "new," improved lab opened the first week in January and has been very well received by returning students. Thank you, National Geographic!

We have also developed a new partnership with Deloitte through their Hispanic Employees Network. We were invited to present our program to employees during Hispanic Heritage Week, and were warmly received by them. A team of Deloitte employees has already translated numerous forms for us into five languages, allowing us to better serve students who speak Russian, two dialects of Chinese, Portuguese and French; more languages are coming soon. In addition, teams of Deloitte practitioners have volunteered to help with registration and tutoring. We are excited to welcome them to Language ETC and look forward to new endeavors together.

We also continue to develop relationships with more nonprofit organizations that serve immigrants in the DC community. Many of them are mentioned in the article on page 1 about the Community Services Fair. We're very pleased to be able to house the DC Earned Income Tax Credit clinic, in Spanish, in our language lab on Saturday morning, from February through April. This program provides low-income, Spanish-speaking DC residents with free tax preparation.

Finally, we hope that you will connect with us on the web this winter. Visit our Teachers' Corner Blog, written by volunteer teacher Cathy Sunshine, at <http://letcteachers.wordpress.com>. You'll find a myriad of teaching tips, classroom activities, profiles, interesting materials on immigration and multiculturalism, and more. The blog is intended to be a lively forum for the entire LETC community to exchange ideas and resources. Check back often or subscribe to the feed to keep up with the conversation. And for quick news and information, visit our Facebook page and become a fan. You don't have to wait for our newsletter to see all the great things happening at LETC!

Language ETC

(Language, Education, and Technology Center)

Board of Directors

D. Philip Baker	Tamera Luzzatto
Amy E. Berger	Sylvia Miller
Jennifer F. Browning, <i>Chair</i>	Sharyl Pattillo
Mary Janice Dicello	Karen Yudelson Sandler
Charles Diltrich	Natalie Wexler
Susan Hattan	Carolyn A. Morrissey, PhD, <i>Executive Director</i>
Stephanie G. Lawson	

Emeritus Board

Pilar Laugel, <i>Founding Director</i>	Renee L. Feather
Susanne K. Bennet	Mark French
Ellen Bennett	Kathleen Hendrix
Frances F. Butler	Robert Kanchuger, Esq.
Karren DeSeve	Edward R. M. Kane
Francis P. Dicello, Esq.	Alexia Kelley
	Gerald Langan, Esq.
	Phil Rizik

Ashley Lipps: LETC's AmeriCorps Volunteer

Ashley Lipps had heard of AmeriCorps*, but when a friend of hers decided to sign up, she took a closer look. Here at Language ETC, we're glad she did. According to Ashley, "I knew I wanted to be an AmeriCorps member for sure, after I talked to Ann-Lloyd Hufstader [LETC's Program Director]. In the past I had volunteered at a program for adults learning English, so I could tell that Language ETC was a place doing great work where I would learn a lot, and hopefully make a difference too." She came to work here through the AmeriCorps program in August 2010 and will stay for one year.



Ashley is fluent in German and rapidly improving her Spanish as she helps students in the office.

"The most valuable part of my experience so far has been teaching and just observing our students here at Language ETC," Ashley says. "In my MA program I spent a lot of time studying and trying to figure out how and why people learn languages. Often, that means thinking about why people don't learn languages!" She notes that our students often have many demands on their time, like jobs and families, that can interfere with their studies. But at LETC, "I'm really learning a lot about how and why people overcome obstacles and stay motivated to learn a language."

Her advice for future AmeriCorps volunteers at Language ETC? "I would let them know that they will never be bored. There is always something different to do and learn!"

**AmeriCorps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, an independent federal agency whose mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.*

LETC Welcomes Embassy Staff Members

Staff members from seven embassies joined Executive Director Carolyn Morrissey, along with other LETC staff, several teachers, and board members during an informal luncheon, on Thursday, November 18, 2010.

The purpose of the get together was to expand awareness of LETC and its mission within the diplomatic community. LETC sent invitations to all embassies, offering the opportunity for luncheon and a tour, particularly for those staff members who work with immigrants to the United States from their respective countries.

All who attended visited one or two classes. Later over a lunch of salads and sandwiches, guests were able to mingle, ask questions and learn more about LETC.

Countries represented included Haiti, Venezuela, Mexico, Laos, Vietnam, Central African Republic and Yemen.

According to Shari Patillo, LETC Board Member and Program Committee Chair, "The guests seemed to really enjoy visiting the classes, as well as meeting the LETC staff and their colleagues from other consulates."

Our school welcomes the opportunity to meet new people from around the world and spread the word about our classes. Thank you to all who attended, and we hope to see you back again with more of your friends!

Inclement Weather Policy ...

In the event of inclement weather, Language ETC follows the District of Columbia Schools cancellation policy. That is, if the District of Columbia Schools are closed, Language ETC is closed. Please see below for program-specific information.

Morning Classes: If DC public schools are closed, Language ETC classes are cancelled. If DC public schools indicate a late arrival policy, Language ETC morning classes are cancelled. If DC public schools are opening on time, Language ETC classes will be held on a regular schedule.

Evening, Weekend and Sunday AM classes: Check your e-mail or call Language ETC at 202-387-2222 to check the recorded message to know if classes are cancelled.

Language ETC Donors, September 2010 – January 2011

\$10,000

Natalie Wexler and
James Feldman

\$2,000 – 4,999

Amy Berger and Glen Nager
Jennifer and Vincent Browning
Norma and George Fabian
Susan Hattan and Steve Kittrell
Margaret Freeston Hennessey
Carl Kravitz and
Elizabeth Werner
Stephanie and Gene Lawson
Sylvia and Nicholas Miller
Elizabeth Wehrle and
Matt Miller

\$1,000 – \$1,999

Adrienne Arslit
Susanne K. Bennet
Bob and Ellen Bennet
Fran and Frank Butler
Karren and Edward DeSeve
Chuck Dittrich
Betsy and Robert Feinberg
Lincoln Groves
Lynne and Joe Horning
Joan and Barry Rosenthal
Frances H. Symes
Merriellou and Ned Symes
Peter Taylor

\$500 – \$999

D. Philip Baker
Nicholas Baldick
Jenny and Peter Brody
FADICA
Brent and Walter Goo
Robert Kanchuger and
Margaret Cotter
Ken and Jane Lieberthal
Geraldyn Lobel
Maria Teresa Meyer
Quentin Meyer
Karen and Joseph Sandler
Shrine of the
Most Blessed Sacrament
MB73

\$200 – \$499

Betty and Herb Adelman
Mary Carpenter
Melissa Chen and Paul Joseph
Frank and Mary Janice Dicello
Deirdre Donahue
Nancy Donaldson and
Mark Bohannon
Mary and Bob Eccles
Jon and Tim Gale

\$200 – \$499 (cont.)

Brad Gehrke
David Goldston
Eriu Gormley
Pam and Tom Green
Virginia Hamill
Mrs. Robert A. Harper
Dr. Fruzsina Harsanyi and
Mr. Raymond Garcia
Scott Hempling
Margaret Hensler
John and Diane Hopkins
Joan Hornig
Joan Kerrigan
Grace and Peter Kimm
Roland King
Klein Family Foundation
Bonnie Loeb
Carol and Gene Ludwig
Thea and Gary Mason
Mary V. Mochary
Laurence E. Platt and
Elizabeth Clare Herington
Perry Province
Susan and Anthony Quainton
Mr. and Mrs.
Edward J. Quim, Jr.
David Mark Riley
Fabian Rosado and
Virginia Rosado Desilets
Scott and Katharine
Schellhammer
Lee and Elizabeth Schoenecker
Stephanie Slewka and
Horton Beebe-Center
Pamela Tomski
Delores E. Wolf
Kevin and
Elizabeth Wrege

Under \$200

Asuncion Aguila
Joseph Alseldo
Robert Bagnall and Alex Tang
David R. Bender, PhD
Suzanne R. Bemison
Elinor Berg
Elaine and Richard Binder
Sarah Boasberg
Patti Borthwick and
Tom Munzer
Betsy Broder and
David Wentworth
Sharon Brown and
Michael Pollowitz
Stephen W. Buck
Maureen Budetti
Walter and Barbara Burgin
Gerri Burton
Vicki Burton

Under \$200 (cont.)

Thomas P. Butler
Martyn Caldwell
Stephen Callahan and
Christine Madigan
Ellen Cassidy and Jeff Blum
James and Heather Clessuras
Charles and Mina Coggeshall
Barbara and Dan Cox
John I. Day
Mary and Murray Drabkin
Michael Duclos
Judge and Mrs. Timothy Dyk
Susan Fine
Samuel Finn
Ronald and Patricia Flagg
Dr. and Mrs.
William A. Gardner
Ben and JoAnne Ginsberg
Pat Garcia Golding
Daniel Gordon
Joseph and Merna Guttentag
Anthony L. Harvey
Sally Herman
Brenda Hornbeck
Merilee Janssen and
David Oldfield
Julius and Ann Kaplan
Sherman and Maureen Katz
Alexia Kelley
Paul E. Kelly
Amy Shepard Knight
Eugene Lambert
Mary Agnes Lambolely
Nancy Leopold
Jenny Luray
Tamera Luzzatto
Jennifer and Sean Lynch
Mimi Mager
Carlos Martin
Teresita Martinez-Vergne
Mr. and Mrs. James W. McBride
Walter C. McCabe

Under \$200 (cont.)

Drs. Jill E. McGovern and
Steven Muller
Diane Mooney
Bridget and Mike Morris
Carolyn Morrissey and
Carole Richardson
Mary O'Melveny
Sharyl Pattillo
Mary Ella Payne and
Neal Neuberger
Diane and Arnold Polinger
Diane Zipursky Quale
Susan and Larry Rausch
Susan and William A. Reinsch
Beverly Rezneck
Eric Rice
Suzanne Rosenthal
Phyllis D. Rozman
Diana Rubin
Susan A. Safer
Jennifer Shea and Peter Bruns
Larry Slesinger
Claudia C. Smith
Erik and
Jennifer Ann Beard Smulson
Susan Spock and
Caldwell Harrop
Molly Stewart
Harriett Stonehill
Catherine A. Sunshine
Bonnie Temple
James and Claudia Thurber
Corey Urbina
Ann and Mike Van Dusen
Melanne and Philip Verveer
Brenda and Arthur B. Vieregge
Pierre and Claire Wagner
Valerie Wayne
William G. Wleand
Robert and Diane Willbur
Ellen Wormser

Thank You to the following for their generous support

Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer
Foundation

The Morris & Gwendolyn
Cafritz Foundation

IDB-DC Solidarity Program
of the Inter-American
Development Bank

The Jovid Foundation

Clark Charitable Foundation

John and Cora Davis
Foundation

The Hattie Strong Foundation

The Corinna Higginson
Foundation

Holy Trinity Church
Sidgemore Family Foundation

National Geographic
Taproot Foundation

Our Lady Queen of the
Americas Church

Mayor's Office on
Latino Affairs

DC Office of State
Superintendent of Education



Frank DiCello

DC LEARNS Recognizes LETC Volunteers and Student

continued from page 1

Frank was the recipient of the Mike Fox Literacy Leader Award, which recognizes an individual who has used his leadership skills city-wide in a significant way to improve adult, family or children's literacy in the District. Frank was one of three attorneys who worked together to incorporate Language ETC as a 501(c)(3). He was a member of the original Board of Directors and in the last ten years has also served as Acting Executive Director and Chair of the Board of Directors. He has testified before the City Council and fought for funding for adult literacy in the District. In addition to advocating on a larger level, he's also taught many courses and helped many individual students learn English.

Mary Janice was nominated for the Literacy Volunteer Award, which recognizes an individual volunteer whose efforts have made a major contribution to a student or program. Mary Janice was one of the first volunteer teachers at Language ETC. She has spent countless hours teaching students, planning classes, helping staff, and training other volunteers. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for LETC. Through her dedication, hundreds of students have benefitted directly and thousands have benefitted indirectly.

Our students benefit from the dedication of 300 volunteers every term. It's extremely difficult to isolate one or two to recognize. However, those who know and have worked with Mary Janice and Frank over the years cannot fail to recognize and honor their outstanding contributions. Thank you to DC LEARNS for a wonderful evening and the opportunity to honor both of them.

LETC First Community Services Fair

continued from page 1

These are some of the many stories that came out of the fair, which was attended by AYUDA, Capital Area Asset Builders, Columbia Heights Shaw Family Support Collaborative, D.C. Language Access Coalition, Housing Counseling Services, Inc., LIFT-DC, and Martin Luther King Jr. Library, in addition to the organizations listed above.

The next Community Services Fairs will be held February 1 (for daytime classes), February 7 (evening), and February 12 (weekend). These events will appear regularly on LETC's calendar going forward, helping to fulfill the mission of "improving the lives of immigrants through education."

STUDENT PROFILE

José Reyes Wins Award

continued from page 1

Originally from rural El Salvador, José had never been inside a classroom as a child. Two decades ago he came to this country, and despite his lack of formal education opened the El Tamarindo restaurant, now a well-known landmark in the Adams Morgan section of Washington.

Although he achieved financial success, José never let go of his dream of improving his literacy. That dream eventually brought him to Language ETC, where he propelled himself from a beginning to an intermediate level in only one year. His hard work also brought him before the D.C. City Council's Committee of the Whole in April 2010 to testify on behalf of adult educational programs in the District. José serves as a role model and mentor to Latinos throughout our metropolitan area.

An amazing story—but he was up against five other students who also had amazing stories. José didn't think he could possibly win. When he and the other nominees were called up together to receive certificates, José thought his part in the evening was over. But then his name was called again. He had won! As he returned to the podium he thought, "Thank you, God, for putting me in something very important."

Perhaps someday, as José continues his education and his advocacy on behalf of adult learners, he will find himself at the White House meeting President Obama. Congratulations, José!

A small contribution goes a long way at Language ETC.

Donate through 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 \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

In ____ honor or ____ memory of _____

Please notify: _____

Language ETC

2200 California St., NW Washington, DC 20008

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.

Schedule *Language ETC is open 7 days a week to accommodate the diverse schedules of our students.*

Hours: **Monday – Thursday: 9 am – 9 pm**
Friday – Sunday: 9 am – 5 pm

April 3: *Winter Term Ends*

April 16: *Teacher Training for Spring Term*

April 18: *Spring Term Begins*

June 30: *Spring Term Ends*

For further information, call LETC at 202-387-2222.

Language ETC

2200 California Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008-3902
202-387-2222

