



Portland Literacy Council

LiteracyLinks

The Newsletter for Volunteer Tutors

Peggy L. Murphy, Editor
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In This Issue

PLC Community Grants
What's New at the Library?
Tutor Toolbox
 Back to School
Calendar
Opportunities

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Portland Literacy Council is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations can be made at <http://portlandliteracy.org/donate.html>, or by mail to: Portland Literacy Council PO Box 2872, Portland, OR 97208-2872.

Community Grants: 500 words/\$500

The Portland Literacy Council announces its third annual community grants opportunity. We invite community nonprofit organizations to apply for grants to support Adult Basic Education, GED preparation, or English-as-a-Second Language instruction.

PLC's 2014 Community Grants are limited to \$500. Grant funds are available to support existing projects and may be used to meet the program or operational expenses of the sponsoring agency.

To apply: Authorized representatives of interested agencies may submit a letter describing, in 500 words or less, the literacy project for which funding is requested, the students served, the project's goals, and how a community grant will advance the project mission. Submissions must include other acceptable evidence of nonprofit status.

In 2013, Portland Literacy Council awarded seven community grants. Four programs received \$500 grants:

- **Street Books** to build a Spanish-language collection
- Neighborhood House, Women's ESL Health Class, for materials to help support family literacy efforts
- Sunset Presbyterian Church for new textbooks and updated instruction materials
- Sisters of St. Mary's, Beaverton, to support the ESOL/GED program.

Additionally, PLC awarded \$250 grants to Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees, a program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; Centro Cultural, Washington County; and SEWorks, Portland.

For more details on grant program guidelines and eligibility criteria, visit the [Portland Literacy Council](http://www.portlandliteracy.org) website.

Contact: Cheryl Thoen, PLC Board of Directions
Email: grants@portlandliteracy.org

Application Deadline: November 10, 2014

Whats New at Multnomah County Library?

by Lisa Regimbal, Adult Literacy Outreach Coordinator, Multnomah County Library

Hi, my name is Lisa Regimbal and in February 2014, I joined the staff at Multnomah County Library Outreach Services, as the Adult Literacy Coordinator. My previous experience included working as a reference librarian, GED instructor, jail librarian, and Peace Corps volunteer. I can be reached at 503-988-6318 or lisar@multco.us. I coordinate these programs:

- [LEARN \(Let Every Adult Read Now\)](#), a one-to-one tutoring program for adults whose reading levels create barriers in their daily lives.
- [GED: A Plan for Success](#), a two-hour lab that provides an overview of the GED testing process.
- [Citizenship Classes](#), a 6-week series of two-hour classes designed to prepare people for the US citizenship interview.
- [Talk Time](#), English conversation practice, a weekly drop-in program. Volunteers lead six weekly groups.
- [English \(ESL\) Classes](#), free, multilevel, no registration-required classes for English learners.
- [International Literacy Day Celebration](#), an annual event for community organizations that provide adult literacy resources.

ESL Classes

The library has a new partnership with People Places Things to provide English (ESL) classes at neighborhood libraries. We currently host five classes at Rockwood Library. These free, dynamic, family-friendly classes are ongoing and no registration is required. The class facilitators take real-world items like job applications and maps and use effective, engaging techniques to turn them into language and culture learning materials. For more information, call 503-988-5396.

Talk Time

Talk Time is a great opportunity for English language learners at the library. Facilitated conversation groups supplement other ways of learning English. At Talk Time, participants frequently drive the conversation with questions about US culture and idiomatic expressions. It is a place to practice speaking English with no lessons or corrections.

Free Resources for Tutors and Learners

The library has a variety of free resources for literacy tutors, English learners, citizenship applicants, and people working to improve their reading skills.

[LearningExpress Library](#) has tutorials and practice exercises for reading and math skills from elementary to college level. You will find:

- Academic and occupational tests including the GED and the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery)
- Software Skills Center with computer tutorials for Microsoft products
- Career center to start a job search or explore different occupations
- Spanish tutorials to improve reading and writing skills and to learn about and practice for the Spanish GED test
- Citizenship preparation materials, including practice questions for the civics and history portion of the US Citizenship Test
- [General Education Development](#) includes frequently asked questions, an interactive tutorial, skill-building exercises and practices tests available in study mode or timed to simulate the real test

Computer Labs

Thirty-minute, one-on-one lab appointments are available in several languages. (The appointments are available in any language we support, English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese and Chinese).

Editor's Note:

We thank Lisa for this informative recap of resources at Multnomah County Library. We are indeed lucky that our library system continues to provide free resources for one and all.

What's in Your Tutor Toolbox?

Back to School

by Patrik McDade (patrik@pptpdx.com) Founder and Program Director, [People*Places*Things](#)

September means back to school for many children growing up in households where English is not the primary language. These kids struggle with an unfamiliar system in an unfamiliar language, often surrounded by people that don't look like them. That's hard.

But it's even harder for the parents. The parents struggle with the system, the language, and the people in positions of power who often don't look like them, just like their kids. But there's even more: They have to buy all the new clothes, figure out the PTA meetings, fill the car with gas, arrange for childcare, work a full time job, keep everyone on track, take care of domestic duties. And maybe practice a little English on the side. Meanwhile, their children are growing up in a completely different reality than they did – different values, different food, different technology. And likely a vastly more complicated and expensive health care system. The children's reality is completely unknown to the parents. They might as well be on the moon.

We need more funding for kids and schools – it's a mess here in Oregon. But just as urgently, we need support for parents of those kids. The parents make the decisions in the household inside a system that they cannot effectively navigate. The best case scenario for limited English proficient parents? The children excel, and the parents languish. The less-than-best-case (and not uncommon) – everyone languishes.

As tutors of adults, we can make a big difference by easing up on an academic approach to language skills development – and instead accompanying our learners as they navigate the real world. As tutors of children, we can make a big difference by connecting with their parents.

Editor's Note: Patrik regularly presents at the Annual Tutor Conference, and has recently facilitated our Awesome Tutor Workshops. We thank him for sharing his expertise.

For Your Calendar

Tutor Training

Do you know someone who is considering becoming a volunteer literacy tutor? Interested volunteers can learn more about tutoring on the [Tutors](#) page of the Portland Literacy Council website. Access online registration via the Tutors Page.

Upcoming workshops

- September 27 and Oct 4
PCC Sylvania
Note: This workshop is full.
- November 8 and 15
PCC Willow Creek Center
241 SW Edgeway Dr., Room 225
Beaverton
Registration opens October 13

Opportunities

Citizenship Classes

[Registration](#) is now open at Multnomah County Library for Citizenship classes. Pre-registration is required; access registration via the Multnomah County Library website.

- September 24 at 5:30 pm, for six Thursdays
Gresham Branch
385 NW Miller
Large meeting room
- October 6, at 5:45 pm, for six Mondays
Holgate Branch
7905 SE Holgate Blvd
Meeting room

GED Success: Plan of Action

[Registration](#) is also open for MC Library's revamped workshops on how to study for the GED; access registration via MC Library website.

- October 18 (Saturday), at 10:30 am
Gresham Branch
385 NW Miller
- November 15 (Saturday), at 1:00 pm
Gregory Heights Branch
7921 SE Sandy Blvd