

LiteracyLinks

The Portland Literacy Council Newsletter for Volunteer Tutors

Peggy L. Murphy, Editor

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Portland Literacy Council

PO Box 2872

Portland, OR 97208-2872

www.portlandliteracy.org

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Photo credits

Page 1: Catherine O'Connor

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In Their Own Words



Luncheon speakers from St. Anthony ESL program in Tigard: From left: Fernando Macias, Liliana Moga, and Maryam Haghpanah.

The highlight of every Annual Tutor Conference is hearing students speak about their journey to the United States. This year's speakers were poised, their speeches demonstrated spoken fluency, and they used both humor and irony in their speeches. Their stories are amazing testimonials of the challenges they face.

Maryam Haghpanah found returning greetings and saying "nice to meet you, too" a hurdle. So, she made sure she was first to say "Nice to meet you." Hard work and ESL classes in Michigan allowed her to pass the TOEFL exam, and to go to college to study medical technology. While she and her family returned to Iran, political and economic issues brought them back to the U.S. ([Maryam's speech.](#))

Fernando Macias completed preparatory education in Mexico (equivalent to our high school diploma). He came for adventure and found that making a living here wasn't as easy as he'd thought. He's been in the U.S. for 20 years and has worked at numerous jobs from agriculture to construction to printing to electronics manufacturing. ([Fernando's speech.](#))

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St. Anthony ESL teacher Hong Cuc (Cookie) Ritter (right) presented Derene Meurisse (left) a certificate "For Outstanding Generosity and Dedication to our Community." Bob and Derene Meurisse have coordinated St. Anthony ESL for 15 years.



Patrik McDade (left) presented two conference workshops. Trina Hing (right) is a regular annual conference volunteer.

Words

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Liliana Moga and her family followed their dreams, desires, and destiny to come to the U.S. from Romania. She describes feeling like a newborn discovering the world, taking her first steps. She learned to feel and think in another language and discovered new people, places, traditions, and culture. Liliana reminded the audience that Romania was one of many countries deeply impacted by the Chernobyl nuclear accident. She lost several family members to cancer afterwards. ([Liliana's speech.](#))

Using humor is a milestone in speaking another language. Maryam reminded us of the vagaries of idioms. Fernando's first steps to the luncheon podium were a 180-degree turn toward the exit. Nina listed famous Romanians, including Dracula, yet assured the crowd that not all Romanians are vampires.

Maryam, Fernando, and Liliana are all students at St. Anthony ESL program in Tigard. Each speaker showed poise and confidence in telling their story. Their hard work and that of their tutor, Catherine O'Connor, gave the audience a glimmer of their journeys.

Thanks to Conference Volunteers

The Annual Tutor Conference is successful because of great volunteers. Our heartfelt thanks go to:

Portland Literacy Board of Directors

Kris Magaurn
 Jay Morgensen
 Emilia Gilroy-Sander
 Penny Russman
 Bryan McGowan
 Peggy Murphy
 Troy Hlckman
 Lisa Davidson

Volunteers

Trina Hing
 Ariana Chandler

Presenters, Moderators, Facilitators

Gail Czerski
 Cece Dispenza
 Heidi Dryden
 Kathleen Holloway
 Nanci Leiton
 Banyu Yaylali
 Edit McDonald
 Patrik McDade
 Maria Muscarella
 Les Rivera
 John Runcie
 Kay Talbot



Kay Talbot, VLT Coordinator at PCC Sylvania, and Sister Mary Noreen O'Leary. Sr. Noreen has tutored for 25 years.



Les Rivera (left) sporting his St. Patrick's Day regalia is a regular presenter at the Annual Tutor Conference. Kris Magaurn (right), PLC President, has organized the conference since 2001.

Thanks to St. Anthony Students

St. Anthony ELS students helped tutors at the conference understand the practical aspects of language learning. We are grateful to these students:

Culture Exchange Workshop (Kay Talbot, moderator)

- Muzahem Alhuimei — Iraq
- Shufen Chen — China
- Gloria Esparza — Mexico
- Eva Garcia — Mexico
- Nilda Lofamia — Philippines
- Ameila Tulagan — Philippines

Pronunciation Workshop (Cece Dispenza, presenter)

- Eva Garcia — Mexico
- Maryam Haghpanah
- Fernando Macias — Mexico
- Nina Moga — Romania
- Hong Cuc "Cookie" Ritter — Vietnam
- Mai Perl — Vietnam

Thanks to Adult Literacy Supporters

In-kind services and support provided by:
Portland Community College
Reed College SEEDS Program
Maunu Printing, Portland, Oregon

Thanks to Door Prize Donors

These businesses in the metro area donated door prizes, a small token of appreciation to volunteer tutors and other literacy advocates.

- Alder Creek Kayak & Canoe
- Broadway Rose Theater
- Hopworks Urban Brewery
- Kell's Irish Restaurant and Pub
- Kerr Bikes (3)
- New Seasons Sellwood
- Portland Art Museum
- Rae's Lakeview Lounge
- Secret Aardvark Hot Sauce
- Starbucks on Terwilliger (2)
- Starbucks on Macadam (4)
- Wiggles and Wags Dog Wash

The Immigration Law Office of Bryan McGowan donated a Powell's Book Store gift certificate.

Magaurn Video donated White Bird Dance Series Tickets to B.C. Ballet.

An anonymous donor provided an Exodus Spa gift Certificate.

The Tutor Toolbox will return in April.

For Your Calendar

Volunteer Literacy Tutor Training

Registration Information (register by Email or telephone 971-722-6111 X3700)

- May 11 & 18, 9 am to 4 pm
CCC Harmony Campus Bldg
7738 SE Harmony Rd, Milwaukie

To register:

Call: 971-722-4620 x3700

E-mail: pdxliteracy@hotmail.com

Tutor Discussion Group

Spring Term Tentative Date: Saturday, May 4 or 11, PCC Climb Center. Look for firm date and location in upcoming issues of **LiteracyLinks**.

Opportunities

ORTESOL Spring Workshop

Oregon Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR
Saturday, April 2, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
Plenary Session —“The Creation of a New ESL Spelling and Vocabulary List”

Speaker — Keith Folse

(Sponsored by National Geographic Learning)

Includes luncheon and two afternoon workshops
ORTESOL membership is open to ESL tutors.

Multnomah County Library

Multnomah Co Library GED Learning Labs

Learn general information about GED testing requirements and resources to help prepare for the GED test. Take a practice test and learn how to study online and from library study guides. Attendance at the lab qualifies participants for a partial GED testing scholarship.

Registration is required

- Kenton, Saturday, April 20, 3:00 pm