

LiteracyLinks

The Portland Literacy Council Newsletter for Volunteer Tutors

Peggy L. Murphy, Editor

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**Literacy is a
Lifesaver
Annual Tutor Conference
Saturday, March 10
Reed College
Save the date!**

Community Grants Support Literacy



Pamoja House literacy programs include the whole family.

(photo courtesy Pamoja House)

Portland Literacy Council awarded its first ever community grants to **Julia West House**, St. Anthony ESL program, and **Pamoja House**. The grants further PLC's mission to support literacy in the Portland Metropolitan area.

- **Julia West House** in downtown Portland serves adult basic education students, including those interested in earning a GED, and is one of the few ABE programs in the Portland area. Clients include adults with literacy skills in the first to eleventh grade range. Students may be homeless, in recovery, mentally ill, in special needs housing, on parole or probation, unemployed, or learning English. Julia West House additionally offers classes in parenting, relationships, stress and anger management, self reliance, and communication. Tutors assist students with education plan goals, and meet regularly to achieve the goals. Students may receive funding assistance for GED testing.

Achievements are significant considering the many challenges the students face, and the program has a good track record for students achieving GED certificates.

PLC has awarded a \$500 grant to Julia West House to purchase

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Grants (from page 2)

testing materials, program supplies, and official GED Mathematics model calculators.

- **St. Anthony ESL Program**, Tigard, is in its 14th year and currently serves 150 students from 16 countries. The program continues to grow, offering eight classes for students in five levels of ESL. In addition to beginning and intermediate classes, Level 4 ESL and pronunciation classes at Level 5 are now available. Volunteers manage and teach the classes.

St. Anthony is one of the few free ESL programs in the Tigard area, and many of its students come from countries without free primary and secondary education. It's not unusual for students who learn English at St. Anthony' to become proficient enough to become classroom assistants or enroll in college.

The luncheon speakers at the 2011 Tutor Conference were St. Anthony students. They also participated in the cultural discussion workshop.

The PLC grant of \$500 will help defray costs for utilities, and photocopying, currently absorbed by St. Anthony, and will allow the program to continue to offer free English instruction.

- **Pamoja House** in southwest Portland provides free ESL classes, computer workshops, citizenship classes, driver's education, and life skills classes to immigrants. The program serves families, with classes for men, women, and children. Assistance may include tutoring, preparing for



Ann O'Donnell's Beginning I Class at St. Anthony

(photo courtesy of St. Anthony)

resumes, applying for jobs or residence cards, and general life skills. While classes are free, students are asked to pay for textbooks. The all-volunteer teaching staff is able to assist new immigrants in developing the skills they need to become U.S. citizens and contributing community members.

With its focus on family literacy, Pamoja House offers childcare. Class scheduling considers children's school hours so that mothers may attend classes.

PLC awarded Pamoja House \$250 to help defray photocopying costs.

Take a Peek at Portland Literacy Council

The mission of Portland Literacy Council (founded in 1993) is to support tutors. We are an all-volunteer, nonprofit, charitable organization. Many tutors only see us at the annual Tutor Conference each March, so we will be presenting some short bios of board members and their interest in literacy over the next months.

Kris Magaurn is Portland Literacy Council's founder and board chair. She is the chief planner, organizer, and energy behind the annual tutor conference. Kris feels that the conference is "a perfect opportunity for learning techniques, making connections, and keeping in touch with literacy advocates." Kris is a

VLT Coordinator for PCC, and trains tutors (she has ProLiteracy certification in ESL and Adult Basic Literacy). In addition to her considerable efforts for literacy, Kris recently did a lot of heavy lifting as a gripper to a documentary film crew in Haiti.

What's In Your Tutor Toolbox?

Sponsored by Melissa Madenski, Adult Literacy Coordinator, Multnomah County Library

GED Changes are scheduled for test administration in 2013 and testing in 2014.

In 2013, sometime after January 1st, GED tests will be given only on computers at official testing sites - no more paper and pencil tests. This is a big change. Please encourage folks you know who plan to take the GED test to brush up on computer skills or complete their testing before this change. One way to achieve keyboard proficiency is by accessing our [typing tutorials](#) online. The library offers free computer access in all of its branches for two hours a day. The library offers free computer classes at its branches.

In addition to the testing change, there will be a revision to the GED test itself in 2014. This will change the content and requirements for the GED test. If a student hasn't taken all 5 tests and obtained a certificate by the time of the new test, they will need to retake all the tests, even those that they've already passed. Encourage anyone you know to finish up testing by the revision's projected date of early 2014. The proposed revisions are summarized in this [link](#).

The library will continue to offer GED orientations.

For Your Calendar

Volunteer Literacy Tutor Training

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

- January 21 & 28, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Clackamas Community College Campus - OIT
7736 SE Harmony Rd, Milwaukie, OR
- February 25 & March 3, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
PCC Willow Creek
241 SW Edgeway Drive, Beaverton
Near SW 185th and Baseline Road
Park in the MAX parking lot

Literacy is a Life Saver

The 2012 Tutor Conference is slated for Saturday, March 10, at Reed College. Expect a choice of 15 workshops and the usual delicious luncheon. Registration is \$35. Look for details in the February 2012 *LiteracyLinks*. See you there!

Opportunities

"Making It Clear"

Health Literacy Conference
March 9, 2012, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Multnomah Athletic Club
1849 SW Salmon St, Portland

Sponsored by Legacy Health and partners, national and local experts will share research and evidence-based practices to help increase health literacy and improve quality, safety, and outcomes. Adult literacy educators are among the target audience.

Conference fees: \$75 January 16th and after.

See [conference website](#) for details. Please direct questions to Kari Stanley, Director, Community Benefit, Legacy Health, kstanley@lhs.org, 503-413-6011.