



New Neighbors News



A Newsletter Written By and For Our Students

New Neighbors English Language Learning and Family Literacy Program Volume III, Number 1 December 18, 2015

New Places, New People, New Experience

By Jovana Arsic, Level 7

It's Tuesday morning. Just five months ago I could not have dreamed this, that I would be able to write in English, to express myself at least a little bit. But our life paths are incredible and weird.

It was a cold and cloudy January day, almost as sad as my mind. I was on the lifeguard chair at the YMCA. I was unhappy at my job because no one seemed to care about me. At the moment of my saddest thoughts, I saw a guy walking in with three adorable kids. His name was Kenny. He asked if they could swim. I could not say, "No". They asked me a couple of questions, but my English was broken. I wanted to say a lot, but I could not. I wanted to say, "My dears, I am as broken as my English." I miss my family. I want to leave this cold, abstract country.

Kenny gave me his business card and told me to call him if I needed a second job. This is how our friendship started. I came to Murphy's Irish Pub in Old Town, Alexandria looking for Kenny. I learned he is the general manager. I was scared. I told him that I had not worked in this business before; my English is bad; I do not know food or drinks; I can't be a hostess. Yet he kept encouraging me that I would be very good here; that it just takes time. He said "We've got you." I worked as a hostess one night. Then Kenny had a plan to put me into training for servers. At the very first, I was so scared of people, of my co-workers, because they might be mean and make fun of my English. It was a hard time for me. But Kenny continued to support me.

Now every time at work I try to work hard, to respect rules and people, because I want Kenny to be proud of me. He is someone who is worth admiring.

Why I Love Teaching ESL!

By Mary Schlichtmann

In my Intro B class, we talked about childhood memories. One student, Deysi from Honduras, talked about how she liked to dance when she was a little girl. She demonstrated two different dances

for us, and then other students demonstrated dances from Afghanistan, Sudan and Morocco. This is just another example of why I love to teach ESL – I never know what kind of fun might erupt when the students begin to share their experiences.

New Neighbors Photo Album



Learning about community



Learning about health

From Our Director

By Marcia D'Arcangelo

What are we learning? We're learning that there are not enough minutes in the day to do all we want to do. We're learning how to use the Internet to register for New Neighbors classes. We're learning that friends will comfort us when we are sad. We're learning that at New Neighbors we can share our sorrows, our fears, and our happiness. We're learning that feelings communicate when we don't know the words. We're learning that foods from other countries are delicious, creative, and sometimes spicy. We're learning that we all celebrate holidays and love our families. We're learning not to drop our cell phones. We're learning about other countries and cultures. We're learning to be patient with each other. We're learning English, and we're learning how to get along. We are learning to be good neighbors!

Did you know that New Neighbors registered 170 students this fall?

New Job Skills Class Begins This Month

By Julie Kehrli

I'm excited to begin teaching the new Jobs Skills class this month. Students in this class will focus on job-specific English learning and practices. They will learn the skills necessary to identify job openings in their neighborhood and how to fill out application forms to their best advantage. Students will study and practice appropriate job interview behavior and conventions. They will learn to identify and emphasize their personal strengths, skills and experience when seeking employment. They will also study the American workplace culture to learn the skills necessary to interact successfully with their employers and their coworkers, enabling them to keep their jobs and prosper in the U.S. workplace. Students taking this class will be working hard and, hopefully, learning a lot in the process.

What Makes the U.S. Interesting?

By Students of Level 6

The most interesting thing for me is the lovely way of teaching children without pressure. **Fouzia, Pakistan**

The most interesting thing I have done was to see the skyline from New York. I was so surprised at all the tall buildings. **Lidia, Honduras**

The most interesting thing that I have seen here is how most people smile and say "Hi" even if they are not family. **Roya, Afghanistan**

The most interesting thing I've seen since I came here is the ocean (the Atlantic Ocean). There is no ocean near my country. **Sholpan, Kazakhstan**

The most interesting thing I have seen was Niagara Falls. **Rajaa, Morocco**

The most interesting things I have seen are The White House, The Capitol, and all the museums. **Ana, El Salvador**

The most interesting thing I have seen is that people here respect the laws. Citizens have rights that no one can break and they feel secure to live here and I feel that way too. **Carolina, Mexico**

I like very much to go to the natural parks. The most interesting thing was to see the beautiful natural parks in this country. Next year, I want to go to Yellowstone Park. **Gabriel, Colombia**

The most interesting thing that I have seen is the beautiful color of the city in autumn. **Susana, Mexico**

The most interesting thing I have done was to organize our first Thanksgiving. I cooked American-style turkey, and we invited our American neighbors. **Maria, Spain**

The most interesting thing I saw when I moved here is how people line up to take the bus. Everyone who comes to the line asks, "Are you in line?" Everyone respects the order. **Armida, El Salvador**

The most interesting thing in my life is my family life. Six years ago, I was single and living on my own. Now I am married and have two kids. Now family life is always busy. **Kume, Eithiopia**

The most interesting thing to me is to see how laws work here and the consequences you face if you don't obey them. **Margaret, Ghana**

This most interesting thing I have seen is spring in the U.S. It is "explosive."
Marian, Spain

Student Milestones

- Nadia Bakri Mohamed, Level 5, obtained a Virginia driver's license.
- Pablo Lemus, Level 5, was awarded "Employee of the Month" from his employer, Four Seasons Hotels.
- Soumia Ziani, Level 5, obtained a job at Macy's for the holidays.
- Adiari Rivera, Level 2, is expecting her second child, a baby boy, in February.
- Five Level 5 students received Alexandria Library cards after a class tour of the Queen Street library.

Wisdom Sayings From Across the World



"The prawn that falls asleep gets swept away." **Danisa Guerrero, Venezuela**

"If you chase after two rabbits, you won't catch either." **Kana Shimamura, Japan**

"Tell me who your friends are, and I will tell you who you are." **Nhora Osorio de Leon, Colombia**

"If you use a rock bridge [across the stream], check the bridge." **Esther FunjeongWon, South Korea**

"Don't look a gift horse in the teeth."
Stephanie Arratia, Bolivia

Build vocabulary by learning a new word every day!

- Keep a list of new words you see or hear!
- Buy a book of word searches!
- Play Scrabble in English!

Life in the United States (As described by Level 5 students)

By Pablo Lemus

I really like living here because it is a safe country. When you are going to work or coming home you don't worry about delinquency. We have found many opportunities here. There are different types of jobs and we have met people from other countries. We have heard other languages and we are learning some new words. Our children have better opportunities. They can speak more than two languages. I'm so glad to be here.

By Nadia Mohammed

The thing I like most about the U.S.A. is the ROLE of children and women, making sure they get the safest life in all conditions. Many women and children in the world don't get these kinds of rights in many countries. After I came to the U.S., I found every woman and child has a right to speak, write, go to school and say NO for everything and anything they don't like and YES for everything and anything they like. This is a country where I want to raise my two daughters to give them the opportunity of learning and being on TOP of their dreams and my dreams too.

By Yitbarek Altaye

When I am living in the U.S., I observe so many things and I like all the systems of how to govern the people according to democracy and equality. This is reality. The U.S.A. is for all the world's people.

By Naod Leykun

When I came to the United States, everything was new for me. One day I went to Target with my wife. I went to the restroom. I wanted to wash my hands. I didn't know how to open the faucet. It was a motion sensor. I saw a man washing his hands. I didn't see how he opened it. I tried to open the faucet again, but the water didn't come out. I walked out of the bathroom without washing my hands.

By Salihah Algahtani

There are many reasons to love America. America is a beautiful and colorful place to live. One reason I love living in America is the beautiful views. Also, sandy beaches to camp at, ocean shores, grassy hills and rivers. In America there are many places for tourists. Every state has its own places of attraction. Moreover, people from a really young age start to volunteer and do community service work. Also, almost every teenager at an early age has a job. They learn how to be independent from a young age.

A Friendly Visitor

By Elizabeth Gomes Da Cruz, Level 6

Last spring at New Neighbors, I talked to a representative of the organization, Volunteer Alexandria, and I learned about Senior Services of Alexandria, one of their many volunteer opportunities. When I first applied for volunteering in Alexandria, I had an idea that it would be a good way to practice my English. But after seven months working as a volunteer, my experience is much more than that.

I started visiting once a week under the Friendly Visitor Program with Mrs. Else, who is 92 years old. She lives at The Fountains of Washington in Alexandria, a senior citizen residence. At the beginning, Mrs. Else talked about her life and asked about my life as well. Almost every week, I invite her to walk outside, and she has been enjoying that. For many years, she was a bird watcher, and I became very impressed with how she recognized a bird by the way it flies.

At this point, I don't know who is helping who more. I always feel very welcome, and I am learning a lot by seeing Mrs. Else's positive way of life. Although she is a senior in her 90's, Mrs. Else is very sharp and still wants to learn and study. She is a good example for all of us!

We Live in Alexandria!

By Sofiya, Level 4

My name is Sofiya. I am from Ethiopia. I have been in the U.S. since 2012. I have two daughters and one son in Alexandria. Alexandria is very comfortable because there is good public transportation, there is no crime and there are many public libraries and shopping malls. Alexandria has historical Old Town and it is a good place to enjoy. Christ Church is my school. I go to school to learn the English language and to get a job someday.

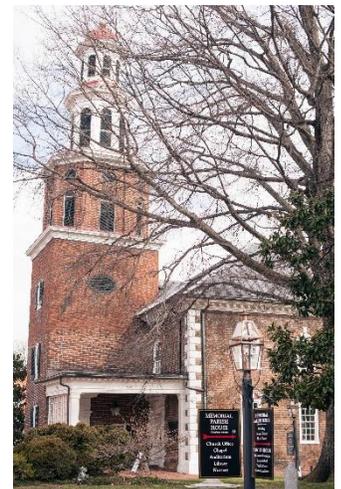
By Fadoua Razzoua, Level 4

My name is Fadoua. I came to Alexandria in 2014. I live on Seminary Road. I like this city

because I have a lot of friends here, and because there are beautiful views. There are a lot of shopping centers and schools near me. However, the best thing I like about living in Alexandria is there are nice people. They respect each other. There are also a lot of green spaces and good weather.

By Aven Sabre, Level 4

My name is Aven. I am from the north of Iraq. I came to the USA in 2000. I have lived in Alexandria for more than 15 years. I like my neighborhood. We are good friends and we are like a family. My house is close to the shopping center and there are good schools for my kids.



By Alumbra Photography

Level 7 Takes a Field Trip!

My name is Helena and I'm from Germany. I really enjoyed the field trip on the Washington D.C. Mall on a lovely Wednesday. We visited six monuments. The World War II Monument impressed me the most.

My name is Danisa and I am from Venezuela. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorial was my favorite because is divided into four presidential periods and you can see a representation of the most significant success in each period carved into bronze. I'm very thankful because it was a great day sharing with classmates and our teacher, Don. We enjoyed the nice weather, learning American History and getting involved in American Culture.



Life in the United States (As described by Level 5 students)

(Continued from Page 3)

By Maza Desta

I like America because it's beautiful and very clean and everything goes by the rules. People respect each other and everyone is equal. Also, there's opportunity to study and to work. So that's why I'm studying to improve my English skills to find a good job for the future.

By Yemane Gebreselase

When I came to the U.S.A. I was confused by the English language. For example, I couldn't follow a conversation if many people were talking at the same time. I always got confused the first time when I got in the U.S. with my family. We have visited museums, galleries, zoos and a few U.S. states. The U.S.A. is very beautiful and the best country in the world. America has wonderful infrastructure, for example, the roads, electricity, water, real estate, transportation, and more. Also, the U.S.A. has very good laws. No one is above the law. I like that people in the U.S. have

respect for each other. I have respect for the volunteer teachers. After I came here a year later I took English classes starting with level two in New Neighbors English School. For the past two years I haven't been able to take classes because of my work schedule. I have been working since May 18, 2010. This year I have been learning in level 5. My life has changed because my English skills have improved. I like New Neighbors English School. I would like to suggest for anyone new to the U.S. to visit the New Neighbors English School. Thank you so much for this school organizers and volunteer teachers. Now I have better English skills than before, which is improved opportunities.

By Erika Martinez

The U.S.A. is a country where I enjoy security and the rights of people are respected, especially freedom of expression. I am confused by state laws. I don't understand the reasons for the differences. I live in a city in Maryland.

We have to travel to Virginia and Washington D.C. for work and other services. When we moved, the laws changed. We have had the opportunity to receive different services in different states and to compare them. But I enjoy staying here!

By Zienab Fnu

The most important things I like in the United States are a good life style, career opportunities, good health care, a clean environment, and most important gender equality. And I like women's freedom and good governances, law, policies and equality across the country.

Register for Spring!

In Person: January 20 and 21, 2016

9 :30 – 12 noon at Christ Church

Online: Available starting January 4

New students must take placement test at Christ Church



418 S. Washington St., Alexandria, VA (703) 549-0111 www.campaigncenter.org



118 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA (703) 549-1450 www.historicchristchurch.org