

Division of Adult Education Monthly Webinar

January 23, 2025

This session is being recorded. By participating in this session, you are consenting to the recording, retention, and use of this session.

No other recording of this session is allowed.



1/23/2025

1

1

Agenda

- Division staff updates
- Presentations
 - Using Advanced ESL Students as Volunteers in Adult Education Programs
- Updates and reminders



1/23/2025

2

2

Division staff

- Mary Wilson: promotion to lead advisor
- Cheryl Parker: return from medical leave



1/23/2025

3

3

Presentations

- Intermediate Unit 1
- Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon
- Penn State University
- United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA



1/23/2025

4

4

Utilizing Advanced ESL Students in Adult Education Programs

Rachel Zilcosky, Program Administrator,
Rachel.Zilcosky@iu1.org

Angela Kenes, Head Coordinator,
Angela.Kenes@iu1.org



5 Intermediate Unit 1 Adult Education & Career Readiness

5

Program Background and Need

Program Background:

- Serve Fayette, Greene, Washington and Westmoreland Counties in southwestern PA. Contracted enrollment in direct service grant is 497
- Until PY 23-24, traditionally were 20% ESL and 80% ABE
- Increases each year in ESL students
- Needed to change class schedules and train staff
 - 23-24: 30% ESL and 70% ABE
 - 24-25 45% ESL and 55% ABE
- More need than staff available
- Multi-level class offered on weekend
- Advanced students wanted speaking and listening practice



6 Intermediate Unit 1 Adult Education & Career Readiness

6

Ways Student Classroom Aides are Utilized

- *Divide class into small groups with 2-3 students at same level*
- *Instructor provides lessons one week in advance to tutors*
- *Help with translation for procedural items and intake*
- *Start as whole group and end as whole group*



7 Intermediate Unit 1 Adult Education & Career Readiness

7

Recruitment/Incentives/Additional learning

- *Recruitment is based on attendance, ESL level and interest.*
- *Communicating the benefits of being a tutor and working with peers*
- *Provide additional advanced learning materials to peer tutors*
- *Provide Burlington English accounts*
- *Stay past normal class time to meet with tutors and provide help and instruction on teaching*



8 Intermediate Unit 1 Adult Education & Career Readiness

8

Benefits and Outcomes of Peer Tutoring Opportunities

- *All peer tutoring opportunities are viewed as a privilege*
- *Acknowledgement of skill level*
- *Preparation for work as interpreter or teacher in the community*
- *Helping other students to assimilate*
- *One peer tutor hired by community agency as PT teacher*
- *One peer tutor promoted to supervisor and recruits for class participation*



9 Intermediate Unit 1 Adult Education & Career Readiness

9

Why and how our advanced ESL students volunteer in our program

Why

- Student volunteers help the teacher address the needs of the class
- Struggling students get additional help through purposeful pairing of volunteer advanced students and struggling students
- Advanced students benefit from the experience and have something they can include on a resume

How

- Work one on one with a student
- Assist the teacher in organizing and facilitating classroom activities
- Special events – organize, plan, and participate special



10

How do you recruit students for volunteer opportunities? Do you ever receive interest from students or do teachers suggest students?

- We let our teachers know that advanced students can help.
- We offer the opportunity to our advanced students.
- Our best success is students who completed the program and come back as volunteer tutors - it's more difficult to engage current students to volunteer outside their class because they are busy. They are working, have families and homes to run.



11

Do you provide incentives/additional learning opportunities?

- Letters of recommendation
- The chance to build their skills by teaching others – students build soft skills, academic skills and workplace skills.



12

Do any of your students act as community or cultural liaisons in your program and/or any other capacity?

- Student conferences at Franklin and Marshall and Hershey Medical Center.
- LGH – students assisted with the readability of signage in the hospital.
- Local Foundations– student speakers tell their story.
- Advocacy – students write letters and testify in hearings.



13

A presentation slide with a blue gradient background. At the top, it features logos for the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, Penn State College of Education, and Goodling Institute. The main text reads: "Penn State Career & Family Pathways Utilizing Advanced ESL Students in Adult Education Programs".

14

Why we started utilizing advanced ESL students

- Looking for ways to give students opportunities beyond the classroom
- We have students with a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences
- Students were looking for ways to help the program
- Could use help with:
 - New students with little English language skills
 - Recruitment
 - Special events



15

Student Ambassadors

What is a student ambassador?

A student ambassador is a current or former student who will be matched with new students to help them adjust to our program and to State College. Responsibilities may include attending orientation and explaining information from the perspective of a student. Ambassadors may also be asked to help promote our program on social media and attend Centre County outreach events with the instructors.

Can anyone be a student ambassador?

There are requirements. Student ambassadors must be current or former students of the program and have an ESL level 4 or higher.



16

Student Ambassadors



How will ambassadors be matched with new students?

Ambassadors will be matched with new students who speak the same language and/or share the same culture when possible.

How will this benefit the ambassador?

Being an ambassador is a great way to give back to the program and help others who may be feeling overwhelmed or lost. You will receive business cards and be recognized at a yearly dinner. This is also a great experience to add to a resume!

Does an ambassador have to be trained?

Prospective Student Ambassadors must attend training before officially becoming a Student Ambassador. Training will be offered several times throughout the year as needed. The training will be 1 session for approximately 2 hours.



17

Events advanced students help facilitate and participate in

Annual Student Appreciation/Fall Kick-off

Held in early September to show our appreciation for our students and kick-off the new academic year.

Potluck Lunches

Students and faculty bring a dish from their country to share. New students are introduced, and student birthdays and achievements are announced. This is a great social event with a lot of conversation, laughter, and friendship (and amazing food!). 4 times per year.

Conversation Groups

A place to practice conversation skills in an informal setting. Hosted by students, instructors or tutors.



18

Events they help facilitate and participate in

American Culture Destination

Throughout the year, we explore various aspects of local and American culture. Annual events include the Penn State Arboretum, the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts, coffee and conversation at local cafés, the Centre Hall Yard Sales, picking apples and pumpkins at local farms in the fall, the Centre County Grange Fair and more! [4-6 events per year.](#)

Panel of Experts

Learn about and discuss interesting topics with a panel of experts-often our very own students! Recent topics have included Brazil's Carnaval, Lunar (Chinese) New Year, Iranian New Year, Ramadan, Ukrainian Culture and Ukrainian Vyshyvanka Day (World Embroidery Day), Earth Day and Climate Change, the ancient Chinese exercise Ba Duan Gin and more!
[4-6 events \(October-May\)](#)



19

United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania

- Mission: To work together with neighbors to provide services and create opportunities that empower individuals and build strong, interdependent communities
- Vision: To address emerging social needs and be an innovative leader in building strong interdependent communities based upon our traditional commitment of partnering with individuals, families and neighborhoods
- Five programmatic departments and a Community Development Corporation



20

Community Education Department

- [Community Education Overview](#)
- English as a Second Language for adult students
- Family Literacy Program for English Language Learners
- Contracted Enrollment: 60 families
- School-Aged Tutoring
- 17 families consisting of 30 adults and 37 children
- Citizenship Preparation Classes
- USCCB Preferred Communities
- Language Partnership
- Job Readiness Programming



21

Employment Opportunities

- Fee-for-service childcare positions for the Family Literacy Program
 - Build conversational and work-force skills
 - Gain confidence
- Full time childcare positions within the agency
 - Career or field that relates to their educational background
 - Advancement of careers
 - Achievement of goals
 - Translation of degrees from home country
- Instructors often make suggestions based on students' skills, goals, and interests



22

Volunteering and Additional Opportunities

- Volunteer classroom aides
 - Lead activities or groups
- EnGen program seats
 - Seats are limited and valuable
 - Allows students to practice their English skills (also in relation to fields of interest)
- Leadership Class
- Cultural Liaisons
- Caregiver Leadership plans
 - Welcoming Scranton
 - International Dinner
 - Family engagement events



23

Contact Information

Audrey Golosky, Assistant Director of Community Education
 agolosky@uncnepa.org
 272-228-1373



24

GED Ready® price increase

- Retail price increase to \$7.99
 - Individual purchases
 - March 3
- Batch purchases at reduced prices available through GED Direct™



1/23/2025

25

25

Assessment reminders

- TABE Online 13&14 available
 - Programs may begin using
 - Email to program contacts on 1/17/25
 - TABE 13&14 test times
 - What's New with TABE 13&14
- BEST Plus 3.0 training
 - Free training through CAL ends 4/14/25; staff should complete by then



1/23/2025

26

26

Incentive funds

- Data pulled morning of January 1, 2025
- 55% of contracted enrollment to be eligible
- Award amounts through approval process
- May be used for any allowable costs
- OC 119 Incentive Compensation
- Funding adjustments
 - Target due date mid-February



1/23/2025

27

27

▶ ANDE study agencies

- Additional funds
 - Cover extra data entry
 - May give additional pay for participating teachers



1/23/2025

28

28

▶ Questions?



1/23/2025

29

29

▶ Contact/Mission

For more information on adult education and family literacy, please visit PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov

The mission of the Department of Education is to ensure that every learner has access to a world-class education system that academically prepares children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. Further, the Department seeks to establish a culture that is committed to improving opportunities throughout the commonwealth by ensuring that technical support, resources, and optimal learning environments are available for all students, whether children or adults.



1/23/2025

30

30
