



LiteracyLinks

The 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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Newsletter Editor:

peggy.portlandliteracy@gmail.com

Connect with ORTESOL

by Eric Dodson, Vice President, ORTESOL

Relationships are often the most vital factor in teaching and tutoring. When I first started working with adult English learners through the Portland Literacy Council and PCC several years ago, I felt like I had a good connection with my students, but I often struggled with understanding how to meet their needs, understand their mistakes, and provide the best instruction possible. Fortunately, over time, other tutors and coordinators connected with me and provided helpful resources.

The big “aha” moment for me, however, was getting involved with the Oregon Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages ([ORTESOL](#)) and attending its fall conference, where I realized that hundreds of others had similar situations and questions. I wasn't alone after all!

ORTESOL is a not-for-profit, volunteer-run organization that works towards connecting and supporting those who are teaching English, whether they are at a university, a community college, or volunteer tutoring center. It doesn't matter what kind of teaching, tutoring, or advising situation – we have many members who do not fit traditional teaching roles, but are interested in expanding their circle of relationships and resources.

Most importantly, ORTESOL provides a chance to connect with others to build relationships and share resources to reach our common goals. To me, ORTESOL offers a chance to collaborate in order to better serve our students.

Our largest event, an annual fall conference, is held in November. Our 2014 fall conference was the largest size ever, involving over 400 attendees, with nearly 100 workshops on a range of topics. Often, the energy from these presentations and subsequent conversations lighted up teachers' faces as they revitalized. Some relevant workshop titles from this last year include:

- From Classroom to Community in Adult ESOL
- Five Tasks to Connect ESL Reading and Writing Skills
- Teaching without a Textbook
- Songs, Chants, and Internet Memes: Making Grammar Stick
- Bridging the Skills Gap in Multi-level and Mixed-ability Classes

(Continued; see [ORTESOL](#), Page 2.)

Preparing for Meaningful Citizenship

by Theodora Mautz, Executive Director, Mission: Citizen

Mission: Citizen is a high school student-run 501(c)(3) organization that offers free eight-week citizenship classes to those who are eligible to naturalize and are proficient in English. Now in its sixth year, Mission: Citizen has served over ninety adult students from areas around Portland, Gresham, Hillsboro, Tualatin, and Beaverton.

The primary goal of Mission: Citizen is not just to help students pass the citizenship test, but also to prepare them for meaningful citizenship.

Mission: Citizen is offering students partial scholarships to help them offset the costly naturalization fee if they attend all eight classes and pass the mock citizenship test administered during the last class. Scholarship amounts depend on the number of students eligible, but this past fall, Mission: Citizen was proud to award eight students \$100 scholarships.

All Mission: Citizen teachers are high school student volunteers, and most are alumni of the Lincoln High School Constitution Team (a rigorous program in which students study United States history and civics extensively) who were inspired by the experience and wish to apply their knowledge to the community.

The curriculum, split into eight lessons, is taught through slide shows, review quizzes, and interactive games. It consists of all one hundred civics questions listed by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services that could be asked in the civics portion of the citizenship test. The curriculum is also filled with historical anecdotes, facts, and other supplemental material that give students an in-depth overview of the United States that is important for students to participate in the political process as citizens. Mission: Citizen also teaches students about the rights and responsibilities that come with citizenship, and the ways in which people can make a difference in their communities, whether as a green-card holder writing a letter to a local representative, or as a citizen voting in a national election.

(See **Citizenship**, Page 3.)

(ORTESOL, from page 1.)

In the next year, ORTESOL will have a one-day spring workshop (free to members). Instead of a 2015 fall conference this year, ORTESOL members can attend a collaborative conference, Tri-TESOL, which also involves English teachers from Washington and British Columbia.

In addition to conferences and workshops, ORTESOL members are connected through its mailing list and quarterly newsletter, which provide information about new resources and opportunities for teachers and tutors. Also, members are eligible for a number of grants to help defer the costs of professional development, to carry out their own classroom research, and to become members of the International TESOL organization.

If you are interested in joining ORTESOL, part-time or volunteer teachers/tutors are eligible for a reduced membership rate of \$15 (go to www.ortesol.org for registrations steps and further information). Whether through ORTESOL, the Portland Literacy Council, or your local teaching site, I hope you are able to continue to build relationships with other teachers throughout the state in order to further help your English learners. And, finally, thank you for all that you do!

Articles from ORTESOL and Mission: Citizen

Editor's Note: LiteracyLinks is pleased to offer its audience the opportunity to hear from additional voices for adult literacy. We thank Eric Dodson, Vice President of ORTESOL and Theodora Mautz of Mission: Citizen for their submissions.

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Buying at Amazon? Remember that PLC is an eligible charitable organization at <https://smile.amazon.com/>. "AmazonSmile will donate a portion of the sale to Portland Literacy Council. "AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service." (source: AmazonSmile.com)

What's in Your Tutor Toolbox?

Notebook - Resources for the Adult Educator (a publication for ProLiteracy members)

The Fall issue of [Notebook](#) is full of resources that tutors may find helpful. "Using Math at Work," has a lesson plan and an array of additional ideas. "Communicative Tasks" reviews several conversation scenarios including calling school to report a child's absence. "Exploring U.S. Geography" discusses the states that border Mexico and Canada, and includes a map and additional activities. Tutors can learn about internet storage options in "Using Drop Box to Organize Your Teaching Files." In the article, "Exploring Resources," readers will find even more links to literacy, health literacy, natural disaster preparedness, citizenship, and adult education and technology use. All articles contain links to Internet sites that contain more information: however, not all links are accessible to nonmembers. Wrapping up the Fall issue is a moving article about an adult learner and the challenges she faced to attain a college degree.

Notebook contains content for ABE/GED topics and other literacy topics. All in all, it's a good read and worth your time.

Founded in 2002, ProLiteracy promotes adult learning, content, and programs to help adult learners, and advocates for adult learners. **Notebook** is published quarterly, and may be viewed online.

Editor's Note: *We thank Kathleen Holloway, Senior VLT Coordinator at PCC Southeast Campus, for calling our attention to **Notebook**.*

***Notebook** is a PDF file. Use navigational arrows to scroll through the document.*

(Citizenship (from Page 2))

Mission: Citizen has three upcoming classes.

- Tualatin Public Library starting Monday, January 5, 2015, and running for eight weeks on Mondays from 6 to 7:30 p.m. (No class Jan. 19)
- Rockwood Library starting Sunday, January 25, 2015 and running for eight weeks on Sundays from 1 to 2:30 p.m.
- Beaverton Library starting February 4, 2015, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., and will meet on eight Wednesdays.

For more information or to register for a class, please visit missioncitizen.org; Email: missioncitizen@gmail.com; or telephone [503-765-6867](tel:503-765-6867).

For Your Calendar

Tutor Training

Learn more about tutoring on the [Tutors](#) page of the Portland Literacy Council website. Access online registration via the Tutors Page.

Upcoming workshops

- January 17 & 24
registration opens December 22
PCC Southeast Campus
2305 SE 82nd Ave.
- February 28 & March 7, 2015
registration opens February 2
PCC Cascade
705 N Killingsworth

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. This class meets on six Sundays.

- Sunday, February 8, 2014, 1 p.m.
Midland Library
805 SE 122nd
- Mission: Citizen classes, see article pages 2 & 3

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.

- January 17, 2015, 3 p.m.
Kenton Library
8226 N Denver Ave
- February 21, 10:30 a.m.
Rockwood Library
17917 SE Stark St

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