



# the Lantern

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A newsletter of the Presentation Lantern Center

Sponsored by the Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque, IA

## Lantern Center welcomes Ellis

The Presentation Lantern Center is proud to welcome Sue Ellis as its new education director.

Ellis comes to the Lantern Center with a wealth of experience teaching English to language learners of all ages, from kindergarteners to adults. She earned her master's degree in ESL from Hamline University, St. Paul, Minn.

"I am really excited to join the staff at the Lantern Center because, as the education director, I will be able to share my love for teaching with the volunteer tutors," Ellis said.

Her passion for teaching English came across directly in recommendations from those whom she has taught: "She has been really a good mentor because she is very patient, compassionate, understanding, available and punctual, among many qualities," wrote one mentee.

As education director, Ellis will help pair adult immigrants studying English and citizenship with volunteer tutors. She will help the pairs continue their journey with English-language and citizenship learning materials, as well as embody the Lantern Center's mission of hospitality, education and advocacy for our immigrant neighbors.

"We're so grateful to welcome Sue to the Lantern Center," said Lantern Center executive director Megan Ruiz. "She comes to us highly recommended by local adult English language learners who she has built friendships with as a volunteer tutor, and administrators and colleagues with whom she has worked, teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) both in her home state of Minnesota and right here in Dubuque."



Founded in 2002 by the Sisters of the Presentation, the Lantern Center is an independent nonprofit that now serves hundreds of immigrants per year in the Dubuque area. If you are an immigrant who wants to study English or citizenship or could benefit from our assistance, or if you are interested in volunteering with the Center, please call (563) 557-7134 or email [Info@TheLanternCenter.org](mailto:Info@TheLanternCenter.org).

## Helping us help more immigrants

The Presentation Lantern Center has been humbled this year to be the recipient of a number of significant grants and funding opportunities. All of these help us more effectively fulfill our mission of hospitality, education and advocacy for immigrants.

Individual donations remain the greatest, single source of our funding. We appreciate all of our supporters, from those who volunteer weekly and bring in tasty treats for our teatime table, to those who have the ability to make significant bequests for our future.

Since January, the Lantern Center has been the recipient of the following:

- A McDonough Foundation grant for \$5,000 to improve our educational programs and materials
- A DRA grant for \$15,000 to support best practices in teaching adult learners
- A contract for services with the City of Dubuque to educate adult immigrants in English and citizenship, totaling \$25,000
- A Women's Circle Giving Grant for \$2,000 to empower women and children with upward mobility
- A United Way of Dubuque grant for 2022, totaling \$28,500
- A Dupaco R. W. Hoefer Foundation grant for \$4,000

## Dr. Wee headlines Lighting the Lantern

This year's Lighting the Lantern virtual fundraiser on Sunday, Sept. 25 will include an inspiring message on immigrant vitality and success from recently-retired Northeast Iowa Community College president Dr. Liang Chee Wee.

Wee led NICC for more than a decade as the community college guided thousands of northeast Iowa residents toward fulfilling careers and lifelong learning. During his tenure, NICC received national recognition from the Aspen Institute for community college excellence.

Wee was named a community college "Champion of Change" by the Barack Obama White House for his success in educating students of diverse backgrounds. He came to NICC from Luther College, where he served in the department of economics before moving into college administration.

Wee developed a reputation at NICC for personally caring about each and every student, staff member

and community member. He acted as an enthusiastic and effective mentor who encouraged students to follow their dreams, as well as acting as an able administrator and leader.



In today's world, immigrants are absolutely essential for building strong economies and vibrant communities. Wee has earned the Institutional Leadership Award from the International Economic Development Council, as well as the ninth annual Leadership Award at the immigrant...

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Entrepreneurs Summit, which honors a first-generation immigrant who has demonstrated leadership and an entrepreneurial spirit.

This will be the third year that Lighting the Lantern will be virtual. Because we wish to share Dr. Wee's inspiring message, Lighting the Lantern will be broadcast via Facebook Live, free to all.

And because this is also a fundraiser, we ask supporters who are financially able to buy a "seat" at the table as an "education sponsor" for \$90 (i.e., the price of a translated picture English dictionary and two workbooks) or a "citizenship or DACA sponsor" for \$725—the same amount that an immigrant pays to

apply for U.S. citizenship (the Lantern Center provides \$500 scholarships to DACA students and adults who could benefit from financial assistance toward their citizenship application cost. Ticket holders will receive a link to participate via Zoom, with additional interaction opportunities. On behalf of a DACA or citizenship sponsor, we will send the Zoom link to eight email addresses. Your generosity will help us continue our English-language and citizenship tutoring and services to new Dubuquers for generations to come.

To reserve a ticket or table, send a check to the Lantern Center at 900 Jackson St., Ste. LL5-1, Dubuque IA 52001 or go to [TheLanternCenter.org](http://TheLanternCenter.org) and click on "Donate." Include the memo "Lighting the Lantern" and your email address to receive a Zoom link for our event starting at 4:30 p.m. Sept. 25.



SCHMID INNOVATION CENTER  
900 Jackson Street  
Suite LL5-1  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

The Presentation Lantern Center is a drop-in center offering hospitality, educational opportunities and advocacy to adult immigrants, especially women, who are striving to better their lives. Founded by the Sisters of the Presentation, the Center is generously sustained through donations from our founders and individual donors like you. Thank you and God bless you.

**HOURS**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday:  
10 am-3 pm

Tuesday and Thursdays:  
1-7 pm

**Contact us at**

563-557-7134  
[info@thelanterncenter.org](mailto:info@thelanterncenter.org)

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We welcome your support and prayers. Your generosity touches many lives and hearts from around the world.

Please make checks payable to Presentation Lantern Center.

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## Lantern Center celebrates 100 citizens



On a balmy summer evening overlooking the Mississippi River, the Presentation Lantern Center celebrated 20 years of improving immigrant lives, including 100 immigrant students who have received U.S. citizenship. About 100 people enjoyed dinner, games, laughter, conversation and delicious desserts brought by students.

Our 100th citizen, Diego, is exemplary of all of our successful citizenship students: dedicated, hard-working, ingenuous, intelligent and community-minded. He always has a smile on his face and a kind word for everyone. He is trilingual and extraordinarily brave, making the perilous decision to journey to the U.S. at a young age.

Diego works extraordinarily hard to support his family of 5 and is extremely generous, thoughtful and humble about his achievements. When offered a scholarship to offset some of the costs of citizenship,

he politely declined, saying, "I've been saving for this, and it's OK. Please give the scholarship to someone who needs it more than I do."

At the picnic, the Lantern Center recognized board president and tutor Tim Moothart for earning the Governor's Volunteer Award in May. In addition, two volunteers earned the Center's prestigious Lantern award for their dedication in tutoring.

Lantern award winner Barb Day has been tutoring virtually since before the pandemic began, often tutoring multiple students multiple times a week. She has recruited and helped train new volunteers for the Lantern Center and recruited her son, tutor Chris Day, founder of Reboot Dubuque, which rebuilds computers for people in need of technology in Dubuque.

Lantern award winner Sr. Marci Blum, OSF, has volunteered for extra tutoring when needed, as well as helping her regular students with citizenship, English, employment, transportation and professional development. She has helped families who were homeless to obtain shelter, and three of her students (one of whom was Diego!) have now successfully passed their U.S. citizenship test.

Our volunteer appreciation and celebration brought together students, tutors and supporters in a relaxed and convivial atmosphere, a tradition that we hope to continue next year with another celebration that truly exemplifies the hospitality integral to our mission.

## A Joy-ful advocate for immigrants!

Sr. Joy Peterson, PBVM, has served with passion and commitment on the Presentation Lantern Center board of trustees. She serves on the leadership team of the Sisters of the Presentation. Sr. Joy has been a tireless advocate for our immigrant students, following a long career as a peace and justice promoter, formation director, vocation director, congregational leader, pastoral minister and teacher. We wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement from her leadership role on the Lantern Center board!



Sr. Joy Peterson, left and Sr. Carmen Hernandez, right, holding a student's baby at our 2019 volunteer appreciation event.

