



the Lantern

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A newsletter of the Presentation Lantern Center

Sponsored by the Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque, IA

Living as an immigrant

Six years ago, I moved from my native country, Colombia. Then I settled in the United States, so now I am an immigrant. Immigrant is a powerful word. It describes a huge population of dreamers, learners and people who wake up every morning with one goal, pursuit of our dreams.

Living as an immigrant is a bittersweet feeling. First, for different reasons like emotional, family, economy, job opportunities, we left our hometown. We left behind friends, family members, jobs, even our own language. Then we took a suitcase with plenty of dreams, hopes and memories.

It is an endless route that we walk every day looking for our American dream, but we are not alone in our journey. There are wonderful people who are willing to teach and help us, such as those at Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) and the Lantern Center.



Julia Quitian

Finally, we realized that the nice people are our friends, neighbors, teachers and coworkers. Now we have a new place that we can call home. We will be immigrants forever, and forever our hearts will have two homelands to love.

Education corner

It is with warmest greetings that I want to share some of the wonderful things happening



JoLynn Wall

at the very busy PLC. Thus far in 2019, we have welcomed over 92 students and 186 volunteers. We have celebrated five students who have become U.S citizens.

In 2019, we also embraced new and increased collaborations with professors and students from Southwest Technical College (SWTC) in Fennimore, Wis., and Clarke University here in Dubuque.

Although I find these numbers exciting, as they demonstrate growth, they pale in comparison to the joy that comes from seeing our students' and volunteers' gratitude and happiness from growing linguistically, and triumphantly, in their immersion in English and sharing of cultures. Sometimes we are fortunate, and a tutoring pair bravely shares the student's hard work in writing in their newfound second or additional language. This is the case for the writing, "Living as an Immigrant." We share this with you as a way to say, "You and your support for the PLC matter." Thank you for all that you do for our friends and neighbors!

Volunteers recognized at appreciation banquet



Julie Phillips, Ph.D., center, was JoLynn's professor at University of Wisconsin-Platteville. She is the reason that JoLynn, like countless UWP students since 2003, learned about

the PLC. Now that Dr. Phillips is at the University of Dubuque, she has collaborated again to have her education students volunteer with us. She is passionate about education and learning, as well as creating a world of acceptance and peace.



Sharon Speckhard is pictured at right with her student Sahr and Lantern staff. She is on our Education Committee and has volunteered with us since 2016. She has years of experience working with English language learners as the former director

of the ESL program at NICC. She loves learning and sharing knowledge. Her biology and science background is valued by students pursuing their degree. She is faithful in tutoring, offering two full days a week as needed.



Mary Toohey is pictured surrounded by her family and her student's family. She has volunteered with the Lantern Center for nearly a decade and has recruited other volunteers,

including family members. She cares so much about the quality of tutoring that she independently paid for certification as an instructor for English language learners. She brings in fun, engaging teaching materials and has touched many students' lives over the years, as a tutor and friend.



Catherine Bastin comes in for tutoring with thoughtful gifts in hand, such as a toy, a sippy cup or allergen-free rubber gloves. She wants to make every minute of the tutoring session to be meaningful and helpful. Her dedication showed

when she volunteered at Merry Millwork Market despite pouring rain, wind and cold. Catherine's warm smile and dedication have touched the lives of many adult immigrant students and their families.

Meet our interns



Milena Martin (Loras College) (pictured helping a student improve English): The Lantern Center has been a great learning experience. Not only have I worked on my Spanish skills, but I have been able to use these skills to help other individuals. The Lantern Center not only has offered me hospitality, but it also has offered me a safe place where I can go and enjoy the company of others. The Lantern Center has definitely made an impact on how I see the world now, and that's something that I will always cherish.



Cesar Vega (Loras College) (pictured with Sr. Hermann): At the Lantern Center, we help anyone who wants to learn and grow in the community of Dubuque. We are a welcoming organization that helps immigrants move forward with their daily struggles. We try to better these struggles through tutoring and relationships. I personally enjoy building trust and relationships with the students, because it gives them a sense of home.



Emily Barron (Southwest Tech) (pictured helping a student study citizenship): I feel like often you go into this type of work to impact and provide service to others without realizing the amount of impact those you serve are going to have on you. Working at the Lantern Center has been such a humbling experience, filled with joy and gratitude. The people I have met here have changed how I will seek to serve others, and they bring a large sense of community and family to such a small space. Through their hospitality, opportunities, and advocacy, they are doing real work that is changing the lives of others.



Marco Aranda (Loras College) (pictured representing the PLC at the Race in the Heartland conference): I often watch over the children as their parents are studying for the day. Without someone available in these specific situations, the parent would have lost a day of study and practice. This is a place of welcome, and immediately I felt welcomed on the first day I stepped into the center. Since then, every day, I am constantly learning something about new cultures. I love the work we do here because it will have a long-lasting impact on the students we work with and, wanting to pursue a career in social work after college, it reminds me of the awesome work social workers across the country are providing. We are here for the people, which is something I have a passion for, and it's a place I love coming to regularly.



Thank you Sr. Hermann!

All of us at the Presentation Lantern Center are forever grateful for all that Sr. Hermann has done over the past nine years as a board member and secretary for the board of trustees of the Lantern Center. She is an extremely welcoming and friendly individual who has positively impacted many lives throughout her years as a teacher, principal and volunteer throughout Iowa, particularly in Algona and Dubuque.

As a board member and board secretary, she has devoted a lot of time and energy over the years to attending and participating in board meetings, writing detailed, helpful meeting minutes, providing a great deal of feedback and support as a member of the employment and executive committees at the Lantern Center and also serving as substitute for the front desk here at the PLC.

She even served as a grammar and writing tutor for our intern Cesar at



Sr. Mary Hermann Platt

the mother house for one of his Loras writing classes! Thank you, and congratulations on your retirement from the board!



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. Generously sustained through donations from our founders and individual donors like you. Thank you and God bless you.

HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Tuesday, Thursday
1:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Contact us at

563-557-7134
thelanterncenter@gmail.com

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

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Dubuque, IA 52001

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Dear Lantern Center Family,

I hope this letter finds you warm and full of holiday cheer! Here at the Lantern Center, we have so much to be thankful for. Whether you are a volunteer or a donor, YOU keep us going, allowing us to continue our mission of helping our immigrant neighbors. We are humbly grateful for your smiles, and for your support, during this season of gratitude and joy.

Around Thanksgiving last year, immigrant students and tutors shared what that were thankful for around our shared table. Two of our long-time students were expecting a baby in late December, and the soon-to-be father said, "We are SO excited to have this baby. We can't wait to welcome him into the world, although I am so worried. I know babies cost a lot of money, and I want him to have a good life. I want him to have a better life than I have had, and to not have to struggle so much."

Because of your generosity, we were able to throw a shower for this couple and provide baby items for two other families during the 2018-2019 year, such as: diapers, clothing, donated baby books and toys and even a donated crib and 2 rocking chairs to expectant families. This father who still studies here recently updated us to say that, because of his hard work--and that of his tutors--he has improved his English enough to earn a promotion at work. Because of you, he is making his vision for his son a reality!

Thank YOU so much for all that you do. Together, we can have a tremendous impact on people's lives. When you give to a small, stable and nimble organization like ours, your money will not only stay in the community, but your gifts of time and money will be multiplied. Your time, talent and treasure will help an immigrant today and will also leave a legacy for their family and yours. The ripple effect of your generosity will be felt far and wide, in kindness paid forward and in the economic benefits to our community.

May God continue to bless you with the same richness and generosity with which you have blessed our mission.

With Love,

Megan Ruiz, executive director

★ *Welcoming immigrants from around the neighborhood and across the globe*

www.presentationlanterndbq.org