



the Lantern

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A newsletter of the Presentation Lantern Center

Sponsored by the Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque, IA

Meet Your Neighbor, Ellien ★

Ellien Livai started coming to the Lantern Center several years ago, after moving to Dubuque from the Marshall Islands. She asked friends at church if they knew anywhere she could go to get help with her English.

They happily told her about the Lantern Center. There she met Sr. Corine, who introduced her to a tutor who also became a new friend. Ellien has worked very hard on her English over the years in a variety of settings: the Lantern Center, her job and at home.

One of the things she is most proud of is being able to take care of, and have fun with, her grandchildren. She loves playing games with them, watching both educational and entertaining shows and playing English-language-learning trivia games online.



Ellien Livai and tutor Ann Duchow

Ellien has a passion for learning, and both her and her daughter have enjoyed studying at Northeast Iowa Community College. Though she completed high school and post-secondary education in the Marshall Islands, Ellien's degree did not transfer to the United States. She has to start over completely. She is currently working on her High School Equivalency (HiSET) and plans to continue her post-secondary education—again.

Look for the Helpers



You may have heard this phrase recently, as we try to grapple with what the pandemic means for us now and in the future. Fred, the beloved main character of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," started using this phrase in 1968, and it is still being used today, 52 years later. Now it is being used to soothe adults and children alike, as we try to make sense of the chaos and tragedy engulfing our world.

His neighborhood has the same theme as the Lantern Center's mission. All of us are here for one another. We are all interconnected. We are here to help one another out. We thank you for being the very good neighbor you have been to so many over the years.

If you don't need the economic stimulus check sent to your household, please consider donating it. We are working to assist the many immigrants in the community who are trying to support their family after having lost jobs. Millions of tax-paying American immigrants won't get a federal stimulus check. This same group is ineligible for unemployment or other social safety nets. We need your help. You can mail a check to 900 Jackson St., Ste. LL5-1, Dubuque IA 52001 or go to TheLanternCenter.org and click "Donate."

Thank you, helpers! Your neighbors and the Presentation Lantern Center are forever grateful.

Megan Ruiz,
Executive Director
Presentation Lantern Center

Education Corner: Health Literacy ★

Greetings PLC friends and family!

Before we closed in March, like other schools, we promoted creative literacy at the center with a focus on health. In January our Literacy window featured an eye chart and students and volunteers were challenged with the assignment of "What's your vision for 2020?" We were able to share info on the importance of eye care and services available in the community, while sharing goals that we want to achieve.

During National Children's Dental Month, otherwise known as February, a new volunteer and dental hygienist, Sharon Kuttler, was able to share with us the importance of taking care of our teeth and the impact that it has on our overall health.

With the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, that focus changed to helping people stay healthy and keep others healthy as well. When we resume classes, health literacy will continue to be a focus, as it impacts so much of life for all of us. If you have ideas or knowledge in the health field, we would love to hear from you as we plan out the rest of the year.



JoLynn Wall,
Director of Education,
Presentation Lantern Center

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Thank you so much for all your contributions, monetary and otherwise, to the Presentation Lantern Center's mission. May your blessings be beyond measure!

★ What Makes Sarah Smile at the Center

by Sarah Martz

In addition to teaching, tutoring and advocating, I see one of the primary ministries of the Lantern Center as building relationships: relationships of compassion, understanding and trust. I have been blessed with the privilege of cultivating relationships, particularly with the youngest members of the Lantern Center family, since I started volunteering here in May of last year.



Sarah Martz gets a snuggle from one of her small charges at the Presentation Lantern Center.

I spend time each day with the children of the adult students who are being tutored. Some of the children that I engage with speak English. Some do not. Some are old enough to play pretend, play games, and to create colorful pieces of artwork. Others are still exploring and learning the wonders of the physical world around them. My job as a volunteer is to welcome them into our space and to meet them where they are at. I try to incorporate academic skill learning into their play as much as possible but also recognize that their social skills and self-guided exploration are just as, if not more, important at this stage.

My favorite moments with the children are when they surprise me. After many weeks together, a little boy finally trusts me enough to make and hold eye contact with me. When asked how old she is, a little girl tells me that

she is “Four and a half and another half of that.” Another little boy takes some of his very first steps while in my care. A shy little girl who rarely speaks to me suddenly starts happily chatting non-stop. Yet another little girl, 3 years old, enthusiastically says to me, “Oh! That’s a beautiful idea!” when I offer to get out the finger paints.

Even though I don’t have any children of my own I refer to the children of the Lantern Center as “my” children. I am leaving Dubuque (and therefore the Lantern Center) at the end of the month and I will miss my little people, as well as the adults. The work of the center and the people who I have been fortunate to build relationships with here hold a special place in my heart.

VIATS—Rides for Immigrants and More ★

The Presentation Lantern Center has joined with intrepid community volunteers to fulfill a need: providing immigrants with rides to immigration and other appointments. Now, this group is working on urgent COVID-19 relief as well.

The Presentation Lantern Center serves as fiscal sponsor for VIATS (Volunteer Immigrant Appointment Transportation Service). With the help of a \$2,500 grant from the Theisen’s More for Your Community Foundation, volunteer coordinator Tammy White vets drivers and helps find drivers for immigration, doctor’s and other appointments. As fiscal sponsor,

we hold the granted money, which is being used to fund rides for lawyer’s appointments, medical appointments, immigration check-ins, biometrics appointments for prospective citizens. We then disburse it as requested by VIATS to the volunteer drivers who donate their valuable time to the cause.

Now, VIATS has begun a drop-off service of donated groceries and necessities for families affected by COVID-19. To participate, contact catcait2003@yahoo.com. We are so proud of partnering with these passionate advocates to provide important services!



Presentation Lantern Center director Megan Ruiz, VIATS founders Catherine Caitlin and Tammy White and Jim Theisen are among those celebrating the presentation of a Theisen’s More for Your Community Grant for immigrant appointment rides in the tri-states.



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
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Tuesday, Thursday
1:00 PM - 7:00 PM
—contact us for reopening info

Contact us at

563-557-7134
info@thelanterncenter.org

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