PRESENTATION LANTERN CENTER
WELCOME · LEARN · BELONG

The LANTERN

A newsletter of the Presentation Lantern Center

November 2026 · Volume 22 · Issue 4

Tom Lo Guidice: 25 Years of Friendship

By Megan Ruiz, Executive Director

As the Lantern Center heads into our 25th year of welcoming, educating and building relationships with immigrants, we are reminded that our story is shaped not only by those we serve but by the many dedicated people who have helped make our mission possible.

25th Anniversary
2002 - 2027

If you've lived in the tri-state area for any length of time, you may already know **Tom Lo Guidice**. If not, it's my honor to introduce him.

Tom Lo Guidice's connection to the Lantern Center spans nearly our entire 25-year history. His story reflects the very heart of our mission: welcoming newcomers, building relationships and helping people find their place in a new community.

Tom first learned about plans for the Lantern Center in the 1990s through his University of Wisconsin-Platteville colleague, Julie Phillips, when the two were teaching a multicultural class together. When the Center opened in 2002, Tom and Julie began referring college students to the Center, both as tutors and learners. Over the years, their extraordinary dedication and willingness to go above and beyond earned each of them the Lantern Center's Outstanding Volunteer Award. Tom received his award in 2013, following hundreds of hours of service.

For anyone considering volunteering, Tom offers this advice: "The heart of what we do at the Lantern Center as volunteers, and what multilingual learners really need, is someone who is patient, willing to listen and caring." Teaching experience and a second language aren't necessary, he explains. Tutors serve their students by understanding each individual's language needs and goals and working toward them step by step. It may not feel like you are moving mountains immediately, but every word, phrase and tip they learn each week builds on what they already know and makes a huge difference.

Tom has also helped learners navigate far more than English. He has shared knowledge about American culture, credit, banking, budgeting and homeownership; helped people understand their housing rights and find safe, habitable apartments; and supported a learner through the entire citizenship journey, from application to oath ceremony. In just the past decade, he has tutored people from more than 10 countries.

(continued on page 2)



Tom's greatest lesson for us may be the simplest: when you give your time to others, you receive something even greater in return.

Tom Lo Guidice: 25 Years of Friendship

(continued from cover)

Among the Center's treasured photographs includes one of Tom wearing a Santa hat alongside a Marshallese student and another of him at a citizenship celebration during the pandemic, masks and all. He wouldn't have missed the culmination of Asad and Jobaida's hard work for anything!

Even though Tom now lives out of state, his connection to the Lantern Center remains firmly rooted. He says that when volunteering, you get back more than you give.

> *Tom remains woven into the fabric of the Lantern Center*

He holds fond memories of unexpectedly running into former students while attending monthly Spanish-language Mass at St. Patrick's Parish. One was a grateful mother and son who remembered and shared the impact his tutoring and friendship had on their lives. One longtime friend and former student from Bangladesh, along with his wife, has surprised Tom with visits and delicious Bangladeshi food and even recently helped him pack and move.

Over the years, Tom's contributions have extended far beyond tutoring. He wrote a grant that secured new audiovisual equipment and technology still used at the Center today. He has also gifted the Center decorations collected during his work abroad with international students in Asia, and has been a monthly donor for many years.

His commitment to advocacy has also continued. In 2025, as a member of Dubuque Area Congregations United (DACU), Tom helped organize a panel discussion addressing how the community could support and protect local immigrants and refugees amid increasing discrimination and hostility. Panelists included me, local immigration attorney Ry Meyer, Alex Baum of the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque and RRS Stewart of Dubuque 4 Refugee Children. Families learned about their rights and how to prepare emergency safety plans in case a parent or caregiver was unexpectedly detained.

Nearly 25 years, three locations, countless students and immeasurable friendships later, Tom remains woven into the fabric of the Lantern Center. His story reminds us that a community is built not only through programs and services, but through people who show up, care deeply and keep showing up.

Tom's greatest lesson for us may be the simplest: when you give your time to others, you receive something even greater in return. Megan



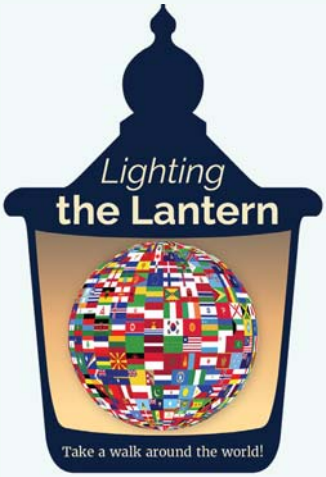




Top: Tom with former student Farhad and, Center, longtime student Asad Chowdhury, who became a U.S. citizen in 2020. Bottom: Tom joined staff, students and sisters in celebrating the Presentation Sisters' 150th anniversary.

Lighting the Lantern

Thursday, April 29, 2027
Grand River Center
500 Bell Street, Dubuque



Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, Lighting the Lantern has sold out two years in a row. To accommodate even more friends and supporters, we are excited to announce that our 2027 event will move to the **Grand River Center ballroom**!

We invite you to join us for this special evening celebrating hope, opportunity and belonging. Become a sponsor or purchase tickets and be part of an event that supports the life-changing work of the Lantern Center.

To purchase tickets for $90, or to become a sponsor, scan the QR code, or visit **https://thelanterncenter.org/lighting-the-lantern**

Scan for Tickets & Sponsorships

Sponsorship Opportunities

Shining Star Sponsor — $5,000
Beacon of Light Sponsor — $2,000
Ray of Hope Sponsor — $1,000
Share-A-Table Sponsor — $500

Share-A-Table sponsorship includes 5 seats.
Top three sponsor levels may choose a table for 8 or 10 guests.

Site Sponsor

GRAND RIVER CENTER



Table sponsors Tim and Mary Moothart welcomed Katie Fischer, Jerry Enzler, Archbishop Thomas Zinkula, Brian & Ann Cooper and Msgr. Jim Miller to join them at our March 2026 event.

PRESENTATION LANTERN CENTER

CONTACT US

2360 Carter Road, Suite 100
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
563.557.7134
info@thelanterncenter.org
www.thelanterncenter.org

MISSION

The Presentation Lantern Center offers hospitality, educational opportunities and advocacy to adult immigrants who are striving to better their lives.

HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10 AM–3 PM
Tuesdays and Thursdays: 1–7 PM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Craig Takes: President
Faye Finnegan: Vice President
Matt Dodds: Treasurer
Richelle Friedman, PBVM: Secretary
Gina Guerrero de Reyes
Marilou Irons, PBVM
Jimmy Jean-Francois
Mary Klein
Liz Kruse
Dianne McDermott
Tonya Trumm

OUR TEAM

Megan Ruiz
Executive Director
megan@thelanterncenter.org

Ann Lorenz
Development Director
ann@thelanterncenter.org

Sue Ellis
Education Director
info@thelanterncenter.org
Interested becoming a student or volunteering? Contact Sue Ellis

Sara Millhouse
Business Coordinator
sara@thelanterncenter.org

VISIT US AT

thelanterncenter.org
facebook.com/LanternDBQ

Friends of the Lantern Center

We are truly grateful to our community for your continued support! Gifts received from August 21 - November 18, 2026.

Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque

Donna Wahlert

In Honor of

Kevin Goodman
Cecelia Becker
2026 PBVM Jubilarians: Sr. Marge Loughren, Sr. Brigid Stanley, Sr. Jane Conrad
Billie Greenwood
Alejandro Rojas
Cassie McDonald

In Memory of

Beth Artico
Judy Schwartz
Kay Crawford
Michael & Mary Klein
Sr. James Marie
Betty Gross
Maryann Caudill-Lo Guidice
Tom Lo Guidice
Lucille & George Heenen
Marci Blum, OSF
James L. Kluesner
Judy Kluesner
Tom McDermott
Jean McDermott
Elaine & Dorrance Meloy
Barbara Meloy Callahan
Susan Miller
Robert Miller
Arlene Ouderkirk
Fran Ouderkirk
Abraham Richman
Gina Richman
Bud Schulte
Cecelia Becker
Betty Takes
Gwen Nilles

General Gifts

Deb & Gerald Adams
Thomas & Janis Anderegg
Anonymous
B1 Yoga | Megan Stecklein
Bill & Sue Biver
Faith Blaskovich
David & Karen Bonfig
Barbara Meloy Callahan
Chris Chapin-Tilton
Michael & Connie Cosgrove
Kevin Deeny & Megan Stull
M. Louann Doering, PBVM
Sue & Michael Ellis
Mary & Keevin Franzen
Allison Freihoefer
Rev. Ronald Friedell
Richard & Colleen Gitter
Marlys Graettinger
Dick & Mary Jean Gregory
Debbie Gross
James & Charlotte Halverson
Lyle & Dianne Harris
David & Jane Heiar
Larry & Linda Hoefer
Ronald Hoefer
Joyce Honkamp
Joan Johnson
James & Ellen Kaune
Patrick & Janet Keyes
Darrell Kifer
James & Nancy Klauer
Michael & Mary Klein
Don & Caroline Koppes
Robert & Angela Krall
Colleen & Bill Lester
Ruth Lewis
Stephen & Sharon Loeffelholz
Tom Lo Guidice
Amy McCarron & Daniel Jones
LeNae McNulty
Dan & Elizabeth Murray
Andy Neebel
Paula Norby
Bob & Ann Osterhaus
Stephanie & John Ottavi
Mary & Barry Pickart
Jennifer Rausch, PBVM
Sarah & Pete Ross
Lana & Enrique Santamaria
Carol Schmidt
Lisa Schmidt
Shirley Seeley
Vincent Sheehan
Sisters of the Presentation
Sisters of the Visitation
Rebecca Taylor-Harris
Leonard & Susan Uhal
Bonnie Ulfers, PBVM
David & Nancy Wahlert
David & Roseann Wiederholt
Raymond & Susan Wilson
Mags & Lenny Young

Grants Light Our Future!

ACT Giving Committee
Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque
Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
Iowa Credit Union Foundation
Wahlert Foundation

Proud to be a United Way Agency Partner!

LIVE UNITED
United Way
United Way of Dubuque Area Tri-States

Scan the Code to Give. Shine Your Light!

A Big Win for Financial Inclusion!

The Lantern Center is excited to announce a first-time $6,500 grant from the Iowa Credit Union Foundation (ICUF) to support financial inclusion for our multilingual learners!

The grant, along with guidance from DuTrac Community Credit Union staff, will help immigrants build practical financial skills, navigate the U.S. financial system and work toward greater financial stability. We are especially grateful to Sherrie Keating, Michelle Ariss and the team at DuTrac, who nominated us for this opportunity. Special thanks to Ena Babic Barnes, Executive Director of the ICUF, who traveled to Dubuque to personally present the grant!

Thank you, ICUF, for investing in our work and DuTrac for believing in our mission and cheering us on!



(L to R): Ena Babic Barnes, Ann Lorenz, Megan Ruiz, Sue Ellis, Sherrie Keating, Michelle Ariss and Craig Takes.