

Fall/Winter  
2015/2016

*We help English language learners become thriving members of our community by offering one-on-one English language tutoring, and building bridges that foster cross-cultural respect, understanding, and friendship.*

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**Letter from PiELL Co-Presidents, Judi Kreinick & Bev Stout**

Dear PiELL Volunteers and Supporters,

We've done it!! We have now officially existed for 30 years, continuing to help our adult learners speak, understand, read, and write English. We had a delightful celebration with tutors, students, and their families attending a fun picnic in September. Many of our students brought delicious food from their native countries, and some of them were real works of art, like the beautiful fish mold, and the fabulous Thai spring rolls. Thanks to Becca Schultz' creativity, there were plenty of games for the kids and the adults. There was the ice-breaker game where the adults walked around asking questions on a piece of paper, and everyone had to ask and answer in English. Horseshoes was a big hit as many of our students had not played before. And when was the last time you participated in a watermelon-seed-spitting contest for prizes? It's harder than you might imagine! More on this fun event on page 2 of this issue.

With improved English comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing skills, our students can more readily communicate with their children's teachers, medical professionals, and employers, and compete more effectively for opportunities for advancement and improved wages. This often leads to better living conditions for themselves and their families. With our increased emphasis on

cultural integration, PiELL students feel more comfortable in the community and are better equipped to help their children succeed in school and resist negative pressure. So many of our tutors go far beyond teaching English, taking their students to stores, doctor appointments, banks, schools, etc. to help them, until they are able to do these things on their own.

Currently, we have 44 active volunteer tutors tutoring 53 adult learners. In September, we completed our second of two New Tutor Trainings for 2015, which helped us match 9 of our 15 waiting learners with our newly trained tutors.

Below are several accomplishments that have helped us sustain and maintain our Mission.

- We trained 16 new tutors during 2015.
- We have added 20 new students to date in 2015.
- We developed and implemented a much-improved Language Skills Assessment that has aided our tutors and our Board in measuring our students' progress.
- We held two successful fundraiser events: one at Northridge Restaurant of Nevada City and one at Smiley Guy's Smokehouse.

As always, thank you to all of our volunteers and our supporters for your generosity.

*Judi Kreinick Bev Stout*

Judi Kreinick & Bev Stout



PiELL Board Members, PiELL students, and family and friends enjoyed a great dinner at Northridge in Nevada City during a PiELL fundraiser there.

We would like to give a very special "Thank You!" to David Arstein for his continued support over the last many years as our volunteer webmaster. He is always willing to help us with the big and the small tasks that we need on our website.



English language gives each individual the voice to be heard in our community.

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Contact us at [admin@piell.org](mailto:admin@piell.org) or 265-2116.





**PiELL Annual Tutor & Student Potluck:  
Celebrating 30 Years of PiELL!**

In September, PiELL held its annual potluck for tutors and students. This year, it coincided with the 30th anniversary of PiELL. The event was held at Becca Schultz' beautiful home in Nevada City. There was delicious food and lots of fun and games. A few lucky people won door prizes. Some students brought their families, and the kids had lots of fun. This event is a fun way for PiELL to show appreciation for their wonderful volunteer tutors and a great day for students to meet everyone. It's one more way PiELL helps to build bridges in the community.

Some of the volunteer tutors and PiELL students during the potluck. (Right)



**My Student Srey**

By Bill DeCamp, Tutor, Board Treasurer

Srey is a delightful, eager English learner from Cambodia. At work, she deals with English-speaking customers daily, and her abilities in English reflect this level of exposure. She recognizes the need to improve her skills at speaking, as well as in reading and writing English. She remains a very gracious and grateful English learner. My tutoring sessions with Srey are about an hour and a half in length each week.

9th wedding. Then after the wedding, there was celebrating, entertaining far-traveled guests, and recuperating after the wedding!

I did meet independently with Srey frequently in July and August helping her with her wedding speech, wedding vows, "Thank You" card address labels, et cetera.

*Srey's wedding (Left): Bill (center) with the Bride and Groom after the ceremony.*

Srey took a break from formal studies in the month of August since she was preparing for her August

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United Way of Nevada County

**Donations In-kind**

David Arstein  
Louise Beesley  
Trevor Michael, Owner Margaritas  
Diana Runnels  
Becca Schultz  
Philip Smith

## Success Stories & More

### My Students From Guatemala

By Jay Schuff, Tutor, Student Evaluator

When PIELL asked me to do interviews for prospective Spanish speaking students several years ago, I did not hesitate to say yes. As a former Peace Corps Volunteer in Guatemala (1971-1973), I have always been interested in Latin America and indigenous people. During my stay in Guatemala, I learned to speak Spanish and Cakchiquel, one of several Mayan Indian languages. The experience of learning such a different language made me appreciate all too well the struggles of learning another language.

My Guatemalan experience was life transforming. I worked for a large wheat cooperative in the mountains and lived in a small Mayan village. Learning Cakchiquel was an enormous challenge as it is not a written language and the sounds are a tad difficult for an English speaker. Over the past 40 years I have been trying not to lose it. I frequently talk to myself and day dream in the language, especially when driving. In airports and busy tourist locations, I am always on the lookout for a Mayan for potential conversation. And it does happen. A few years ago I met an extended Mayan family at "The Bean" in Chicago Millennium Park. What fun for me and such a surprise for them to meet an American who spoke their Mayan Language!

Six months ago, I set up an interview with a prospective student, Miguel. He told me he was from a small town in the Guatemalan highlands, Tecpan. I couldn't believe it. Tecpan was the nearest town to the tiny village where I lived. A three hour walk through the mountains - no roads or cars in those days - Tecpan was where I went to the Post Office and to the market on



Thursdays. Of course, growing up in the region where I lived, Miguel speaks Cakchiquel. What a wonderful surprise for us both. He teaches me new Cakchiquel words and slang and I remind him of words his grandparents used to say. Miguel and five other Mayans have been living and working in Grass Valley for the last six years and I didn't have a clue. We are all great friends now and I tutor two of them. Miguel speaks English quite well but can not read English. We are now reading a junior high level biography of Sitting Bull. Luis is 18 years old and speaks very little English. We have started at the beginning and it is a joy to see him progress.

It is a great pleasure to be involved with PIELL. I always tell prospective students that learning English opens many opportunities. It is hard work but "vale la pena".

### My Student, Laia

By Alan Weisberg, Tutor

I have not had any problems working with Laia except finding compatible times to meet. Currently we communicate on Sunday evenings to set a day and time for that week. I am usually able to get a conference room at BriarPatch and that's a good place for her since she shops there.

We have a very good plan each day and the hour and a half goes quickly. Her goals are improving her conversational English, reading, and grammar. I also work with her on a yoga training manual she is using to get certification in a particular variety of yoga. We also read articles I find, and have finished the first about the 10,000 step per day health goal.

### My Student, Gloria

By Sharon Thurman, Tutor

After not meeting for a while, Gloria and I reviewed some of the things we had studied. She remembered most of them. We also have been discussing her driving test. Her permit expired in October so she needed to get her license soon. She is great at parallel parking - better than me!

She passed the written part of the test the first time she took it! Then, on 10/12 she passed the driving test! Her license just recently arrived! See picture, right. She is very happy to have her license and relieved that she doesn't have to worry about driving without it any more. Meeting with Gloria is the highlight of my week!



### Reaching a Goal!

By Nancy Guenther, Secretary, Student Evaluator, Tutor

Paula and I have been meeting for two and a half years. Paula is originally from Santiago, Chile, and lives in Penn Valley with her husband and two teenage boys. She is a diligent student of English. She has progressed from a beginning English learner to an intermediate English learner in a relatively short time. Last year, she had enough confidence to begin teaching Spanish at her sons' school.

Paula has practiced meditation for many years and it brings her much peace. She recently decided that she wanted to teach meditation to others. She signed up for an extensive on-line course through Ananda. So for a few months, we put aside our regular course work and focused on her goal. It was difficult to listen to videos entirely in English. So we would play back the parts she didn't understand and discuss them. Part of her coursework was to practice teaching meditation on line to other students taking the same course. She also had to make three videos and we practiced beforehand what she would say.

As I watched her make the first video, I was so proud of her it moved me to tears. She knew she had made some mistakes, but I told her not to worry about it as she had done a fine job and everyone would know what she was trying to say. Her trainer said that he thought her videos were charming and that everyone would want to take meditation classes from her. Even though the course was long and difficult, she persevered and now Paula is a certified teacher of meditation!



Paula and Nancy



## Partners in English Language Learning

578 Sutton Way PMB 198  
Grass Valley, CA 95945

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### PiELL Needs You

Piell is facing a challenge - we desperately need board members with grant writing and/or Treasurer skills. You have shown that you are committed to supporting PiELL. If you have these skills, we hope you will consider joining our Board. If you can help PiELL meet this challenge, please contact us at 265-2116 or [admin@piell.org](mailto:admin@piell.org).

### Thank you to the following businesses where PiELL students and tutors meet in a comfortable and welcoming environment!

Briarpatch Co-op  
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### PiELL Events

#### Smiley Guvs Smokehouse Fundraiser ~ February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 - 5 -9pm

Enjoy a delicious slow cooked meal and a percentage will go to Partners in English Language Learning!  
Smiley Guvs Smokehouse ~ 131 Joerschke Dr. in Grass Valley  
Call 274-2933 for information and to make reservations

#### Spring 2016 New Tutor Training Schedule

March 12<sup>th</sup> ~ Sessions 1 & 2 8:30am-4:30pm  
March 19<sup>th</sup> ~ Sessions 3 & 4 8:30am-4:30pm

*\*Must attend both days. Call us at 265-2116 or email [admin@piell.org](mailto:admin@piell.org) for more information. Check our website "Event" page for upcoming events!*



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### Welcome to our new Tutors!

We recently held another successful New Tutor Training, and we are very pleased to welcome our new Tutors! Congratulations to Kristen Burgess, Annie Haymaker, Bill Ososki and Mary Pascale! They completed the two-day training in March and are now being matched with students. They are all excited to begin the program, and have been matched with their new students.

We will be offering our two-day New Tutor Training in March (3/12, 3/19). If you are interested in becoming a tutor or know someone who might be, please contact us at 265-2116 or [admin@piell.org](mailto:admin@piell.org) for information. A big THANK YOU to all of our volunteer tutors. We appreciate you!

### Partners in English Language Learning

#### Physical Address:

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Phone/Fax: (530) 265-2116 Email: [admin@piell.org](mailto:admin@piell.org)

#### Mailing Address:

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[www.piell.org](http://www.piell.org)

#### Office Hours

Mon: 1:30—4:30  
Wed: 1:30—4:30  
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