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*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.*

## Letter from the PiELL President

In our newsletters, you'll often read about PiELL's students. Those stories touch us all, I think, and those of us who tutor can't help but become interested in and involved with the many challenges and joys in our students' lives. The relationships become personal and have led me to some personal family reflections.

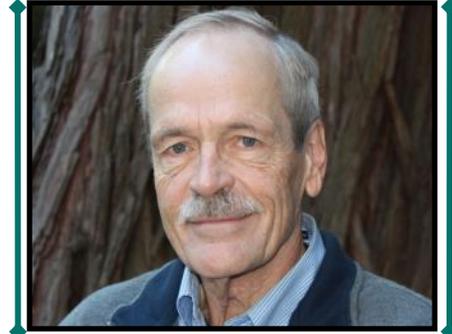
When my parents met, their common language was French, though that wasn't the native language of either. Upon their coming to the states, my father's home country, my mother knew no English. There were no formal classes, only Mom's perseverance and primarily the one-on-one help of my father. I'm in wonder at how well my mother has assimilated, and sometimes hear stories of related challenges along the way.

Though retaining a slight accent, Mom now seems otherwise to be a native, with decades of strong community engagement. She also plays a mean game of Scrabble, though she occasionally tries to sneak in a strange word. When we allow use of å, æ, and ø tiles, her true roots shine through, and she destroys us.

I expect that many readers share variations of this family story without reaching back too far in time. That makes our common ESL interest doubly personal, though it is obviously not a requirement.

Thanks for your ESL interest and ongoing support of PiELL, whether as a tutor, volunteer, or friend.

— Chris Crain



Chris Crain

## Community Support Matters!

As an organization which receives no government funding, PiELL must raise money each year through grants, donations, and fundraisers. We are so grateful to this community for its continued support of PiELL.

This year we have received grant funding from the United Way, Dollar General, Save Mart, as well as

BriarPatch for a grant submitted last year. Each of these organizations has many requests for funding, and it means a great deal that they selected PiELL to be a recipient.

If you have opportunities to support these organizations and let them know how much we appreciate their generosity, it would be great.

## Northridge Fundraiser



On September 9, Northridge Restaurant in Nevada City hosted a successful fundraiser for PiELL.

Northridge donated a portion of all the proceeds to us. This included meals, alcohol and take-out. Northridge has hosted fundraisers for us before, and we always appreciate their willingness to help PiELL.

Those who attended enjoyed the friendly atmosphere and good food.



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### To Our Generous Donors

We at PiELL say a special thank-you to all of our donors who have so enthusiastically supported PiELL and its mission of helping students integrate into our community.

### 3% to PiELL on your SPD Spending

There are many ways to help PiELL: tutoring, volunteering, donations, scrip, Amazon Smile, etc. Thank you for your generous support! A lesser known opportunity partners PiELL with SPD, a local grocery store which has operations in Grass Valley and Nevada City. When you sign up with the SPD eScrip program, 3% of your SPD spending is donated by SPD to PiELL.

Signing up is very easy. You can find the form on PiELL's website, [www.piell.org](http://www.piell.org), listed as SPD Community Card under the Donate tab. Simply fill out the form and present it to an SPD cashier. They'll immediately sign you up and provide you with an SPD eSCRIP card. At future checkouts, present that card or provide your phone number in order to earn 3% for PiELL!

## Meet PiELL's New Treasurer, George Perez

Welcome to PiELL's newest board member. George Perez joined the board in April and serves as our treasurer. He brings with him 42 years in education and his experience growing up in the U.S. speaking Spanish. PiELL is thrilled to have a board member who learned English as a second language. Spanish was spoken in George's home, and he learned English when he was ten by watching TV.

When George was 12, he began working as a custodian in an L.A. sweatshop. He worked two to three hours a day and on Saturdays and says he has worked all his life. George did not like speaking English at school, and in the tenth grade, he scored so high on a standardized test that the administrators wanted to know whose work he copied. George proved them wrong by retaking



Treasurer George Perez

the test. His newer score was even better. Finally, his abilities were recognized.

George went on to college and majored in math and Spanish literature. He got a job as an engineer doing drafting work but got more enjoyment as a tutor, and he decided to complete his teaching credential. He then became a math teacher and taught ESL at night.

While teaching, George earned a master's degree in psychology. He went on from teaching to become a school counselor and principal. George moved to Santa Cruz and became known as someone who could fix problem schools. He then moved to a Los Altos school that had had five principals in the prior year. He went on to become the superintendent of the Mount Pleasant School District, which created a charter school, fed all students three meals a day and provided an ESL program for the parents. He also became a political activist and spoke out for bilingual education. George retired in 2011 and moved to this area in 2012.

In addition to his work at PiELL, he is a substitute teacher, a tutor, a volunteer at the Woolman Center, and a volunteer at Eskaton.

## Delfino, A Jack of all Trades ~ Denise Mozzetti

I lucked out when I got to work with Delfino! He is really an amazing person. Twenty-four years ago he left Acapulco, Mexico, and eventually came to Grass Valley. He registered for a class to get his GED, and a good teacher worked with him. He thrived in that environment.

Because Delfino works two jobs and only has one day off per week, he is content spending time with family. He works as a maintenance man, but his skills entail much more than that. He has to think on his feet and solve many problems in the building trade.

His English is improving, but he sometimes has trouble when people speak fast. Eventually I learned that it's because many of the people he works with use slang. I've introduced him to idioms. He likes "Jack of all trades" (since he is a maintenance man) and "speed demon." He told me that he understood that a word ending with "ed" meant past tense, however, that some other past tense words did not end in "ed." After that, I checked his reading material for irregular verbs so we could go over them before reading. We discuss what we've read, and the



Delfino and Denise during a tutoring session.

conversation takes off from there. Once I smiled as Delfino spoke passionately about the political issues in Venezuela.

It's hard to say who is getting more out of this PiELL relationship, Delfino or me. Or maybe we both are.

## Martha, A New American Citizen ~ Kathryn Eldredge



Martha poses proudly after becoming a U.S. citizen.

On September 19, 2019, Martha became a United States citizen after passing her citizenship exam on September 13. She took her Oath of Allegiance after many months of hard work, practice and diligence. But it's not enough to just state that fact. There is much more to her story.

Martha came from a small village in the state of Jalisco, Mexico. Her husband, Carlos, had already lived in the United States for many years before they were married in 2009. She moved here with him. They then had three sons.

Not only did Martha know very little English, but she was a young mother who could not drive. She walked everywhere with her children. She was very isolated and alone in their apartment while Carlos worked. Together we worked on very basic English skills in her apartment. When her first child entered preschool, we started working in earnest to prepare her for the written part of her driver's license test. She passed her driving tests and got her license on her first try.

Although Martha was very busy with her small family, she decided to actively pursue her US citizenship. Since then she and I have worked intensively and exclusively on the citizenship test and interview process. In between cooking, cleaning, driving, soccer practice, Catechism lessons and helping her children with their homework, Martha studied when she could. We practiced vocabulary and various scenarios she might encounter.

She submitted her application in January of this year, and while we waited nine months for her appointment, she continued to drill and memorize.

Carlos was always by her side encouraging her.

We at PiELL are proud of Martha for passing her citizenship test with flying colors!!!!

## Tutors Can Help

Since April of 2019 seven new tutors have successfully completed their tutor training and are matched or soon will be matched with a student. They will join our current group of 33 active tutors who teach English, but who do so much more.

Many of our English language students have difficulty accessing community services. If they speak very little English, they may not know what services are available or how to contact them.

Tutors are in a unique position to help. Medical services are an example. Tutors have made appointments with providers. Many have even accompanied their students to their appointments. Tutors also have accompanied students to talk to their children's teachers, go shopping and access other community services.

*If English made any sense, "lackadaisical" would mean something about a shortage of flowers.*





## Partners in English Language Learning

578 Sutton Way PMB 198

Grass Valley, CA 95945

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

BriarPatch Co-op  
Bubba's Bagels  
Caroline's Coffee  
Daily Donut  
Flour Garden Bakery locations  
London's Best Fish & Chips  
Nevada County Libraries  
P.A.R.T.N.E.R.S. Family Resource  
Peace Lutheran Church  
Safeway, Brunswick Basin  
Sierra Mountain Coffee Roasters  
Starbucks Coffee

### Did You Know?

Our volunteer tutors gave 1,068 hours of service during the twelve-month period ending July 1, 2019. We currently have 33 tutors matched with 35 students from the following 16 countries.

#### Asia      The Americas

Cambodia	Brazil
China	Chile
Indonesia	Colombia
Japan	Costa Rica
Laos	El Salvador
Nepal	Guatemala
	Mexico
<u>Middle East</u>	Nicaragua
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### Holiday Donations Through Amazon

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### PiELL Office

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

**Mailing Address:** 578 Sutton Way, PMB 198, Grass Valley, CA 95945

**Office Hours:** Mon. 1:00-4:00 pm; Wed. 1:30-4:30 pm; Fri. 9:00 am-noon

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