

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 the PiELL President

Dear Friends,

The positive energy at PiELL continues to build as we reach out to new students and train new volunteer tutors.

Our students are an amazing group. Their dedication and hard work have enabled them to grow personally and professionally. Over the past year, students have reached important milestones, such as obtaining a driver's license, receiving a promotion on the job, and even passing the exam for their U.S. citizenship. Our beginners are already making real strides. One tutor recently reported, "Maria continues to be an excellent student, very committed and competent. She prepared a beautiful summary of everything we've covered in the Level 1 workbook." With their improving English language skills, PiELL students are building real connections within our community.

The benefits of PiELL's work extends to the tutors, as well. Many of our volunteer tutors have made lasting friendships with their students. Students come from many different parts of the world, and this fresh perspective creates an opportunity for learning – and fun! Just recently, one of our tutors invited her student to "Ladies Game Night" at a friend's home. "We enjoyed a few hours of laughter and fun," she said. "My student learned to play the game Farkle – as well as some new idioms."

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to our donors. Your generous support, together with the dedication of our volunteers, makes it all possible. Thank you!



Chris Crain, President of PiELL



Chris Crain

More Crazy English!

Contronyms are words or short phrases that have two opposite meanings – they literally contradict themselves. Talk about confusing for an English language learner! Here are a few examples:

Clip – to connect (as with a paper clip) or to detach (as in clipping your hedge).

Garnish – to add to (as with food preparation) or to take away (as with wages).

Lease – to rent property, or to offer property for rent.

Sanction – to approve, or to boycott.

Screen – to present, or to conceal.

Trim – to decorate (as with a Christmas tree) or to remove excess (as with a mustache).

Wind up – to start (as with a clock) or to end (as with a business).

PiELL Information

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Thurs. 1:30-4:00 pm

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Jose and Judi: A Learning Partnership



What is it like, moving to a new country and not knowing the language? Recently, we sat down to talk with PiELL student Jose Gonzales and his tutor Judi Kreinick. Originally from Guatemala, Jose came to the U.S. seven years ago to work for a family friend in Grass Valley. He spoke almost no English, but he had a strong desire to learn. "I was thinking about my future," explains Jose. "If I learn English, I can open a lot of opportunities for my life."

"Jose was a very dedicated student," says Judi, "and he always did his homework! It didn't matter how much time he spent at his job each day – often ten hours or more – he still did his homework, religiously."

As his English improved, Jose started his own business: V.G. Landscaping, LLC. Over the past few years, demand has steadily grown. He now has seven employees, and his business has expanded beyond landscaping. "Last year, I got my contractor's license. In the past, a lot of big jobs, I didn't get because I didn't have the license, the insurance. So I decided to get that. Now we also do remodeling, concrete, roofing, painting, and decks." And there is plenty of work for his team. "Yeah, we are getting busy," he says, "and a lot of people are calling and calling!"

Judi says, "He's only 24 years old, and he has seven guys working for him. He owns a van, and three trucks – and lots of equipment. I am just awestruck."

Over the years, their friendship has grown, as well. "Judi is like my mom in the U.S." says Jose. "I want to thank her. Without Judi, I couldn't be how I am now."

In addition to being a tutor for the past 14 years, Judi is a Resource Tutor, conducts New Tutor Training, and is on the Board of Directors. "As a tutor," Judi says, "patience and caring are the two most important qualities. You don't need to have a teaching background. We have mentors and materials to help."

Although they no longer meet on a weekly basis, Judi and Jose stay in touch. Judi says, "I am so proud of him! He's a really special person."

About PiELL, Jose says, "This organization helps a lot of people, so I want to thank you. You guys have a big heart to help us."

Interested in becoming a PiELL tutor? Visit www.piell.org and click on the "Volunteer" tab to learn more!