

ESL Program

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NEWSLETTER

Thanks

message from Diane

Students, faculty and staff have helped to make this a flourishing summer, and we would like to extend thanks to everyone for working so hard.

Faculty members have developed and implemented fantastic lesson plans. Read the following articles for some examples.

English for Medical Professionals

by Carol Haddaway

After listening to a five minute NPR Morning Edition broadcast on *The Health Benefits of Working for a Lifetime*, EMP students had to formulate questions and provide the answers. Students followed the broadcast with the help of a list of key words, phrases, and idiomatic expressions to help with listening comprehension. Asking some questions proved to be very challenging and engaged everyone as we struggled with grammar, meaning, and content. For one question in particular, we had to work backwards with the answer to formulate the question, "How many times have the population of people over 65 year old who are still working increased compared to 20 years ago?" (We would be interested to hear your answers.) The activity was a lot of fun and went way over the allotted time!

Oral Communication Intermediate

by Judith Yancey

Intermediate Oral Skills has been working hard on a variety of strategies for speaking! Students have assessed their own conversational style and learned how to participate in the most common US conversations. They've practiced strategies for showing involvement, including nonverbal behaviors like nodding, eye contact, or saying "uh-huh," and have also learned how to interrupt politely in order to join a conversation. In addition, they have discovered different ways to ask for repetition or clarification, to change the subject, to disagree politely, and to make suggestions, and have used these strategies in authentic conversations with each other. By recording themselves on mp3 files, students have assessed their own needs and are keeping logs of pronunciation problems and misunderstandings, and are learning to predict stress and rhythm. Other pronunciation topics have included intonation, pausing appropriately, and manipulating stress for special purposes such as highlighting new information. "Tools" for practice have included rubber bands and UNO cards!

Reminder

Baseball Game

We still have 3 tickets left!
Please call Pat Palmer now to reserve your seat for the Orioles game on Saturday, July 30 at 1:05

ESL Program

What's up in TOEFL ?

by Denise Link-Farajali

Wow! It's hard to believe that our month-long TOEFL course is coming to an end. We're preparing for our final CBT (Computer Based Test) this coming Monday, and that'll be it!

The ten of us agree that studying every afternoon for almost 2.5 hours is really tough! Our stomachs are full from a hearty cafeteria lunch, and all we really want to do is take a nap on these "dog days" of summer.

The TOEFL test has required us to study intensively for its 4 parts: listening, grammar, reading, and writing. We probably had the most fun with the listening section by discussing idioms. Did you know, for example, that when it rains hard in America, they say that it's "raining cats and dogs"? We discussed the rough equivalents of this idiom in the languages that we represent and learned that in Chinese, they say "they are pouring pails of water" when it rains heavily. However, in French, it is said to be "raining strings" to represent the downpour. There is no similar idiom in Italian or Korean, it seems. Other common American English idioms we learned



were: "to give someone a hand" meaning to help someone; "to put a fire under someone" meaning to strongly encourage one; and "to cost an arm and a leg" meaning that

something is very expensive.

Building vocabulary is especially difficult since TOEFL tests a wide range of academic subjects. In that the greatest chance for improving our individual scores lies with the grammar section, we spent a lot of time reviewing the most commonly tested items. Our most difficult topic has been count and non-count nouns and all the many, many rules for article usage.

As hard as all of these questions can be, we find that we must remain encouraged as most of us have to take the test. As a matter of fact, 2 took the paper-and-pencil TOEFL test at a local college last Saturday and are eagerly awaiting the results! Others are registering for the CBT test quickly before September 15. In late September, the new TOEFL test will begin. It'll be hard because we then have to write AND speak much more. The new test is 4+ hours in length and will be Internet-based. Everyone -- included our TOEFL teacher, Denise -- is a little bit nervous about it.

Globalization is Good!

by Natalya Shkolnikova, ESL student

Almost in every country you can find people from all over the world. Many of them come to find better jobs, others to be involved in international business. While some choose to live isolated from that country's culture, others want to immerse themselves in it. Those that are reluctant to absorb their new surroundings prefer to live among those that are similar to them. They form communities that resemble their own native countries in order to retain their original culture. Others, however, choose to willingly embrace their new home and the local customs that accompany it. They adopt the food, clothes and the general way of life of the new environment with little or no hesitation. They might do it because they want to leave their old life behind or just to try something new instead.

Globalization, overall, is a good thing, because it brings people from all over the world together. As the ways of communication get more advanced, knowledge and information become more widespread. While some cultural identity may become lost, relationships spanning across the globe are formed. A lot of good can be accomplished when the world is united as one.

Certificate Ceremony

To recognize all of you who successfully complete the intensive summer courses, the ESL office holds a certificate ceremony and lunch on the last day of class, Friday, August 5, from 11 am to 1:00 pm in Mattin 101. All morning classes will meet that day for a shorter length of time. Oral Communication 8:45 - 9:45 and Reading and Writing 9:50 - 10:45. The Ceremony includes an international lunch, and we invite the students to bring a dish from their home country to share. We know that people work, so it does not necessarily need to be homemade! The IELP provides sandwiches—very American! We also provide drinks and dessert. So begin thinking about what you would like to share with your friends.