



EVERLEARNING

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2020

PROGRAM UPDATES FROM THE RIGHT TURN

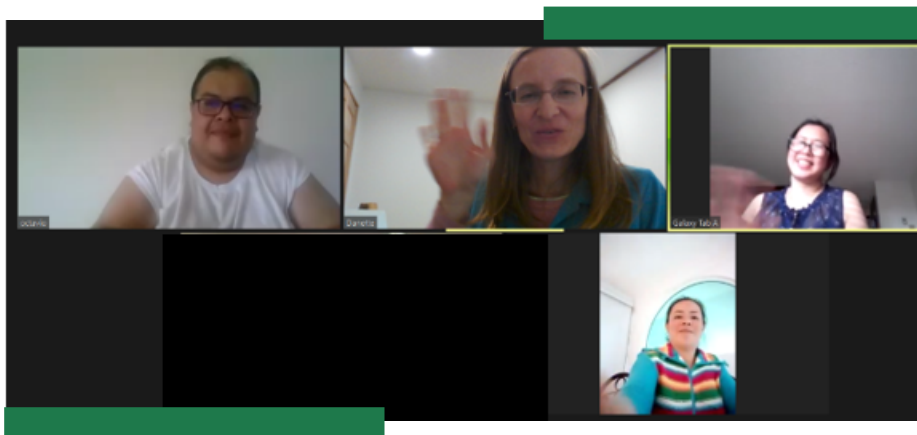
THE RIGHT TURN: SARAH VALLE

The GED program at The Right Turn is going strong during the pandemic. It doesn't look the same but in this line of work, flexibility is key on a daily basis anyway so we are making it work.

I have had two learners who were not able to regularly attend classes because of their work schedules become my most dedicated students during this pandemic. Without distance lessons, they would not be able to study with a live teacher which is the preferred method of learning for both of them. I am very glad they are dedicating hours of time with me during this hard time.

This is my first year as a GED teacher and I can't believe how much I have learned along with my students. We have learned together to be positive in hard situations, and to never give up even if it doesn't look like you thought it would. We have learned together to laugh at our online mistakes and have patience with internet glitches. My students now know how to sign into online meetings, and to share their computer screens. They now know online meeting manners and how helpful knowing how to use technology can be to their everyday lives. Many of my students are not the ones who preferred in-person classes, but I am very glad I got to serve the group who was not able to attend in person classes. This has taught me there is a need there and we can fulfill it with continued online learning.

When we get back to in-person classes I plan to continue to offer an online option for people who cannot or do not feel comfortable doing in person classes. I want to keep this offering as one more option to meet their learning goals. I also see the value of one-on-one classes that we have been doing during this time. I am excited for the students to do some post tests and see the amount of growth they have made during this time.



LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE PANDEMIC

THE RIGHT TURN: DANETTE JARZAB

English Language Learning online during the pandemic has been an interesting time for our small, rural site in Pierre. Before the pandemic, we had a small group of about seven adult learners. During the pandemic, some of our learners in the agricultural field had their work times change from eight hour days to twelve hour days. In trying to meet their needs, many of the students shared that they were so exhausted after twelve hours of physical labor, they had no interest in studying English. There was one student that persevered using the online Burlington English (BE) program at his convenience. With the remaining students, we used Zoom to conduct virtual classes.

Lessons learned:

- 1) Scanning two lesson choices and emailing the students a PDF at the beginning of the week was helpful. This way they could preview the materials, if they wanted to.
- 2) Having two choices was helpful in giving the students control over the class direction. This is a technique that we use during our face-to-face classes and I want to maintain it as much as possible.
- 3) Having online classes for more than an hour was too much. It was difficult to maintain interest, engagement and focus.
- 4) Having a variety of options for study was beneficial. As expressed earlier, having the BE classes and the virtual Zoom sessions seemed to work best for as many learners as possible.

Upon the subject of education. I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A VIRTUAL GRADUATION CEREMONY SUCCESS

CAREER LEARNING CENTER OF THE BLACK HILLS: GLORIA PLUIMER



Career Learning Center of the Black Hills

Nationally renowned speaker, Father Greg Boyle, gave the commencement speech honoring the Summer 2020 GED® graduates of the Career Learning Center of the Black Hills (CLC). Father Greg's speech was part of the virtual graduation ceremony, a Facebook Live Watch Party on the CLC Facebook page, Friday, June 12, 2020 at 7:00 PM.

Father Greg is the founder of the non-profit organization in Los Angeles, Homeboy Industries, a national model for gang intervention and re-entry programs. Father Greg has received numerous honors for his work with former gang members and is the author of the bestselling book, *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*.

You can find his speech at this link <https://youtu.be/AB7zoVoa6dE>. I encourage you to do so and share with others. The message is applicable to all 2020 graduates—high school and GED® graduates.

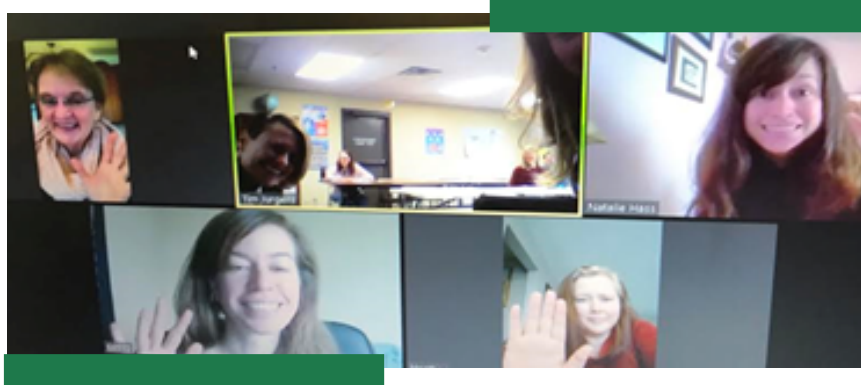
There were other speakers during the ceremony including Secretary Marcia Hultman and Stephenie Rittberger. Stephenie's talk can be found at <https://youtu.be/s39-So6lOvU>.

To view the ceremony in its entirety, go to the CLC website at <https://youtu.be/Ee5b-bz0EQk>.

MARCHING ON: TEACHING WITHOUT A CLASSROOM

LSS CENTER FOR NEW AMERICANS: HEATHER GLIDEWELL

Determined to keep providing English classes the education department at the Center for New Americans (CNA) built an online ESL program.



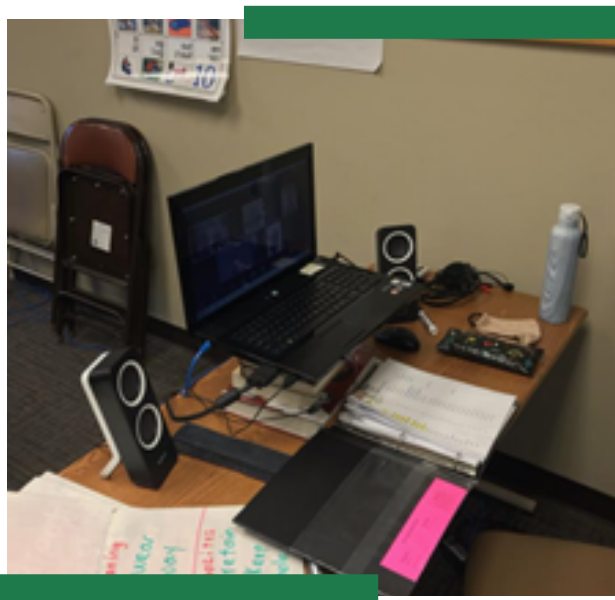
The teachers at the Center for New Americans put their students first. So saying, with all the life changing events in the past few months, the teachers were determined to keep their students well-being and educational needs at the foreground as doors were locked, businesses closed, and residents were encouraged to stay home.



MARCHING ON: TEACHING WITHOUT A CLASSROOM CONTINUED

This unprecedented situation called for creativity and adaptability, and the CNA teachers took the plunge to build an entire online education program for the refugees and immigrants in the Sioux Falls area. This endeavor poses unique problems, in particular, ensuring that students had the appropriate technology, applications, and Internet access.

After researching multiple online platforms and considering the pros and cons, teachers began helping several students download and install Zoom in the final days of March. Outreach continued through April, as teachers created handouts and technical assistance.



What made this online transition successful?

Teachers with patience and determination, the willingness to fail, and most of all, contacting the families. When the family is supporting the student, helping them navigate the technology, making sure they have a quiet space to learn from their English teachers, then the student will be successful online.

MARCHING ON: TEACHING WITHOUT A CLASSROOM

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What does the future bring us?

Online classes or hybrid classes may continue to be implemented in the months ahead. The Center for New Americans is putting the health and safety of their students first and will continue to provide essential English classes in whatever way necessary.

A few quotes from our wonderful education staff:

"This has been a Herculean effort, with every teacher working tirelessly to overcome language and technology barriers to build this program and continue to serve our students. Even though COVID has kept us physically apart, Zoom classrooms have allowed us to retain what is so special about the Center for New Americans: our connection to our students whom we love so much."~~**Teacher Lindy Obach**

"We feel grateful that our students have been so adaptable and willing to try out the new, unfamiliar technology. We're also thankful that the students' family members are able to help them use the technology at home."~~**Teacher Kate Harris**

"The students have been so dedicated to continuing their learning, figuring out this technology and all the issues that come with it - and all without complaining! This is outside all of our comfort zones, but they are so patient and persistent. I'm so proud of them."~~**Teacher Amy Quiroga**

"The benefits of using online classes have surprised me. I have had students that struggled in the traditional classroom begin to flourish in the online platform."~~**Teacher Heather Glidwell**

"Zoom teaching has grown on me. I am impressed with our team about how fast we had the zoom classes up and running, with no prior training or experience."~~**Teacher Silke Hansen**

STUDENT, ARTIST: A NEW AMERICAN SHARES HER STORY

LSS CENTER FOR NEW AMERICANS: LINDY OBACH

Khadija Sediqi is currently a student in our English classes, but, really, she is much more used to being at the front of the room, teaching. A woodcarving teacher, specifically, and a very talented one at that. Khadija became interested in the art of woodcarving because of her mother. Her mother is a talented woodworker in her own right, and Khadija learned from her while growing up in Kabul, Afghanistan. Her mother has always been in corner and wants her daughter to be happy in her life. "All credit goes to my mom. She led me to this art and she helped me a lot," said Khadija.

With her mother's blessing, Khadija enrolled in a three-year woodcarving program at Turquoise Mountain Institute in Kabul as a young teenager; at the same time she was still studying at high school. "At night, I went to art school, and in the daytime, I went to high school." Khadija was trained and works in the Nuristani woodcarving tradition, Nuristan being a state in northeast Afghanistan. In the Nuristani tradition, the wood is carved by hand with very intricate, delicate details.

Turquoise Mountain is an art institute with locations all over the Middle East: Afghanistan, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Myanmar. The institute's primary mission is to restore heritage and culturally-significant buildings in order to support artists and revive traditional crafts across the region. Artists at Turquoise Mountain train in everything from jewelry and woven goods, to ceramics and calligraphy.

After graduating from the prestigious institute in 2010, Khadija went on to work at a small production company where she began making carvings and home décor. She also taught woodworking to British and American expatriates at the embassy in Kabul. One of the most exciting things thus far in Khadija's life as an artist is working on a big woodcarving project that was exhibited at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC.

Since coming to the United States in 2016, Khadija has been able to continue to making art, though it's been hard. "I didn't have any of my tools, and I don't really know any artists. But I did find a friend who has a garage where I could work for a little while. And the good thing is that I now found my tools on Amazon, so that makes me happy."

Khadija has big goals and plans for her art. When asked about these, she said, "I can teach people woodworking, I would like to have a company to make these, I'd like to make YouTube videos to share with people who want to know about this art." The things she wants to make are mostly decorations for the home.

STUDENT, ARTIST: A NEW AMERICAN SHARES HER STORY CONTINUED

“Someone else would make the big stuff, like the cabinets – that is the carpenter, but I do the carvings that decorate the table.” When asked about her favorite wood to work with, she responded with no hesitation: “Walnut! Walnut is my favorite. But I also love cedar because it’s soft and smells so nice.”

Of her art, Khadija says, “I enjoy working with wood to bring old traditions back to life – making the ancient relevant to the modern world. I hope when people see my art, I hope they like it. That’s the most special part for me.”



Implementing Trauma-Informed Practices for Workforce Development

COABE JOURNAL MAY 2020

Abstract

After tracking barriers of adult education learners pursuing their GED®, the Career Learning Center of the Black Hills (CLCBH) found that high rates of poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and other trauma-related experiences led to an ongoing sense of helplessness and despair among many of our adult learners, in particular Native American learners in Rapid City, located in the Black Hills region of South Dakota. CLCBH staff recognized that even successful program graduates, especially those impacted by trauma, faced further barriers to navigating the transition from learner to long-term employee. In an effort to improve learner retention, achievement, and workforce development, CLCBH began a process of implementing trauma-informed practices and educating staff, learners, and employers in the business community about these practices.

Stephenie Rittberger

Stephenie Rittberger is Adult Education and Literacy Coordinator for the Career Learning Center of the Black Hills (CLCBH) and has been involved with adult education for over 20 years as an instructor. In 2008, Rittberger was named Adult Educator of the Year by the South Dakota Association for Lifelong Learning. She loves her students and considers her job at CLCBH to be a calling. She admires the resilience and problem-solving abilities of the adult learners. Ms. Rittberger and her husband also own a working ranch located near Rapid City, South Dakota.

Julia Monczunski

Julia Monczunski is Media Services Program Coordinator for Black Hills Special Services Cooperative, an educational agency committed to building stronger communities by helping individuals and organizations reach their full potential. Ms. Monczunski is also a certified School Library Media Specialist and taught English in Taiwan for five years.

“Knowledge will bring you the opportunity to
make a difference.”

CLAIRE FAGIN

2019 SDALL Award Winners

Each year, SDALL members nominate their students, partners, and peers for the SDALL Distinguished Awards of Merit. Winners are chosen by a volunteer awards selection committee from the SDALL membership, and awards are presented during the annual awards ceremony held in conjunction with Summer Summit. Here is a look back at the 2019 SDALL Award winners

Outstanding Community Partner: Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health

Nominated by Stephenie Rittberger, Career Learning Center of the Black Hills

This board was named the Outstanding Community Partner of 2019. Health Pathways Occupation Grant (HPOG) was the catalyst of a partnership that has evolved into a much greater and more developed partnership built on respect and collaboration. Early on, Career Learning Center of the Black Hills simply built a pipeline of referrals between the Adult Education programming and their educational programming. They have assisted 48 individuals in obtaining a GED by sponsorship of their testing fees. Many students have attended and completed courses in various health care fields, including Certified Nursing Assistant, Emergency Medical Technician Boot Camp, Paramedics courses, Medication Aide licensure, medical billing and coding, Licensed Practical Nursing programs, Registered Nursing programs, Phlebotomy, and Surgical Technician. The students working in the main training components have flourished and are highly successful.

Beyond the HPOG collaboration, Patty Eagle Bull agreed to assist us in undertaking a large scale project to bring trauma informed practice (TIP) to the forefront of our philosophy. She has given a lot of time and energy in assisting the staff and leadership in learning about the benefits cliff, and contemplating the wrap-around services students need when trying to gain coping mechanisms and gaining educational success. We are currently working to create cultural components for trainings in TIP for employers. The storytelling as a healing tool is the model we are working with. There is education regarding the historical trauma Native American Learners need to heal from, as well. We are creating and constantly evolving the micro-learning in this area. In the future this project will present the training and offer mentorship to assist employers in making policy and procedure changes leading to increased retention and productivity of their hires. The learners/employees benefit by feeling valued and a culture of respect is fostered in the process. This project, lovingly named WOKSAPE (the word for wisdom as translated by Birgil Kills Right) had a seat at the Minds That Move Us Career Pathways Festival in Miami, Florida in August 2019.

2019 SDALL Award Winners

CONTINUED

We deeply appreciate the partnership, as Patty is a valued team member on multiple levels and has assisted us in creating a better classroom management system leading to increased outcomes for learners. Our entire community is better because of the spirit of partnership and the depth of knowledge that Patty Eagle Bull and her staff bring to the table.

Volunteer of the Year: Oscar Gabriel Godoy Fewell

Nominated by Royce Miller, Cornerstones Career Learning Center

Oscar Gabriel Godoy Fewell (Gabe) was the Outstanding Volunteer for 2019. Gabe is a 23-year-old ELL teacher who grew up in Guadalajara and the Denver area. He earned his TESOL certificate in 2017 and moved to Vermillion in 2018. He currently teaches English to Chinese children via the web. Gabe moved to Romania in the fall of 2019. Gabe was a diligent volunteer for the entire year, racking up over 146 hours in the fiscal year. Our Vermillion ELA class (like many) is a one-room schoolhouse, with ELA students ranging from BEST scores of 88, to 470, to students who are TABEing at NRS level 3. Without Gabe, it would have been impossible to adequately serve the needs of these students. Gabe's involvement led to a great year for our ELA program, one that has surpassed all others to date, in terms of student hours. Gabe always has a positive attitude and has a great rapport with students at every level. We were sad to lose him.

Student of the Year: Rebecca Good Bear

Nominated by Stephenie Rittberger, Career Learning Center of the Black Hills

Rebecca Good Bear was named the Student of the Year for 2019. It is rare to meet a student with as much compassion and self-awareness as Rebecca. Her resilience, positivity, and humor are especially astounding given the challenges she has overcome in her life. As a single mother and recovering from addiction, Rebecca's strength of character has not only helped her adapt to a new home, new definition of family and support, but it also serves as an education and inspiration to others. Given the depth of her experiences and her understanding of historical events and cultural relevance, Rebecca has an unusual wisdom beyond her years. She also possesses a quiet and respectful manner that is helpful to others in the classroom.

Rebecca experienced the violence and upheaval stemming from addiction and the loss of a close relative. Throughout these unstable and uncertain times, Rebecca tirelessly committed herself to her education while balancing part-time jobs to help support her family. She lacked confidence when she first started. She related that she was crawling through the door but she later started to walk.

2019 SDALL Award Winners

CONTINUED

Now, she is running and thinks she is about to leap into the air and take flight. She is a gifted storyteller. She promotes dialogues as a member of our student steering committee for the Woksape project, and she strongly believes in the power of education to create peace and reduce inequity.

I am truly amazed with all that Rebecca has accomplished, and she is one of our most determined, caring, and balanced students. Her enthusiasm is contagious when you speak with her, as her face lights up when she speaks about her children, education, and ambitions for the future. I have been especially impressed by her fearlessness in making friends and participating in programs that can assist in healing trauma and improving lives struggling with the crisis of poverty. Rebecca speaks with eloquence about trauma and talks about her desire to promote multicultural understanding and peace among all. From these events, including helping with Lakota greetings and powerfully speaking for a storytelling component of Minds that Move Us, Rebecca has already contributed a great deal to the Career Learning Center in pursuit of these goals.

The challenges that Rebecca has faced have truly made her a uniquely strong and courageous individual. Her resilience and optimism have served her well as she has shared her story, and they will continue to serve her well in college and her future life. Rebecca has my highest regard. I know she will continually impress you with her involvement in the community, her cultural perspective, her unshakeable resilience, and her focus on her academic and career success. I am excited to see how far her educational and professional journey will take her in the future. Rebecca accrued nearly 400 hours of classroom time in 16 months and her pre-TABE gave a total math grade equivalency of 5th grade 4th month and when she post-tested, she scored 12th grade 8th month. She began attending courses at Western Dakota Tech on May 28th.

Teacher of the Year: Judith Oldert

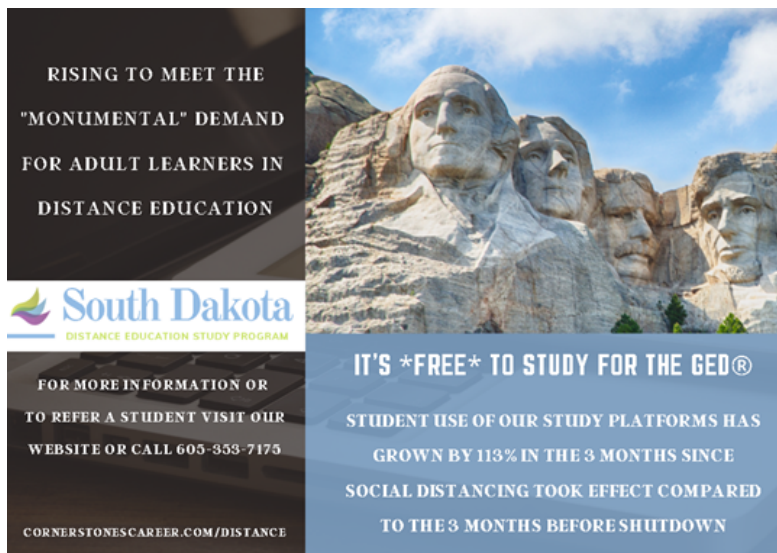
Nominated by Stephenie Rittberger, Career Learning Center of the Black Hills
Judith Oldert began her Adult Education Career with the Career Learning Center of the Black Hills (CLC) in 1993 working at Pennington County Jail. Judy's 26 years of dedication to adult learners has included one-on-one and group instruction in all subject areas; working with English Language Learners to develop English skills in reading, writing and language acquisition; providing career exploration and support in pursuing post secondary education and/or employment; assisting students with life skills and workplace skills; and instilling a sense of confidence and self-esteem in each and every student she encounters. Former adult education students frequently stop Judy when they spot her in public to share the impact she has had on them and the success they are currently experiencing because she simply believed in them.

2019 SDALL Award Winners


CONTINUED

At the CLC of the Black Hills, Judy is the organizer. Managing curriculum, developing efficient systems and handling chaos in a calm and composed manner are her specialties. In Judy's mind, change for the benefit of the students and staff can easily be implemented with a little extra attention in structuring time, materials, curriculum, space and technology. She is gifted in terms of seeing how to make separate components work together no matter how complex. Her approach to these challenges is positive and encouraging. Organization techniques is a skill many of our students need to develop to be successful. Judy always takes the time to explain and show our students how to set up a system to keep track of their class requirements and their personal obligations. Most students may not recognize their ability to retain what they learn when there is a pattern and structure to their study habits. This enables them to move toward accomplishing their goals when they form routines under the guidance and support of Judy Oldert.

Judy is a walking example of teamwork and work ethic. She is always willing to pitch-in and do the hard work. I believe these personal attributes stem from growing up on a family farm/ranch where both qualities were required day-in and day-out. Students recognize there is an expectation of working hard from the moment they meet with Judy—and she exemplifies what is expected through her own example. Judy immediately earns respect of the students she serves because she 'walks the walk.' When out in the community with Mrs. Oldert, it is not uncommon to stop every few feet to chat with previous students about their time since the Career Learning Center, college, new jobs and family. She connects with students who have not yet finished and cheers them into a return. It is an amazing testimony to her teaching ability as students past, present and future want to share their experiences with her.



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