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It's Never Too Late to Learn After dropping out over a decade ago, a mom returns to study English again

Guadalupe Flores emigrated from Mexico to the U.S. in the early 2000s, settling in Lincoln. Like many immigrants, once here she started taking English classes at Lincoln Literacy, but she soon found it necessary to find work. Once she landed a job as a cleaner in a restaurant, the demands of her work and her family sapped her drive to keep studying English. Guadalupe dropped out.

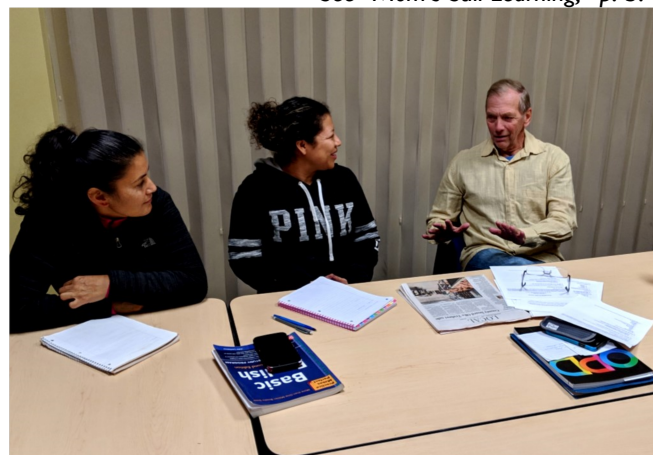
That too is fairly common — if quite unfortunate. However, Guadalupe's story takes another turn. This past summer she returned to enroll her youngest son and herself in Lincoln Literacy's family literacy classes held at Culler Middle School.

Now, her son is back in school at Elliot Elementary, but Guadalupe is going on. She takes English classes twice a week

and studies as much as she can in between. Guadalupe gets a little extra motivation at home.

"My sons always say, 'Mom, go to school!'" she confesses with a laugh.

See "Mom's Still Learning," p. 3.



Flores (center) listens as tutor Mark St. Clair explains English phrases.

Nursing Aide Prep Program Launches

Responding to the needs of our adult learners and our community, Lincoln Literacy has initiated a series of skill-building classes. The latest of these is our CNA prep class.

With generous funding from the Community Health Endowment and in collaboration with Bryan Health and its College of Health Sciences, we have jointly enrolled seven refugees and asylees to help them become certified nursing assistants. It is a remarkable group of students and tutors. Led by retired physician Mike Eppel, who serves on our board of directors, the tutors include Cindy Sandene, a former registered nurse, and Sarah Rogalla, who worked as a CNA in her native Canada, as well as Shannon Nolte, who though not a healthcare professional has decades of tutoring experience.

The students are equally impressive. Tseday Gizaw, pictured at right, was a clinical nurse in her native Ethiopia before going to Kenya for advanced training to become a cardiac nurse.

See "First CNA Class," p. 2.



Dr. Mike Eppel (l) instructs Tseday Gizaw.

Looking to enrich your life and help another? Try the most satisfying volunteer gig in town!

Lincoln Literacy depends on volunteer tutors to get the job done. We offer training and support to the volunteers who teach our students. Both tutors and learners report satisfaction levels above 95%. For more info, click "Get Involved" on our website, www.lincolnliteracy.org.

◆ First CNA Class Is Underway

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She served in that role for six years before gaining admission to the US. Hewa Lelane, a Kurdish refugee from Iraq, worked there for 12 years as a nurse, including several years as a surgical nurse. He currently works in Bryan Health's environmental services unit, but he's eager to put his nursing skills back to work. He sees becoming a CNA as the first step in a long-term plan.

Wajdan Yusif came to the us as a refugee from Sudan at the age of seven, and went on to graduate from high school in Grand Island. She's worked in elder care, and would like to do so as a CNA.

Jaafar Hamad is another Kurdish Refugee from Iraq. He worked there for years as a trauma nurse, often serving as part of an ambulance crew.

All seven of the students have been pre enrolled in Bryan's accredited CNA course that begins in January. Thanks to the CHE grants all seven will have full tuition scholarships, plus the support of Lincoln Literacy tutors while they complete the program. This first group is expected to gain their certification by late

April and then join the CNA workforce.

Meantime, Lincoln Literacy is recruiting additional tutors and candidates for our second CNA prep class, to begin in February.



Tutor Sarah Rogalla (l) guides student Ahlam Bakr toward her CNA certification.

Board Member Champions Planned Giving

Diane Wilson has done it all. A volunteer tutor since 2007, she helped Vietnamese refugee Bao Nguyen to start her own business, then went on to tutor other students in English before launching our financial literacy seminars. As a certified public accountant who has worked in both the for-profit and non-profit sectors, she could not be better qualified. The volunteer tutor record she logged would on its own amount to great service.

However, Diane has done much more. Having joined the board in 2015, she has taken on the leadership in fundraising. In particular, she's led our effort to build a legacy for literacy through planned giving. Diane was among the first on the board to declare her intent to provide for Lincoln Literacy's future through a gift in her will.

Development Director Victoria Welles could not be more grateful. "On top of all her other support, Diane has been wonderfully generous with her time and knowledge," Welles said, adding "Diane taught me a lot about planned giving." The pair has persuaded several more board members to join the club, and aims to get the entire board involved. In the meantime, Lincoln Literacy's Fund for the Future has grown to over \$100,000, thanks to estate gifts. In a time of fading federal support, it represents our best hope of steady income.



Diane Wilson (right), with staff member Victoria Welles, receives a 2018 distinguished board service award.

**Help Us Build Our
Fund for the Future:
Leave a Legacy
for Literacy!**

You can make a bequest, designate a life insurance policy or a portion of your estate, or look into a charitable annuity to help LL into the future. Contact us for details.

You can also support our present-day work by making a tax-deductible donation online at: lincolnliteracy.org

◆ Mom's Still Learning

Continued from Page 1

"I like to work," Guadalupe says, "but it's very frustrating to not understand what people are saying in English. I really want to learn it this time."

Her tutor, Mark St. Clair, says she's making good progress and is an inspiration to others. He has encouraged her to take advantage of blended learning opportunities. When she doesn't understand something outside of class, she uses Google Translate to figure it out. She watches English language programs on TV with captions to strengthen her understanding. And she makes use of the Duolingo app to improve her burgeoning English.

Sandra Rojo, who also started learning English with us in the early 2000s but is now fully fluent and serves as the manager of our English language learner programs, agrees. "She's always cheerful and so enthusiastic. She encourages the others to keep coming to class."

Guadalupe admits she's a bit of a cheerleader. "I like to meet people from other countries and learn about their cultures," Guadalupe says, "But sometimes they don't want to come to class because it's hard. I tell them 'If you don't come to class you'll never learn!'"



Flores continually encourages fellow students in her English classes.

Returning to Lincoln Literacy English classes has inspired Guadalupe. She now dreams of something far more ambitious than cleaning restaurants. "I'd like to be an interpreter," she says. "I want to help other people like me in medical offices or hospitals. That is my big dream."

Along with many others dreams, this is one we hope to help come true.

Rising to the Challenge of Digital Literacy

At a time when fake news outpaces the real thing, when millennials and seniors alike get scammed online, and when even your friendly neighborhood mail carrier delivers dubious come-ons through the letter slot, literacy ain't what it used to be. Teaming up with Lincoln City Libraries, Lincoln Literacy offered its first-ever information literacy workshop this fall.

A rescheduled Huskers football game cut into attendance, but evaluation suggested content was well worth-while. It included a primer on the dangers of phishing, online fraud and enticements, as well as phone scams and misleading mailers.

The workshop also presented a brief history of the news, demonstrated ways to recognize fake news websites, and suggested ways that information consumers can evaluate claims to separate probable truth from likely falsehood.

"We all need information literacy," says librarian Kathryn Kelley, who devised the presentation with Lincoln Literacy's Executive Director Clayton Naff, himself a former full-time journalist.

"I think it's essential to our mission that we help people from all walks of life not only gain access to information but develop a mental toolkit to evaluate it," Naff said. "Living in the information age is great in many ways, but it's all too easy to be misled or swindled."

The two hope to offer the workshop again in the spring.



Executive director Clayton Naff and librarian Kathryn Kelley led the workshop.



745 South 9th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
402.476.7323
info@lincolnliteracy.org
www.lincolnliteracy.org

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our community by teaching
the English language and a
variety of literacy skills to
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**With thanks to our donors,
grantors, and volunteers:**

**Happy
Holidays!**

Online, Canvas Puts Tutors Squarely in the Picture

One of the great things about tutoring at Lincoln Literacy is that we don't have any mandated curriculum or teaching method. Sure, we provide training, but our tutors bring a wealth of knowledge and creativity to the task of imparting skills to our students. We want to make it easier for tutors to share their ideas with each other, and to pose or answer questions, as well as to access teaching tools, lesson plans, and other resources. That's why we've created our own version of Canvas, an online course platform widely used by colleges. Tutors who attended our Nov. 12 workshop about it said it will definitely be a help. If you're not yet signed up, let us know and we'll send you an invitation. Email our Adult Empowerment Programs Manager Renee Cox, seen at left below, at rcox@lincolnliteracy.org.



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