

# PAE

## FRIENDS OF PORTLAND ADULT EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

### Portland Alum finds more than employment at Portland Food Co-op

The **Portland Food Co-op** is a wonderful addition to our neighborhood – and special to PAE because one of their first employees is a PAE alum. **Idriss Kambeye** was there when the doors opened on December 10<sup>th</sup>.

Idriss grew up in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and spent five years in South Africa working in customer service for technology companies and a hotel. He came to the United States by way of New York City, arriving in Portland in May of 2014. He quickly enrolled in writing, math and job skills classes at Portland Adult Education.

Since his arrival five months ago, he has worked as a Case Aid and Front Desk Volunteer at Catholic Charities which utilized his French and English fluency. He is now holding down two jobs, one at the Food Co-op during the day, and a second job at IA Printing. Idriss credits his success at landing a job working 40 hours a week as a cashier at the Portland Food Co-op to Deb Brieting, his job-skills teacher. "She made this opportunity possible for me," he said. When asked about working in Maine, Idriss explained, "I like how we all work together and I have found a family



Idriss Kambeye

working at the Portland Food Co-op."

Matt Thompson, Assistant Manager, and Mary Alice Scott, Education and Outreach Coordinator at the Co-op, met with us. The Portland Food Co-op brings local producers and consumers together in a member-owned marketplace. They currently work with 180 local producers and have 7,000 local products. They have 23 employees, 2,700 member/owners and are open 9-7 Monday through Saturday, and 10-6 on Sundays. Everyone is welcome and they do take SNAP cards.

To find out more, check out the Portland Food Co-op website at [www.portlandfood.coop](http://www.portlandfood.coop) or visit them at 290 Congress Street. While you're there, make sure to send our best to Idriss.



Portland Food Co-op Staff: Cricket Klein, Kennedy Barteaux, Matthew Thompson, Idriss Kambeye, and Mary Alice Scott.

## From PAE's Director



Beth Campbell

Portland Adult Education's Academic and ESOL programs have seen tremendous growth over the last three years! Since 2011, we

have seen a 36% increase in the number of ESOL students. More than 1,700 ESOL students took classes with us in 2014. Over 2,000 students are taking academic courses, an increase of more than 21% during this same period.

In September, more than 35 Portland Adult Education stakeholders (community members, volunteers, key agency partners, faculty, staff and students) participated in a structured

conversation to identify and prioritize what will move PAE forward.

Four key priorities were selected through this planning process:

**Funding; Operations; Marketing and Website Development; and Business Outreach.**

We began tackling **Operations** issues by creating sub-categories with a small group working on each:

**Communications:** An internal blog was created to more efficiently share information with our large group of faculty and staff who are not all in the same place at the same time.

**Student Expectations:** A policy has been created to streamline and create consistency among all classes. It was finalized and implemented in January for use in all PAE classes.

**Staff Handbook:** A draft has been written; a few sections need to be completed.

We have initiated monthly training options for faculty and staff focusing

on poverty, cross-cultural communications and peer observations using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

The second priority we have addressed is our **Funding** needs. The John T. Gorman Foundation awarded Portland Adult Education a new grant for \$104,000 to support our work with the **Portland Jobs Alliance (PJA)** through the following activities that were not covered by our CDBG funding:

- Provide employment case management and follow-up services for students in PJA originating at PAE.
- Provide employability skills workshops .
- Develop job-ready skills training for native English speakers, with a focus on individuals experiencing homelessness in partnership with **Preble Street**.
- Expand the **Learning Lab** hours by adding 16 additional hours per week through August 31, 2015.

## College Transitions Alums Coach Current Students

No one knows better than adults currently enrolled in college how challenging it is to balance work, family, and school. Fortunately, PAE has excellent access to these experts. Four alumni from the College Transitions program returned in November to offer advice and encouragement to current students.

Three SMCC students and one USM student, **Xianxiu Xie, Van Phuong, Zakia Momand, and Lucy Shulman**, joined a Maine Educational Opportunity Center advisor, South Portland's College Transitions counselor, and PAE's College Writing Workshop teacher in a great discussion with PAE students about what it takes to thrive in college. Some important tips include:

• Be aware that college demands much more work **outside** of class than PAE does.

- Make friends to share information and to study together.
- Seek out help from professors during office hours and from tutors available at the study center.
- Don't go to college before you are prepared; the Accuplacer/TOEFL tests are not the only measure of whether you are ready.

These alumni experts have earned the right to offer advice. One of the students achieved a 4.0 average in her first semester; another matched that GPA and is applying to transfer to colleges such as Smith and Wellesley after finishing her associate's degree. College may be tough, but College Transitions students are ready.



PAE Alums share their experience.

Photo by Molly Haley, [www.mollyhaley.com](http://www.mollyhaley.com)



## New Mainers' Resource Center Marks First Year

In the first year, over two hundred people contacted the **New Mainers Resource Center** (NMRC) for information. Applicants included skilled foreign-trained professionals with experience in healthcare, engineering, law, bio-sciences, teaching, and finance/administration.

The program received funding from **Maine Health Access Foundation**, the **Betterment Fund**, plus the **People of Color** and **Undapassawana Funds** of the **Maine Community Foundation**. The Center's accomplishments include:

- 178 people received services.
- 122 people received case management.
- \$100,000 was raised with FPAE for programming.
- NMRC students also took advantage of other PAE programs.
- A website was established: [www.nmrcmaine.org](http://www.nmrcmaine.org).
- NMRC signed an agreement to become an affiliate of the Welcome Back Initiative.

The NMRC will continue to develop and expand its services in 2015 and plans to seek continued funding from the Maine Legislature to extend the program beyond the pilot phase.

For more information about the New Mainers Resource Center or its services, contact: Sally Sutton, Program Coordinator, [suttos@portlandschools.org](mailto:suttos@portlandschools.org) or go to: [www.nmrcmaine.org](http://www.nmrcmaine.org)

## Scholarship Update

**Evergreen and Nine Wicket Foundations** each made generous donations which allowed FPAE to award scholarships that help students pay for PAE classes.

These scholarships helped students who had no other source of funding. The courses students pursued included: Certified Nursing Assistant, Medical Terminology, Medical Coding, Accounting, Basic Law, and Computer Basics. Many of these courses lead to a certificate which provides students with skills and knowledge to be competitive in today's job market.

In the Fall term, FPAE awarded 24 students scholarships totaling \$5,586. For the winter term 23 students were awarded scholarships totaling \$5,441.

## Computer Lab Update



This winter, the English language learning lab at PAE is expanding its hours and scope. The lab continues to serve PAE's wait-listed ESOL students. In addition, we are working with students currently in ESOL classes who want to accelerate their English learning. The lab works closely with the New Mainers Resource Center to

support their participants as they search for work in the US. With new funding, the lab is now open 16 additional hours which allows us to accommodate students in the late afternoons and evenings. The lab continues to benefit from student volunteers who create a welcoming environment for all users.

### **FPAE's Mission**

*To raise resources and awareness to support adults at Portland Adult Education striving to become stronger citizens, employees, parents and entrepreneurs.*

## FPAE Board

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### **Contact**

**Sarah Robinson at FPAE**  
[friendsofpae@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofpae@gmail.com)

## Legal Savvy at PAE

PAE's new Basic Law class introduces students who are curious about legal matters, or a career in the law, to the U.S. legal system.

Students learn legal terminology, the history of law, and study the structure of federal and state legal systems. Guest speakers and trips to the USM Law Library and the Portland Court House enhance learning.

Our enrolled students come from multicultural backgrounds and include attorneys from Columbia and El Salvador, medical interpreters from Rwanda and the Congo, a mediator from the Congo, an interpreter from Somalia, and a US student enrolled in our Legal Office Certificate Program.

The instructor, Suzette Moulton, has an associate's degree in Business and a Bachelor's degree in Paralegal Studies. She is also a member of the National Paralegal Honor Society.



Students in PAE's new Basic Law Class.

**Friends of Portland Adult Education**  
PO Box 3185, Portland ME 04104  
email@friendsofpae@gmail.com

## Our Amazing PAE Volunteers

**Juliet Eyraud** is the **Bowdoin College** Volunteer Coordinator and a classroom-aide extraordinaire.

Juliet, a junior at Bowdoin College, became interested in teaching adults when she took a TEFL course and then taught English to adults during a gap year in Thailand. Later she had a summer fellowship teaching English and social studies to women in rural Cambodia. Her enthusiasm grew when she helped in Gail Burnett's classroom at PAE in January 2013, through Bowdoin's Alternative Winter Break. As a result of her positive experiences, Juliet became a regular classroom volunteer and eventually took on a leadership role coordinating Bowdoin volunteers at PAE.

Juliet admires PAE students' ambitions and the supportive teachers who foster those dreams. She appreciates how difficult it must be for students to retain this spirit when many have suffered through unrest, war, family separation, and upheaval.

Because of some lingering effects from a concussion, Juliet is taking time off from Bowdoin to spend more time at PAE. She assists Gail in her class twice a week and helps Hannah McCain another day.



Juliet Eyraud and students Roselyn Nguessan and Jose Tchibangu.

She is also teaching a small class of non-native speakers at Front Street Community Center which is coordinated by Portland Housing Authority.

After completing her degree in computer science with a minor in education, Juliet hopes to find a career combining these two passions.

Juliet finds volunteering to be a great way to get out of the "bubble" of your own life and to see your town in another light. She has enjoyed becoming a part of the Portland community – something she might have missed without her involvement at PAE. Because of caring and encouraging volunteers like Juliet, PAE students have a better chance to meet their goals.

## From Friends of PAE's President



Rob Wood,  
FPAE Board Chair

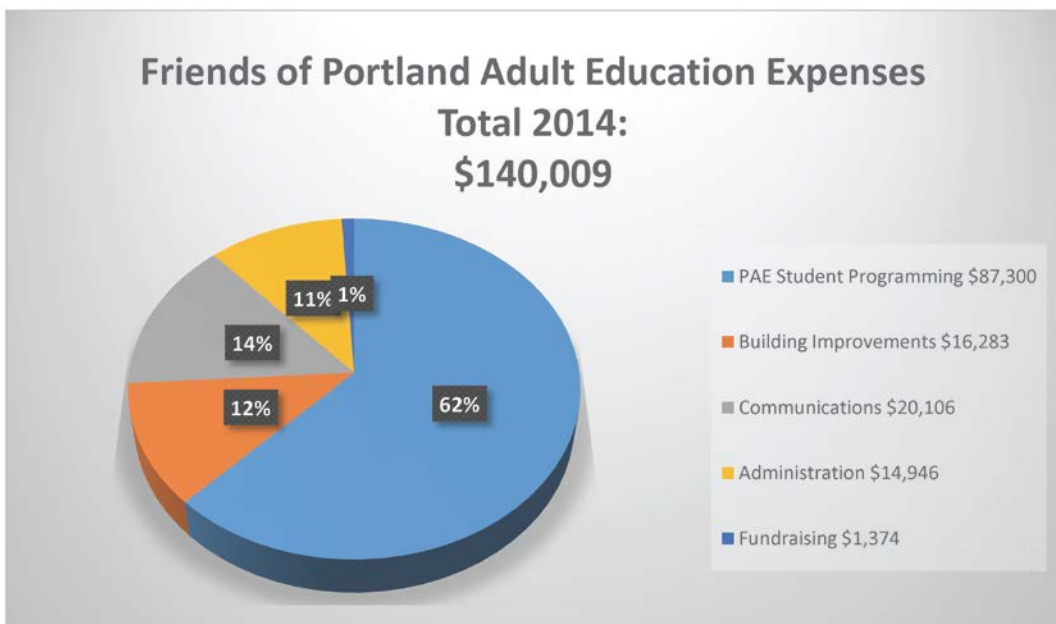
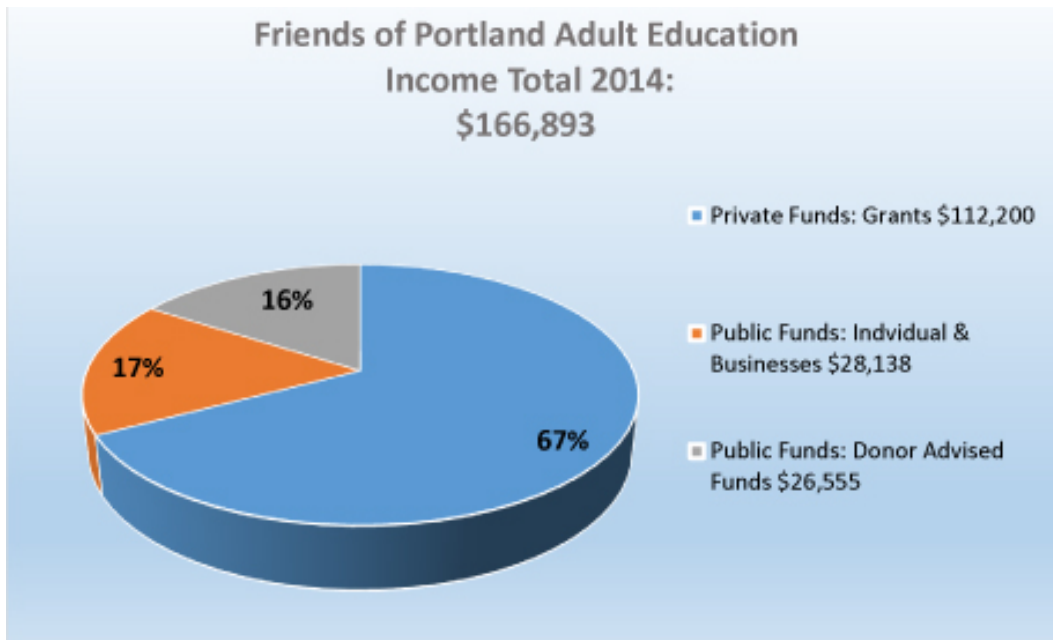
FPAE's highly successful second year enabled us to supplement and support Portland Adult Education and its programs in some important new ways. Board Members and Coordinator Sarah Robinson worked together to expand our financial resources (see Year at a Glance) as well as FPAE's membership. Our increased funding in 2014 allowed

FPAE to support the following:

- Unified all PAE programs at the Cathedral School site.
- Improved the intake system to accommodate our ever-increasing student enrollment
- Established a \$15,000 scholarship fund to support needy students enrolling in PAE programs.

The Board extends a heartfelt appreciation to the more than 150 Friends and numerous foundations who have made this possible. They are listed on the next page.

## FPAE 2014 Year at a Glance



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