

Friends of Portland Adult Education

NEWSLETTER FALL 2017



A PAE student with new glasses!

PAE and Lions Inspire Vision

During early July, Portland Adult Education and the Yarmouth/North Yarmouth Lions Club organized a visual screening for PAE students. Approximately 50 students received free eye exams with a portable screening machine. PAE's ESOL Coordinator, Valerie DeVuyst, worked with Lions Club President Jane Cleaves and June Johnson, Coordinator of the Maine Lions Vision Screening, for over a year to plan this event. Retired ophthalmologists and Lions members, Drs. Frank Read and Peter Headstrom, generously volunteered their time to write prescriptions and assist with selecting reading glasses.

As a result of the screening, 5 students received prescriptions for glasses, 3 were referred to more complete exams, and about 13 received non-prescription readers. These numbers validated PAE's suspicion that about 20% of the student population have vision challenges.

With a donation of \$1000 from the Y/NY Lions Club, PAE was able to purchase prescription glasses on-line at low cost. FPAE has also donated \$2,000 to increase the number of glasses that can be provided.

All participants, especially the students, thought the screening was a great success. PAE plans to repeat this opportunity in October.

FPAE Scholarships

During the 2016-17 school year, FPAE awarded scholarships totaling more than \$21,000 to support 113 students to enroll in PAE courses. These funds were secured through the following grant sources:

Evergreen Foundation

Betterment Foundation

Key Bank

*Portland English as
a Second Language
Scholarship Fund*

From the FPAE Chair

The 2016-17 school year witnessed continued growth in registrations and quality of instruction at Portland Adult Education. PAE has helped so many community members in so many ways – tutoring, language acquisition, high school credentials, college preparation, and finding employment.

The Friends of Portland Adult Education has supported these efforts by providing nearly \$100,000 of resources for the following areas:

- Establishing a new handicapped accessible computer lab to be used for wait listed, high school equivalency, and college bound students
- More than \$21,000 in registration and textbook scholarships to more than 110 students who have no access to federal, state, or local resources

- Graduation Ceremony scholarships for more than 20 homeless and asylum students

- Field Trips to both Portland and Augusta educational sites

- PAE staff support for curriculum, staff development, and a strategic retreat.

- Public awareness of PAE through facebook, Website (Friends of pae.org), and newsletters

My sincere appreciations to the scores of individuals and foundations that have made this possible.

Rob Wood

Chair of the Friends of Portland Adult Education



Recent Events

Strategies Lab Coming Together



When Debora Vianna Da Silva moved from Spain to Portland, Maine with her family, she wasted no time getting to know her community. On one of her neighborhood walks in the East End, she discovered Portland Adult Education (PAE) and came in to inquire about English Language classes. After several months as a student, she began searching for ways to give back to her new community using her professional skills as an architect and designer.



Thank you, Debora Vianna Da Silva for the work that you have done. Your willingness to work with our school will benefit students for years to come.

In the winter of 2017, PAE decided it was time to upgrade the school's English Language Learning Lab. The Friends of PAE wrote a successful \$6,000 grant to the Harmon Foundation to support this. Debora volunteered her expertise in concepts of space and function to create a modern space that allows for collaborative learning as well as independent study. The result has been an inviting space that is bright and accessible. The design work on the walls is an allusion to PAE's work to create connections between students, education, careers and community.

Certified Nursing Assistant Training

CNA training has been very active over the past year. We worked with our local medical partners in offering this State certified program to 129 students.

Courses included:

- 3 at Maine Medical Center
- 3 at First Atlantic Healthcare
- 2 at New England Rehabilitation Hospital
- 1 at Barron Center

PAE is planning a CNA/ELL class for the beginning of the new school year. This extended course is for those students whose English is not quite high enough for the regular course. Students will be studying medical terminology prior to the State curriculum. An English language instructor will be working with students outside of the course to reinforce vocabulary, comprehension, test taking skills and accent reduction.



Recent Events

New PAE Office Staff

The friendly PAE office staff has changed! Suzanne Berthiaume has left for a wonderful opportunity with the Gorham School District. The incredible Grace Pelletier is teaching three exciting staff members in the many complex office procedures. Zakia started as a ESOL level 1 student in 2009, graduated with a diploma in 2009, and is now a Junior at USM. Sharon has worked part time for two years while she finished up the Office Certificate Program. Victoire joined the staff in September. She has 16+/- years' experience in administration and finance. This great trio will continue the tradition of serving thousands of students with smiles and wisdom.

Zakia Momand



- Other careers explored in life: PSS
- Major area of study: Political Science
- Hobbies/Outside interests: Henna Art, Scrapbooking and Writing
- Languages Spoken: Pashto, Urdu, Hindi and English
- Countries visited: Pakistan, Afghanistan and Germany

Sharon Lacey



- Other Careers Explored in Life: Retail Management
- Hobbies/Outside Interests: Reading, Movies and Music
- Years in Adult Ed: 2 years
- Countries visited: Canada and England

Victoire Liwanga



- Other careers explored in life: Operations, Marketing, Procurement, Account & Program Assistant
- Major area of study: Financial Management
- Hobbies/Outside interests: supporting my kids in their sports activities, reading and movies
- Languages Spoken: French, English, Lingala, Kikongo, Swahili, and basic Spanish and Portuguese
- Countries visited: Congo Brazza, Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tunisia, South Africa, France, Belgium and Germany

A Message From the PAE Director

As I reflect upon my first six months as Executive Director at PAE, I continue to be impressed by everything I see at this school: the professionalism of the staff, the dedication of the students, and the support of our volunteers and community partners. I was also surprised by the breadth of the work being done here. While I would read the brochure that came to my home with interest, I never imagined that PAE was serving over 4,000 students including teaching English to over 2,000 immigrant students. My own path has been challenging yet exciting. Friends of Portland Adult Education (FPAE) has been an important partner as we try to meet the needs of our students, teachers and volunteers. As our funding needs increase, we try to use our funds wisely and efficiently. I hope that we can continue to count on our Friends for both financial and moral support as we move forward. Thanks for all that you do.



Anita St. Onge
Executive Director, Portland Adult Education

Thanks for all you do!

Appreciation from Sam Kaking

My name is Sam Kaking. I'm originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo. My wife and I arrived in United States in April 19, 2016. We initially came for a church conference in Alabama, but we were forced to ask for asylum due to unfortunate events that took place in our home country while we were in Washington.

I'm grateful to Portland Adult Education for contributing to the success of my career.

Before coming to the U.S., I studied and worked as an Electro Mechanical Engineer. When I arrived to Maine, I was feeling discouraged because I knew it was not going to be easy for me to return to my career. I had a foreign degree and even though I had years of experience, without the help of PAE, finding work was not going to be easy.

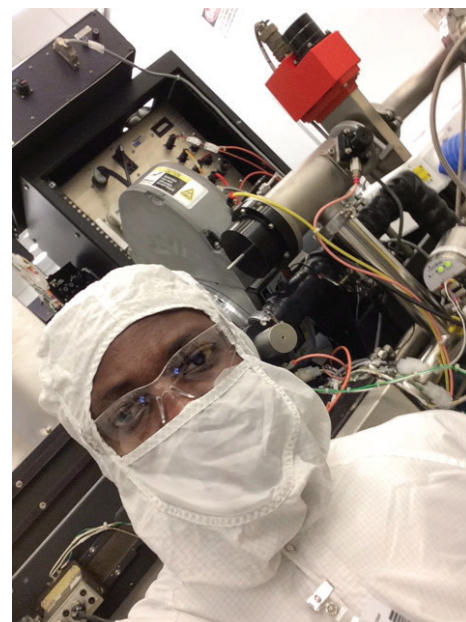
In June 2016, I registered at PAE to improve my English fluency and vocabulary skills. Earlier this year, I enrolled in the Job Class Program.

This program not only helped me to gain more confidence in job interviews but it also gave me a better understanding how to market myself more effectively to employers. These are things I wasn't quite sure about before.

I knew little about the American culture, such as body language and other gestures.

Pursuing my career, which seemed very challenging at the beginning now became much easier. Right now I am pleased to say I work at On Semiconductor, formerly known as Fairchild Semiconductor as a full time Maintenance Technician. I really enjoy my job now and my new company!

Thank you to the Portland Adult Education team, instructors, administrators, and partners for your support!



*With gratefulness,
Sam Kaking*



*Volunteer Pauline Lipari and Nidhal Alshammaa
at the Citizenship Ceremony*

There is no doubt that Portland Adult Education volunteers contribute immensely to PAE's mission. In the 2016-2017 academic year, over 200 Portland Adult Education vol-

Volunteer Roles- Old and New

unteers donated their time to our programs. PAE volunteers are busy as classroom aides, one on one tutors for homework in ESOL classes and for citizenship preparation, and as facilitators for the volunteer-led conversation classes. Some volunteers have helped math students work towards high school completion (or to pass their HiSet test) whereas others may help students prepare for their Maine driving test.

The New Mainers Resource Center (NMRC), which works with skilled foreign trained professionals to help them start their careers here in Maine, utilizes volunteer mentors as

part of their program. New Mainer professionals are matched with professionals in their field. Through a partnership with Systems Engineering, employees were connected with new Mainers who had experience in the field of technology. Mentors and their students met several times to discuss job search strategies and workplace culture. Another mentor with the NMRC has helped a new Mainer practice the names of prescription drugs in order to prepare for a national pharmacy tech exam. PAE is lucky to have so many dedicated volunteers who help PAE students reach their goals.