The true measure of success

It's always nice to get external validation. Recently, the System for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES) contacted me to say that The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. is one of only 10 adult basic education programs in Massachusetts to be ranked Tier One for two of the past three years. As nice as it is to be recognized by experts, the true test of our success is the success of our students.

This month, I am sharing the stories of two students who have already achieved a lot and are reaching for more. English is the crucial step for them in their journey to pursue their dreams. Your donations make it all possible.

Thanks for your continued support,

Diane Portnoy
President and CEO, The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.

World traveler finds home

Oguz had a good life in Turkey. He was working as a ship's mechanic and traveling the world. His uncle, a professor at Virginia Tech, inspired him to come to the U.S. Oguz described his decision to stay saying, "I have been to many countries and never have I seen such a great country with such diversity. I felt like I'm at home, so it became my home."
He came in 2000 and, after spending a year at The Immigrant Learning Center, Oguz went on to earn an associates degree from Quincy College. He became a U.S. citizen in 2006, and in April 2013, he obtained his BS in mechanical engineering from Northeastern University.

To support himself, Oguz has been working as a manager at Domino's Pizza. Now that he has his degree, he's excited to have his own business "to give back this great community what they have given me."

Oguz's other major success was his marriage to Hatice in 2012. She joined him in the U.S. from Turkey and has registered to learn English at The ILC.

Who needs sleep?

Gertrude came to the U.S. from Haiti in 2006. Her first job was in the kitchen at McLean Hospital. Although she had no nursing background, she says she "wanted to serve people" and was inspired to get certified as a nursing assistant. That led to a job working the overnight shift at Tuel Nursing Home in Melrose from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

Recently, Gertrude gained a second job at a nursing home in Woburn. So, three days a week she comes to The ILC in the morning, goes to work in Woburn at 3:00 p.m., then to work in Melrose at 11:00 p.m., comes home to take a shower and change clothes before coming back to The ILC to start over again. Hopefully, the other two days a week she takes a nap in between school and work.

It is a grueling schedule, but Gertrude does it because learning English is that important to her. She says that even after seven years in this country she is still "shy to speak English." She knows the only way to make a comfortable life for herself and her family here is to improve her English. Only then can she rest comfortably.

About Us

The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) of Malden, MA, is a not-for-profit organization that helps immigrants and refugees become successful workers, parents and community members through direct service programs and public education. Our direct service program provides free year-round English classes to immigrant and refugee adults in Greater Boston. The ILC further supports immigrants through the Public Education Institute, which informs Americans about the economic and social contributions of immigrants in our society. For more information visit http://www.ilctr.org.