Dear Readers,

We, the editors of this year’s Student Newsletter, would like to take this opportunity to say a few words about what The ILC means to us. The ILC has been helping people like us to settle here and start a new life for 22 years. When we arrived in the U.S., we didn’t know any English, and all of us were ashamed that we couldn’t speak. We were afraid when people approached us and asked us something in English. Some of us never did any shopping and we stayed home alone. Friends or relatives told us about The ILC, and now we have all made a lot of progress. We can speak in public, and we are more confident. We can have conversations, make new friends and most important of all we have started on the road to accomplishing our dreams.

The mission of The ILC is not only to teach us enough English to survive, but also to help us believe that our dreams can be realized in the USA, to help us become leaders who can guide our communities and to help us show America that immigrants are consumers, hard workers and valuable contributors to the economy. On behalf of all ILC students, we would like to thank all teachers, staff, volunteers and the generous donors who fund our school for giving us the chance to build a better life with better opportunities.

We hope you’ll enjoy this year’s issue of our Student Newsletter.

Thank you,
The Student Editors

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The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation supported by tax-deductible charitable contributions and, in part, by funding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Mystic Valley Elder Services, Inc. and the Massachusetts Executive Offices of Elder Affairs, and the cities of Malden and Medford, Massachusetts. The ILC admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin or disability.
Interview with Diane Portnoy
The ILC Founder and CEO

When Diane started the school in 1992, she thought that students should study at least 15 hours a week. She felt that in order for people to learn English, they need a lot of time to study.

At first, the school was located on the second floor of the CVS building on Pleasant Street in Malden. Over the years the school attracted more students, so she decided to move to the current address. The school started in the basement, later expanding to the first and second floors and finally to the fourth floor. Diane said her dreams for the school have come true. She remembered the difficulty her parents had because they couldn’t speak English when they came to America. That’s why she wanted to help immigrants to learn English.

The school used to have a Test of English as a Foreign Language class, and in the future she plans to offer it again. She said students who finish level 5 can go to another school or program to continue improving their English. Diane knows that some people cannot attend school because they have to work to support their family, but they can find other ways to learn English by listening to other people, watching TV or interacting in their workplace.

Diane said that the Public Education Institute has made a big difference in Massachusetts because it helps Americans to realize that immigrants do not take jobs from American people. They help each other to make the country grow. She said immigrants are hard workers, good consumers and risk-takers. She can see that the Institute’s work has helped the American people to see that immigrants are important for the economy and for their communities.
2003 – Founded the Public Education Institute to respond to growing anti-immigrant sentiment. (From left to right: Chiara, Denzil and Marcia.)

2004 – Published first report about the positive economic impacts of immigrants. Today, the Public Education Institute has 11 reports.

2005 – Conducted first workshop for educators about immigrants. Today, educators attend online from all over the USA.

2012 – Started a research institute at George Mason University near Washington, D.C.

2012 – Hosted first Immigrant Entrepreneurship Awards to recognize immigrant business owners. Diane Portnoy is in the middle of the photo.

Present – Continues to spread the good news about immigrants in the USA.
Immigrant-Founded Companies
Word Search
By Morning Level 2 and Afternoon Level 2

Find the hidden words by using the names of the companies below.
(The answer is on page 2)
If I Opened My Own Business, I Would......

By Morning Level 3

We would like to give our thanks to The Immigrant Learning Center for helping us on our first step toward our goal.

- raise animals on a farm and sell the meat to restaurants.
- open a shooting range for target practice.
- open a Chinese restaurant because my husband is a great cook.
- be a plumber, although I used to be a teacher in my country.
- sell African food and juice in the summer at festivals.
- open a hair salon for braids and manicures.
- open a pastry shop and make different kinds of delicious desserts.
- open a fitness center and be an instructor. I made a YouTube video with my exercises.
- open a day care center in my home. I’ve already fixed up my place to do it.
- be a translator/interpreter because a lot of people need help.
- open an ice cream shop because ice cream makes people feel sweet, and I want to bring this happiness to everyone.
- open a spa and do facials and nails. I used to do nails for my mom.
- open a Latin restaurant because I like to cook and manage the business.

If I Opened My Own Business, It Would Be......

By Afternoon Level 3

- a cleaning business because I think it is a good opportunity for me and my family. I can help other people with jobs.
- a laundromat or a restaurant. I could take better care of my family and create new jobs for people. I would name the restaurant “The King Food.”
- a restaurant and florist combined. People like to go out and celebrate in a restaurant, and when they are finished they will buy flowers to bring home.
- in construction such as masonry, carpentry, painting, tiling and plumbing. I like it because I like to meet with many people.
- a hair salon because this is my dream. I like to do different hairstyles. Many years ago I never had money to do my hair in a salon.
- a gas station with a full service garage inside and a small market. I like to work for myself.
- a fence company because it would be easy to find a job in Boston. There are many buildings in Boston to fix.
- to make floral decorations for weddings and parties.
- a travel agency because many people travel to different countries. I can learn about other cultures and get discounts for travel.
- in agriculture. I want to plant vegetables.
- a restaurant. I’ll learn the business, save my money and find a good location.
- an ice cream shop because ice cream makes people feel sweet, and I want to bring this happiness to everyone.
- a hair salon because when I was a child I had a dream to be a barber.

One of our students has already met her goal of owning her own business:

My husband and I already have our own cleaning business in the U.S. We have many contracts with schools and offices.
After September 11, 2001, there was a lot of negative sentiment about immigrants. At that time The ILC was only a school. Diane Portnoy, The ILC Founder and CEO, was motivated to educate Americans about the importance of immigrants. She used her own money and started the Public Education Program in 2003 with Dr. Marcia Drew Hohn as the director. The Public Education Program later changed its name to the Public Education Institute.

The mission of The ILC Public Education Institute is to promote immigrants and to show Americans the positive contributions immigrants make as workers, taxpayers and entrepreneurs.

At first, the Institute started doing mostly research about immigrants. They also only focused on immigrants in Massachusetts. Later they realized that they could focus beyond Massachusetts and started to look at other New England States. In 2012, The ILC started a partnership with George Mason University in Washington D.C., which now does the national research.

The Public Education Institute uses different forms of social media (YouTube, Facebook and Twitter) to publicize the Institute. They go to conferences, schools and universities to do presentations about why immigrants are positive. They use brochures, flyers and their website to promote their organization.

Denzil is originally from Trinidad and Tobago, and joined the Institute in 2011. Chiara is from Italy and joined the Institute in 2013. They have both lived in Boston for five years and are happy in their careers, although they both still miss their families. They are personally motivated to help immigrants because they are both immigrants themselves and want to promote the sharing of language, food and culture. They told us that immigrants contribute to the U.S. by starting businesses, paying taxes and bringing their families and skills.

When we asked them what differences they noticed between their countries and the U.S., Denzil said that the U.S. was much colder, that there was good public transportation and that everything is orderly. Chiara said a big difference is health insurance because in Italy it is free for everyone. She thinks that learning the language is the first thing that immigrants should do when they come here. Her advice is to make American friends and personal contacts because they can help you and give you advice. Denzil thinks that it’s important to learn American behavior and culture, but that you don’t have to change everything about yourself. He said, “You don’t need to change your religion, what you wear or how you speak. You can stay as you are.”

Many people don’t know about the Public Education Institute. However, it’s an important organization because it educates people about immigrant entrepreneurs and the positive impact and contributions that immigrants make to America.
Voices of New American Families
By Morning Level 4 and Afternoon Level 4

The morning level 4 and afternoon level 4 classes participated in Malden Reads. In Listening Is an Act of Love, we read an interview by an immigrant to the U.S. who talked about her family. We decided to write about our families.

- We grew up in: China, El Salvador, Lebanon, Ethiopia, Albania, South Korea, Colombia, Haiti, Brazil, Vietnam, Tibet and Morocco.
- I grew up in Russia in a small town near the Great Russian River, the Volga.
- I grew up on a farm in a small rural area.
- We grew up in a small city, but it was a very interesting place.
- Thank God I still have my parents.
- My parents believed in education.
- Our father was strict with us, and our mother helped us do our homework.
- My mother and father had a business. They sold clothes in An Dong market.
- My mother was a manager in her factory, and my father was a reporter for a newspaper in China.
- My father was an army man. I was born in an army hospital and lived in army homes.
- We were a poor family, but my father always told us that money is not important to be a happy family.
- I am proud of my parents.
- I was a happy bird every day in my childhood.
- I played games on the sidewalk. I played marbles with my friends.
- My childhood was innocent and lovely.
- I liked to help my father plant corn and tomatoes.
- I always helped my grandmother do the housework.
- I was curious and smart.
- When I was five years old, I went to a physical education school. I trained in gymnastics from 5:00 a.m. to nighttime every day except Sunday. I had no holidays and no summer vacations. While other children played outside, I practiced hard.
- I started to work early. I started to study when I was seven years old; I bought my materials to study.
- I was the big boy in my family and cared for my siblings. When school finished, I didn’t have vacations like every child. I worked with grown men and helped my parents.
- After school, I helped my father work in carpentry. I was twelve years old.
- I like soccer, but I didn’t have many chances to perform on the best team because I preferred to fix my eyes on school and university.
- I have my mother’s face.
- I look like both parents, but my father is in my character.
- I look like my grandma.
- I look like my father. I’m very ugly so I’m not happy about this.
- Everyone says that I look like my dad, and always when people tell me that, I feel great.
- I look like Rachel, my sister. She gave me my first name, Winchel.
- I look like my father. I miss him.
- I have three sisters and four brothers. We are a very close family.
- My siblings always called each other by nicknames.
- My sister rode bikes with me to the lake to play.
- My older brothers used to tease me when I was a little girl. I was happy when my father brought me to restaurants to have dinner without my brothers.
- I was the only little girl. My brothers were nice to me. My brothers and I learned how to ride a horse and to plant fruit.
- I have a big family, but sometimes I feel alone because we are separated.
• I came to the U.S. to get an education and to realize my dreams.
• The future in my country was not promising. In my country, we don’t have opportunities or freedoms and democratic rights. Our governors don’t work for our society.
• My father was the first person in my family to come to the U.S. to get a better job, and after nine years, he applied for all my family to come here.
• Our family was very poor, and we didn’t have enough money for studying, so my older brother came to the U.S. when he was 16 years old. He worked hard and he bought a house for my family here. We lived with my grandmother and all my family. My brother has made a success of his life and now he is a citizen.
• When the earthquake occurred, my fellow students and I were together preparing a project in a room on the third floor at the university. I started down the stairs and the building collapsed. Many of my fellow students died. After the earthquake, life was more difficult than before. Every day my sister was crying day after day.
• I came because my country is occupied, and there are no human rights. I have a free life now, but I really wish my family members who are still suffering could move here, but it is impossible for them to get passports to get out. I love my new cozy family, but I miss my family far away. I hope my family can unite someday.

We all bring lessons from our families:
• Respect everyone, be kind, have a good heart.
• Everything is possible as long as you don’t give up.
• Be determined. The first step is always difficult.
• Working hard is the only way to reach your dreams. Help yourself.
• Be disciplined. Don’t be lazy. Know where and how to do things.
• Listen before deciding.
• Love and understanding are the most important lessons I have learned from my family.
• Have conversations with your family.
• Don’t be afraid of obstacles. You need to believe you can do it yourself.
• You have to go to school.
• Always be united: this means every member in my family succeeds together.
• My son studies very hard. I hope he can go to the best college and be a successful person.
• My daughter wants to be a doctor, so I work so hard to help her.
• I want my son to be well-mannered and to become erudite.
• I want my children to have good moral principles.
• My daughter is an excellent student in math, and my dream is to see her graduate from college.
• My dream is that my child will live better than me.
• I bring to the United States my enthusiasm, my skills and my profession.
• In our countries, we were a civil engineer, a TV chef, a quality control inspector, a salesperson, a cell phone tower inspector, a university professor, an accountant, a realtor, a police officer, a newspaper reporter, a nurse, a doctor, a business owner, a math teacher, a welder, a personnel supervisor, a preschool teacher, a university student and a professional softball player.
• I would like to give to the U.S.A. because it has given me opportunities to realize my goals. I would like to give much more because I love this country.
• My family brings their discipline, respect and love for people. We are proud to talk about our culture and invite people to enjoy it.
• My culture helps people all over the world, so we can help in the United States.
• My family has lived in the U.S. for over ten years. We have a little business, and we pay taxes. We built our families here.
• Now I’m from America. The United States is my home. I am part of the American family.
I want to volunteer somewhere where I can help immigrants by translating or helping them with forms.

-Elizabeth

Our class at The ILC recently discussed the topic of “Community.” What is a community? What responsibilities do we have to our communities? How can we contribute? How can we give back and show our gratitude for what we have received? Students brainstormed ideas about ways that they plan to contribute to their communities in the future.

Here are some of their thoughts!

I’ll give my blood in the time of need. I was a nurse in Turkey, so I want to volunteer in a nursing home. - Hatice

I want to make a big donation for the children and people who have cancer. – Peterson

I want to help by volunteering to visit sick people and seniors and bring them meals or babysit.
- Ouafa, Ying, Hemlata and Regine Rama

I know how hard it is to speak a language that is not your own, so I’ll be a volunteer to teach immigrants the English language. – Marie

I want to donate blood and donate my organs after I die to save lives.
- Sibele

I plan to help by giving money to people because some people can’t work. Some people can’t find jobs, so they have big problems.
– Samson

I want to volunteer somewhere where I can help immigrants by translating or helping them with forms.
- Elizabeth

Give a hand! Pitch in! Help out!
The students in morning level 2B reviewed the jobs, businesses and employers of all the students at The ILC at the beginning of March 2014. Of the 452 students enrolled, 120 students were working at 92 companies, and seven students had their own businesses.

Here are the top nine jobs and employers of ILC students.

In Our Own Community
Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Malden Square from Pleasant Street to Malden City Hall
By Afternoon Level 1B

Forty-four percent (44%) of all businesses from the start of Pleasant Street to City Hall are owned by immigrant entrepreneurs.

They are from India, China, Vietnam, Morocco, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Ireland and Moldova.

Ten percent (10%) of all businesses in the Square have owners from India.

Ten percent (10%) are from Vietnam.
Ten percent (10%) are from China.
Ten percent (10%) are from Arabic speaking countries.

One business owner is from Ireland.
The businesses are convenience stores, restaurants, hair salons, mini-supermarkets, nail salons, a massage and acupressure clinic, and a dollar store.
Supporting Local Immigrant Businesses
By Afternoon Level 5

Levels 3 and 5 are working on a class project together in order to promote and support local immigrant businesses. We are putting three bulletin boards in the resource room at the bottom of the stairs in the basement!

| FLYERS! BUSINESS CARDS! PHOTOS! | RECOMMENDED BY STUDENTS AND STAFF! | SERVICES WANTED! |

There are several ways that we are going to promote immigrant businesses. On the first board, we’re going to put flyers and business cards of the businesses we use to encourage immigrants to try new places. These businesses can belong to students, their families or their friends. In addition, we are going to recommend businesses and services. On this bulletin board, we tell the people, “This is a good place! I went to that place a few weeks ago, and they did a really good job, and it wasn’t expensive!” Last but not least, we’ll have a bulletin board for services wanted. When you need a service (party help, babysitter, cleaner, etc.), just put a notice on the last board. Leave your name, phone number, e-mail and the day you need the service performed. We believe that since we are all immigrants, we should help each other, and we want to show everyone that immigrants do a lot of great jobs in the community!  

Fredly, Level 5

Here are some recommendations from some of our classmates!

**All Seasons Table** 64 Pleasant Street, Malden
I went here on Friday night with my family. That day was very busy, but the service was good. It was quiet and clean and the music was good. The food was not too sweet or spicy, and they give every customer a free drink—bubble tea—on the weekends. (Yuki)

**Fuloon** 375 Main Street, Malden
This is a Mandarin-style Chinese restaurant, and I have been there twice in the evening. The food is authentic and reasonably priced. I recommend the scallion pancakes and chicken wings. You should also try the Mandarin Honey Tender Pork, the Whole Mandarin Fish and the Peking Duck!

**Perfection Supermarket**, 201 N. Common Street, Lynn
Their products are very good and not too expensive. They carry fresh meat (goat, beef and pork), vegetables, fruit and Caribbean foods. (James)

**M & S Beauty Supply** 383 Somerville Ave., Somerville. This is a beauty and cosmetics place, but I also get my hair cut here. The price is very reasonable, and they respect the customers. I recommend this place, especially for Haitians. (Mejuste)

**Bossa Nova Restaurant**, Malden
We went to this restaurant last Sunday at lunch time. We ate barbecued beef with rice, beans and salad. The food was delicious, and the prices are very good. We would go back again! (Dione)

**Lou Diamond Barbershop**, Everett
I go to this barbershop every two weeks. He does a great job on my hair. It isn’t expensive, and the place is very big. It’s open 7 days a week. Go there! You’ll really like it! (Fredly)
The four Literacy Program classes have about 130 students. Thirty-four of these students have a total of 60 adult children who are living in the U.S. This is a summary of what they are doing.

**Seventeen work in health care:**
- 9 nurses
- 2 medical assistants
- 1 doctor
- 1 respiratory therapist
- 1 nursing home worker
- 1 phlebotomist
- 1 computer technician for Brigham’s and Women’s Hospital
- 1 hospital office worker

**Eleven work in transportation:**
- 7 taxi drivers
- 2 truck drivers
- 2 MBTA employees

**Four work in food service:**
- 1 baker
- 1 cook
- 2 other restaurant workers

**Four work in finance:**
- 1 accountant
- 3 bank employees

**Other occupations:**
One works as the Success Program Director for an organization called Bottom Line that helps disadvantaged youth enter and graduate from college.
Three are attorneys.
One is a computer engineer.
One is an army soldier who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.
One owns a barbershop.
One is an esthetician.
One works for a security company.
One works for a distribution company.
One is a YMCA lifeguard and office worker.

**Some college graduates, including:**
One graduate from MIT
One graduate in Architecture
One graduate in Ophthalmology
Eight are college students, including one who is studying at Harvard.
3 nursing students
1 veterinary medicine student
1 massage therapy student
3 other students

**Three will begin college next fall:**
One will attend MIT next year on a scholarship. This year she participated in the Model UN Conference.
One just completed the Year Up program and will study business.
Another will study criminal justice.