

ONE TO ONE LEARNING IS A SPONSORED MINISTRY OF DOMINICAN SISTERS OF SPARKILL

ONE2ONE

Learning, Inc.

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N E W S L E T T E R

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newsletter

one2one-learning.org

One to One Learning, Inc.

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OUR MISSION

To empower immigrants to reach their full potential and lead meaningful lives in the communities in which they live and work by providing them with English classes and other supportive services.



TRUSTEES

Sr. Marie Peter Buckley
Sr. Aileen Donovan
Sr. Irene Ellis
Sr. Grace Anne Hogan
Sr. Nancy Richter

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Ms. Suzanne Reynolds

A Message from....

Sister Cecilia La Pietra

Dear Friends in Mission,

As I thought about what I wanted to share with you in this letter, the word HOPE came to my mind. With all that is going on in our world and in our lives, we need to live in hope and find signs of hope in our daily lives. Last night, as I went through the events of the day, a pattern evolved that I began to see as signs of hope.

The first part of the day found me looking through files for pictures of teachers who had volunteered for five years or more. I found myself just enjoying pictures from the past, remembering students and teachers, some still attending, others having moved on, all as signs of hope for the future. Later in the day, we had a site visit from the Catholic Charities Archdiocesan Team. We shared a lot of where we have been with these wonderful vibrant young ladies, who encouraged us in our mission and promised support in different areas of need that we proposed. Hope in sharing. As they were leaving, a group of three young Girl Scouts and their mothers arrived bearing "Birthday Cake Bags" for Moms who normally would not have the means to surprise their children. Hope in need and giving. Later, I attended a Zoom meeting with Dominican Sisters and two young men in Haiti, who described the terrible situation of gangs who have taken over their country. They know our sisters because we have an orphanage project with Sisters of Charity and some of our sisters have gone to Haiti for summer camp. This is not happening now because of the danger but the zoom was initiated to plan on ways we could help. They kept asking us for prayers. We kept saying, "We love you. We are family". Hope in prayer. After that Zoom, we attended a Mass for the husband of one of our students. It was the end of the Rosary Novena of nine days after the burial. Many were there to support the family and food and conversation were shared. Hope in community.

Awareness is the key. If I had not decided on writing to you about hope, I would have missed all these signs. Can we live in hope as "Hope is an outreaching desire with expectancy of good. It is characteristic of all living beings" (Edward S. Ame). A sign hanging in my office, "I have a small grain of hope. I need more. I break off a fragment to send to you. Please take this grain of a grain of hope, so that mine won't shrink. Please share your fragment so that yours will grow. Only so, by division will hope increase." (Denise OP) Let us be circles of hope for each other, expecting that good will grow in community. I pray for you each day. Please share your concerns that I might bring them to prayer. Please pray for us.

The mission of "One to One Learning", the empowerment of individuals by teaching English, is a mission of hope. The minute a person enters the door, there is hope that "something good will happen to me here". As Friends in Mission, we are instruments of that hope.

Peace, *Sister Cecilia*



AWARDS CEREMONY

This year we celebrated on two evenings, On-Line and Morning Classes on June 12th and In-person Classes on June 14th. With both groups together in 2022, we found the ceremony very long. This year we would not have been able to fit both groups together because of the addition of many more beginner in-person students. We wore the same sapphire blue 25th anniversary tee shirts again this year to save on the purchase of a new tee shirt. Nice to extend the anniversary year. Sister Cecilia called up each teacher and Veronica called the names of the students, with their names, perfectly pronounced. There were 102 Certificates of Excellence, 62 Merit, and 37 Participation awarded to students. New teachers had received tee shirts as their gift for their service. Teachers received certificates, noting their years of service and those with more service received gifts of framed pictures of their group or candles, depicting the light of learning. Even with predictions of rain, for both evenings the rain held and we were able to enjoy refreshments and share with each other outside on the picnic benches.



CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

For last year and this year Steven Broncano, a 7th grade student, was the oldest of the children who came to the program with their parents. This small group took place in the dining room and Steven was the welcomer to the younger ones, ages 4 through 7. He set their table with crayons and coloring books and when Amanda Jane, the art teacher, came Steven assisted her with the craft project. He also assisted Rose, on Wednesday evening, when she did some remedial work in math and reading and also did projects with molding clay. With COVID under control, we are hoping to return to the expanded Children's program.



USA CITIZEN!

Gloria Acosta is a New Citizen and is pictured here with her teacher, **Paul Parsekian** who attended the "Swearing-In" ceremony in Rockland County.

**We are in need of
A Children's Program Coordinator
and
high school and college students
who work with the children in small groups,
helping with homework, reading stories, doing crafts, playing
games, doing puzzles, and serving the snack.**

**Please call Sister Cecilia at
845 216-9799 for more information**

Hands of Hope Gala

CELEBRATING 26 YEARS OF "ONE TO ONE LEARNING"

A very successful Gala was held on Friday, May 12th at Nyack Seaport with **Angelo and his Staff** providing a wonderful evening of hospitality and delicious appetizers, entrees, and dessert. **Sister Nancy Richter** was a delightful MC who graciously kept the program moving to the delight of the serving staff. **Charlotte Murray** of the Board of the Directors delivered the blessing, thanking God and many people for the success of the mission as it continues into the future.

We were honored to hear from **Msgr. Kevin Sullivan** who spoke about the times that we are experiencing now in New York with bus-loads of asylees coming for safety and a place to live and work. **Catholic Charities** is reaching out to them, providing them with food, clothing, and legal



advice. Later in the evening, **Sister Irene Ellis**, Prioress of Dominican Sisters of Sparkill read the May 12th joint statement with the **Blauvelt Dominicans**, in response to the plan to house asylum seekers in Rockland and Orange Counties and the actions of elected officials to prevent this. (see www.Sparkill.org) At a time of celebration, it was so good to bring to all of us, including students and alumni of "One to One" these words of support, "we stand in solidarity with and look for ways to welcome asylum seekers, and provide for the vulnerable among us, especially immigrants and refugees."

Video of Ads for honorees prepared by **Martha Gonzalez** were displayed all evening on a large screen. **Sister Cecilia's** remarks were shown with a video prepared by **John Borst**, former Board Member. We are grateful to **Darryl Popkave** and **Thomas Mellia** of **Multimedia Group USA** for providing the equipment and management for viewing the Video and Journal.



Our Honorees were very special persons who in many ways live out of the call to service.

- **Michael Patrick Davidson, Advocate Award** for using his many gifts as story teller and film maker to become an advocate of environmental justice.
- **Karen De Mateo and Cindy's Pals, Humanitarian Award** for following the way of compassion and reaching out in love to their brothers and sisters, including our students.
- **Sparkill Dominican Associates, Founder's Award** as they follow in the footsteps of St. Dominic and Alice Mary Thorpe in proclaiming the Reign of God through a ministry of justice and reverence for all creation.
- **Sabrina Greco, Board Service Award** for her dedication to our mission of empowerment of Immigrants and her enthusiasm and leadership on the Development Committee.
- **Steve Wilson (Posthumously), Board/Teacher Service Award** for putting his heart and soul into our mission of empowerment of students as teacher, board member, and benefactor.
- **Terrence Amonica, Teacher Service Award** for his goodness and his wonderful example to his students of steadfastness in achieving his goal and his support of our mission of empowerment.
- **Martha Patterson, Teacher Service Award** for her dedication to her students, her faithfulness to the mission, and for her presence during COVID in-person classes.
- **Jessica Reck, Teacher Service Award** for her four-year commitment to the mission of empowerment of our students through her presence in their lives as teacher.
- **Duong Nguyen, Youth Service Award** for her faithful response to the mission of empowerment of immigrants through the gift of language.
- **Elvia Mazariego Stuart, Student Service Award** for her courage in facing the challenges of life, for her perseverance in her study of English, and for her service to the organization.
- **William Martinez, Alumni Service Award** for his inspiration and his life of service to his community and his perseverance in his study of English.



Hands of Hope Gala continued

We are grateful to all who made this Gala such a success. **Phyllis** and **Bruce Schweizer of Quality Graphics Tristate, Inc** for the artistic presentation and production of the booklet, invitation, raffle, and award certificates. To **Edith Nova** who prepared the corsages and boutonnieres, **Father Tom Kunnel** who donated the table centerpieces, and **Sister Jeanne Shary** and **May Pang**, our photographers.

Many took ads and there were many donors and sponsors. You can view the ad video and Sister Cecilia's remarks video and a listing of sponsors and donors on our website www.one2one-learning.org

We are most grateful to all our Board Members, especially **Sisters Mary Grey, Catherine Rose Quigley, Charlotte Murray and Peggy Mc Girl** who were there to welcome our guests and sell the raffles and to **Gino Silvestri** who took care of raffle prizes. Thank you to all our friends and benefactors who attended and to the friends and families of our Honorees.

We ended the event with music prepared by our **DJ Alex Flores** and with the **Limited Raffle**.

We sold 245 of the 300 tickets.

First Prize
was \$8,330 won by **Terrence Amonica**

Second, Third, Fourth Prizes, each \$833 won by **Donna Nugent, Sister Mary Brinn (10 Sisters), Yvonne Cherena**

Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth Prizes, each \$417 won by **Yolanda Zamora, Thomas Acosta, Sister Maryann Borrello, Miguel Aguilar**

See you on Friday

May 3, 2024

Hands of Hope Gala

CELEBRATING 27 YEARS

INTRODUCTION OF A NEW MEMBER TO OUR "ONE TO ONE LEARNING" PROGRAM

In the August 2022 Newsletter you read about our amazing staff and all that they do to support the program. **Sister Maureen Conway**, teaching on-line day and evening classes, keeping attendance, and mentoring our teachers with supplementary materials to enhance book chapters. **Marianne Barry** for record keeping and assisting with Board and Executive Director communication. **Gino Silvestri** working directly with the Executive Director on Financial matters.

In April 2023 we added a new person, **Veronica Diaz Reinhausen** who took on the position of **Program Coordinator** which has been the responsibility of the Executive Director. Presently **Sister Cecilia LaPietra** has been introducing and initiating Veronica into policies and procedures of program management.



Veronica played an active role in evening classes in May and June and helped with preparation of certificates and participated in the Awards Ceremonies. This new position will free Sister Cecilia to spend more time promoting the mission in the public arena.

Veronica comes with a wealth of experience that will increase our services and respond to the needs of many more immigrants. After



a long successful career in the corporate world, Veronica chose to put her energy into a focus on immigration, being part of the Immigration Justice Project of the American Bar Association and the Immigration Justice Campaign. Through Villanova Interdisciplinary Immigration Studies for Advocates, Veronica is a DOJ Fully accredited Legal Representative. Veronica has taken the TESOL course and as a fluent speaker of Spanish, French, and Italian, she is the Director of the Cultural House of Language in Nyack, providing classes in these languages, privately and in group classes. **We welcome Veronica into our "One to One" Family.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



We are saying good bye to a very special member of our Board. **Sabrina Greco** has completed two three-year terms and has given her all to the progress of mission advancement, as a member and then as the Chair of the Development Committee. Sabrina has the kind of personality that makes you want to collaborate with her on any project that she might propose. Sabrina is open to suggestions and welcomes creative ideas and participation. She and her husband, Mike have a sincere love for the mission and show it by participating and donating their time talent and resources.



Sabrina was honored at the Hands of Hope Gala together with her great supporter on the development Committee, **Steve Wilson** RIP. We will miss this dynamic duo but know that they will not be far from

us, Steve from his place in Heaven and Sabrina who has promised to continue assisting with our events.

After a three-year term on the Board, **Ken McDevitt** will be leaving us. We are grateful for Ken's time on the Finance Committee, providing input on Budget and Financial Planning.

We welcome to the Board **Nydia Prishker, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Childhood Education at St. Thomas Aquinas College, who will be also be starting a TESOL Course of Studies at the College. Dr. Prishker hopes to connect prospective volunteers and teachers to "**One to One**".

William Martinez, who was honored at the Hands of Hope Gala for his advancement from starting at "One to One" with no English to this past May graduating from RCC with an Associate Degree, will also be joining the Board. William hopes to help in continuing the mission and providing the best service to help the immigrant community. **Karen Ellis** will join the Board bringing her expertise in Mission Advancement from her work at Fordham University, and Dominican Sisters of Sparkill. **Michael Patrick Davidson**, Gala Honoree, will also share his expertise as a new member of the Board of Directors.

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR TEACHERS ON THEIR EXPERIENCE



GRETCHEN KANE (IN-PERSON)

Before coming to "One to One Learning", I was greatly rewarded as an elementary classroom teacher through the relationships of trust and love that formed between teacher and student. Watching the eyes of a student light up when recognizing their new understanding brought purpose and meaning to all involved.

Now, having taught students at "One to One" this past year, I am similarly rewarded. There is a shared learning between teacher and students. I benefit from each exchange. Learning about another's personal stories, recognizing that most students were unable to have any educational training as children, they are gaining the tools to learn and confidence grows. I have great admiration for each of the student's dedication and conscientiousness and their striving to overcome the difficulties life has presented. Their wish to learn and to become United States citizens is inspiring. The gift of teaching is in the exchange.

This year, two students have become citizens and three others are ready to go for the interview in the Fall. The students are gaining confidence in their knowledge of US history, in reading, writing, and conversational English. I look forward to seeing the new students begin the course of study next fall.



RITA (ON-LINE)

I have four students in my Zoom class and I enjoy helping them and seeing their progress so they can obtain better jobs. It is very important they learn English, not only for the speaking but to understand what other people are saying. The Zoom classes give me an opportunity to use the internet and find different resources for my students to use. I love to use the Epic book website because it enables me to pick different reading levels and topics that

my students can read out loud. They have a fun time at the end of the story taking the comprehension quiz. Another website is "Facil ABC learning" where the teacher shows different phrases that Americans use in everyday life. This is a useful tool that my students can implement in their own lives.

I continue to teach at "One to One Learning" because it gives me pleasure to see how hard working each student is to advance in the English language. I am so proud of them and how committed they are every week.



MARIO

I am happy to be on Zoom since I am tired when I come home from work and I can unwind a little before class. I like how easily I can access Zoom on the computer. I am happy to be learning a lot and uses my English to communicate with the other workers. I love the patience of my teacher in repeating pronunciation and writing text till students are comfortable.

LEIVI

English Zoom classes help me in my job. Learning English helps me better understand the language. I appreciate Zoom classes since I have a newborn baby and would not be able to assist in person.

ILLSIA

I enjoy the Zoom classes since I have a hectic work schedule and would not be able to make in person learning. Driving my children to classes would be difficult. I love the repetition and pronunciation of words that I have difficulty pronouncing. I use many phrases learned at my restaurant.

GLENDA

The classes have helped me understand and speak more English with my boss. I clean a house and am able to express and communicate concerns that I have with the owner.

From Sylvie Blaustein's Zoom Students who send these notes by email

ODULIA

I just like to thank everybody for all that time and teaching. It was really nice. I learned so much. It is never too late to Learn. We can never stop learning. Thank you again to my teacher and Sister Cecilia who help make it possible.

ROSE

I am grateful for this English program which allows us to improve communication in this country. I thank our teacher for each class with dedication and care. I also hope to continue participating next year.

GILMA

Thank God for another year of classes, we had valuable lessons, a great teacher and some very friendly classmates. Many thanks to Sister Cecilia for her efforts and all the collaboration that makes this possible.

THEN AND NOW...

My name is **Maria Peñafiel**. I came to the United States in July of 1997. I came to this beautiful country, looking for a better life. I came when I was 20 years old. It was really hard for me. I was alone with no friends and no family and most important a different language. I got jobs cleaning houses. A few years later I got married and had four children. I always wanted to go to school to learn English but it was very difficult with my children.

In 2019 my brother told me about Sister Cecilia and learning English at One to One. I was able to bring my youngest children to the children's program where my older children volunteered and received community service hours for their graduation. I was able to communicate a little in English and now I am learning to write and read in English, which helped me a lot in my work, since I just opened my own company "*Saida's House Cleaning Services*".

Thank God and Sister Cecilia and all the people who are part of such a beautiful program, to all the teachers who take such valuable time to teach us and for their patience with us. May God bless each one and especially for my present teacher, **Deacon Rob** and for **Sister Cecilia** and all who support One to One Learning. Sister Cecilia not only helps us with the language but with many other things. She is attentive to each one of us and our families and needs in our lives.

RESPONSE FROM OUR BENEFACTORS

We are grateful to you as you assist us in paying our monthly bills to support our programs. These donations total \$11,405. We remember our friends and benefactors in prayer each morning.



Sister Lesley Block
Regina Kelly



Dr. and Mrs. Mark Ambrosi
Memory of Elizabeth Gruffi
Dorothy Cox
Kathleen Gnazzo
Kerry Haggerty
Robert Lechtanski
Memory of Robert Giacobbe
John and Lynn Scileppi
Mary K. Spengler
Ugo Volpati
Memory of Ceil Volpati



Dominican Sisters Band 1956
Memory of Sister Natalie De Natale
Rust Gilbert
Patience Morgan-Irigoyen
Rency Joshua
John and Mary McCoy
Sisters Louise Mileski
and Peggy Jennings
Sisters Catherine Rose
and Rose Mary Kelly
Honor 2023 Jubilarians
Sister Rose Sasso
Margaret Shea



Millie Bebick
Sisters Pius Fagan and Mary Jo Heman
Honor 2023 Jubilarians
Sister Nora Healey
Hesed Community
Jean Looney
Michele and Gerald McCarthy
Sister Sheila Mullins
Maria and Bill Nest
Sister Margie O'Doherity
Sister Joan O'Leary
Memory of Katherine Gannon Ruffino
Sister Barbara Paul
James Russell
Honor 2023 Jubilarians
Marilyn and Bob Timberger



Grants
\$30,000
Alfred E. Smith Foundation
\$5,000
Catholic Charities
Cardinal's Christmas Luncheon
\$500
Rockland Country Club Foundation

Donations
\$10,000 **Alison and Boniface Zaino**
\$5,000 **Eileen and John Lawler**
\$250 **Quality Graphics**

Immigration Fund
Sister Maureen Foy
Memory of Pat Foy
Sister Mary Fleming

Thank you to
St. Francis of Assisi Parish
for their support. Not only did they sponsor the **Tea Party** in November, two tables of parishioners attended our GALA and they took an ad, but they also held a raffle for us in April and raised **\$1,775** for "One to One".
Blessings on **Father McKeon and Sister Pat** for all that they do for God's people.

I N M E M O R I A M
March 2, 2023

We remember **Betty Keyes** and are grateful for all that she has been for us. A parishioner of St. John the Baptist Church, Piermont, Betty was part of the Outreach Committee, that provided Thanksgiving Baskets and Christmas Gifts to our Students.

Betty was a generous benefactor and Chair of the "One to One Learning" Board.

Anne and Bid Goswami
Jordan Family
Virginia Maar
Jack and Margaret Stunkel
Helen Evers
Linda Press
Judith Raspina
Carrie Roach
Ted Simone
Jean Wolken

Interested in becoming a member of the

One to One Learning Family?

Call Sister Cecilia
at 845-512-8176 /
845-216-9799
clpangel59@gmail.com and
sr.cecilia@one2one-learning.org



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Learning, Inc.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 6, 2023

Welcome Teacher Supper

September 11, 2023

Classes Begin

September 17, 2023

3:30 Star-Fest XIV

December 8, 2023

Peace and Lights of the Season Concert

May 3, 2024

First Friday in May 2024

Hands of Hope Gala

Join Our Family of "One to One".

We will meet with new teachers in August to introduce you to materials and methods of teaching.

TEACHERS SERVICE YEARS

5 years

Kathy Gnazzo • Genevieve Goswick • Albert Birkmaier
Robert Sbordone • Ann Rosenberg



KATHY GNAZZO



GENEVIEVE GOSWICK



ALBERT BIRKMAIER



ROBERT SBORDONE



ANN ROSENBERG

6 years



LINDA SCHWARTZ

7 years



SR. MAUREEN CONWAY



ALEXANDRA LESCAZE

11 years



BARBARA BEDWAY

12 years



IRA LIPSON

13 years



PAUL PARSEKIAN

In addition, we had 6 teachers with 4 years of service, 6 teachers with 3 years of service, 9 teachers with 2 years of service, 13 First year teachers and 6 teachers with 6 months of service. Without our wonderful volunteer teachers, we could not have the small group learning classes that are so much a part of our mission of inclusion and empowerment.