

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

ONE2ONE

Learning, Inc.

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newsletter

one2one-learning.org

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a message...

Language Empowers. Language Unites.



LETTER FROM

*Sister Cecilia La Pietra***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**

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Dear Friends in Mission,

As I sit here on February 28th, it seems like the New Year of 2024 happened a long time ago, but it is only two months old. So much going on in our lives, makes time so relative. In the last two letters to you I focused on **HOPE** in the summer edition and **COMMUNITY** in November.

I have a bookmark that has an Owl's picture with the word **COURAGE** and in (The owl is feared and avoided, its hooting cry sounding eerily through the darkness). "May the owl remind us that our fears may be baseless. What we don't understand and fear may teach us that we are stronger than we thought". Thinking about the owl, brought Flaco, our New York "flyaway" owl to mind, how, released from his cage, he had to find a new way of being. Folks who may have been afraid of owls, became quite attached to Flaco, siting him in different settings and enjoying his unique beauty. And how sad all of us were when he died.

Courage is a virtue that helps us to come out of ourselves, step into new situations, and see people, happenings and events differently. We need courage during these times of transition to be able to step into the new and untried. We need the gift of flexibility to be able to flow with the changes in our lives and in the world. I see concrete examples of this in my ministry. I am thinking of a young mother, seeing a *One to One* flyer, finding the phone number, calling and asking, "You speak Spanish??", in the background I hear a baby crying, and the relief that comes when she is directed to come to class and then receiving a text with the address and Bienvenida. This takes courage and there are so many similar phone calls. Then there is a man who calls. He has seen the need for teachers at *One to One* in his parish bulletin. He follows up by meeting me to learn details, teaching method, and materials used. He is a little nervous, never having taught before, asking if he can come to observe a class before starting. This takes courage and what a blessing that so many do come to volunteer because they want to help newcomers to our country.

In this edition, you see pictures of our **Fiesta de Los Reyes Magos**, with students and teachers sharing foods that they have prepared from their native countries. You see communities of hope because folks had the courage to step forward. You see pictures of students' children in procession and in group pictures. In the faces of these children, you see the hope for the future of the United States. Our Alumni are now citizens, owning businesses and their children are now in college and are nurses, accountants, and technicians. Hands continue to reach out and touch hands as folks have the courage to ask and others to respond.

I hope that you will come to be with us as we celebrate 27 years of commitment to our mission, *Language empowers; Language unites*. We have some wonderful honorees who have supported our mission and who live lives committed to the good of their fellow human beings, **Father Tom Kunnel, Bob Stein and Enid Weishaus, Sister Margaret O'Dougherty, Charlotte and Tom Murray, Barbara Bedway, and Paul Parsekian.**

Thank you for your continued support as benefactors, teachers, board members, student, friends and family. Think about taking a raffle so that we are able to sell all 300 tickets this year.

Blessings, peace, good health to you and yours in 2024.

Sister Cecilia

programs...

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PROGRAM

It is important for you, as benefactors and donors of "One to One Learning" to have this report on the levels of success of the students, who you, in your generosity are helping to support. We are proud of them and know that you are, as you walk this journey with them.

In-Person students continued to do well as we began our Spring semester with **170 students** returning after the Christmas break

Paul Parsekian and Gretchin Kane's Citizenship students continue to study American history and government as they prepare for their interviews, sparked on by two of their classmates having passed and are now citizens of the United States.

Deacon Rob's class continues with students achieving higher levels of ESOL in Side by Side III.

Clare La Duke, and Denis Shea's students have begun high intermediate ESOL in Side by Side II with **Susan Hanna and Bill Badinelli's** class soon to follow.

Martha Schindele, Stephanie Sweeney and Vicky Kelder, Roberta Avantifiori and Rosemary Amabile, Cecily Gottling, Susan Fella, Ben Mathew,



Thomas Grande, Ivonne Tirro's classes are in the low intermediate ESOL in Side by Side I.

Pedro Aguilar, Harrold Reyes, Bill Kivlehan and Mike Pisano's, Maureen Grover, Lorraine Marden and Sreija Barna's classes are in the high beginner level of ESOL in Side by Side I.

Diane Bronico, Alfredo Castro, Ronan Clarke, Sandra Rivera, Suzanne Dakessian, Marta Siberio's classes are just beginning the Side by Side I book after completing the Beginner Packet, a basis in the verb, "to be".

Our newest teachers, **Sandra Courtee, Anne Bryant, and Joseph Diaz** began in January 2024 with beginner students, who had been on the waiting list to register. Returning teachers,



Martha Patterson and Magaly Eugene have also taken beginner groups.

Morning students are doing well. **Barbara Chin and Marueen Dowling's** classes are in the high beginner level of ESOL in Side by Side I, **Rosemary Ambrey's** class is in the low beginner level of ESOL in Side by Side I, and **Diane Divanzo's** students have been working on the beginner packet and are now ready to take the test for entrance into the book. As I write this, I am expecting two new teachers to be orientated to our materials and method of teaching. This is the first year that finds us in a position of having to place beginner students on a waiting list. Students who test for the book level can be immediately placed in ongoing groups. The good news is that so many of our newcomers want to learn English.

We have 36 students on-line. **Barbara Bedway, Robert Sbordone, and Al Birkmaier** work with pre-GED material. **Sister Maureen and Alezandra Lescaze's** classes are in the higher level of ESOL in Side by Side III. **Linda Schwartz and Ira Lipson, Sylvie, and Rita Sarubbi's** classes are in high intermediate ESOL in Side by Side II. **Rosmary Amabile** zooms with a student who moved to Minnesota and is in the higher ESOL in Side by Side I.



programs

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CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

The children and their parents are so happy to have this space for them. It is alive and bustling with many young children. The older children have become great helpers, assisting the adult volunteers. **WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS.** Mrs. Fenton has provided some great craft ideas, including making snowmen pictures. Some of the older children receive home-work help and the little children experience school and what it means to share. Of course, the parents can concentrate on learning, knowing the children are safe and sound.



TEACHERS HOLIDAY GATHERING



In gratitude for the donation of time and talent that our teachers bring to the Program, **Sister Cecilia and the Board of Directors** prepared a feast of delicious foods and desserts each year. Teachers received socks that were labeled, "GRATITUDE FOR YOU AND ALL YOU DO." Teachers are always happy to meet Board members and other teachers who teach on another night or in a different room. Friends meet who did not know that they were involved. So, it is a joyous occasion as all go off for their vacation break.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Our mission is to empower our students through English classes and other supportive services. Organizations have, through the years, been the source of providing these benefits to us. **Fr. Tom Kunnel**, introduced us to the **M@T Bank in Piermont**.



On February 5th **Lisa Denti** and staff members from the bank came to classes to introduce the idea of setting up a free checking account. They returned following class nights and proceeded to set up accounts for



interested students. We are planning future possibilities of involvement including mini classes on budgeting, to take place before class from 7-8 PM. Through **Fr. Tom** we have been connected to a medical group that may be able to help us with blood pressure and diabetes screening and follow-up. Our connection with Sun River Health Care has not materialized. We also plan to have a "Know Your Rights" program with an attorney in March. Activities on sight make it easy for students to attend, since their work schedules sometime prevent them from getting needed services.



THANKSGIVING

With so many students we wondered how we would be able to provide \$50 food gifts cards to our students to help them to have a happy Thanksgiving and just provide them with some help for their daily food needs. As we all know, food prices have risen and our food budgets have not risen to meet the increase. We did provide food gift cards, thanks to **ALBERTUS MAGNUS HS, ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, KAREN DEMATTE FROM CINDY'S PALS** and donations from **Dominican Sisters of Sparkill**. We also have an **Immigration Fund** in our Budget from which we were able to access funds to buy \$50 gifts cards from Aldi, where food is excellent and prices are much better than Shop-Rite. Our students were delighted with the **Aldi gift cards**. Benefactors, sometime specify that their donation go into the Immigration Fund, earmarked for student needs, including assistance for necessities and help with application fees.

our circle of friends...

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LA FIESTA DE LOS REYES MAGOS

With so many students, we had many children. We were able to make up 200 family bags with 2 toys or games and a personalized clothing gifts for each child. Each student received a gift from the Alumni, Yancy, Marvin, Manuel, and Rudy as they walked from cabin to cabin delivering gifts. We could do this with the help of our Friends, Fr. McKeon and Sister Pat St Francis of Assisi Parish, Janet Pavarati New City Senior Center, Karen DeMatteo and Cindy's Pals, Sister Diane Albertus Magnus HS, Outreach/ May Pang St. John the Baptist Men and women gifts were provided by Roberta Avantifiore Romanesque Lodge and Ed Tangredi St Ann's Parishioners in Nyack. This year we also got assistance from Catholic Charities NY with coats, hats, gloves, scarves, boots, socks, and toys for fifteen families.

Coming back from the Christmas break on January 3rd we celebrated **La Fiesta de los Reyes Magos**. Each group of students with their teacher prepared the food for their celebration with delicious foods and desserts from their countries. Everyone had a great time. All the children were in the procession to the Presebre as **Hernon Rivas** played "Noche de Paz" on his guitar. Everyone came to join in the dining room from their buildings and at the end we had a raffle of many nice gifts.



events...

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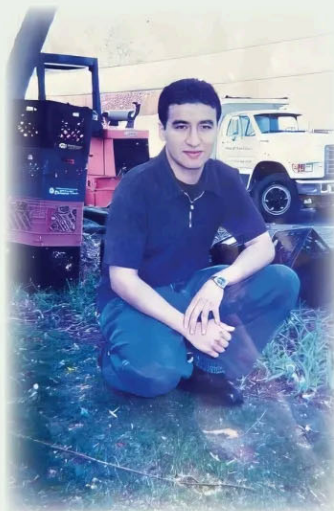


ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH *Tea Party*

This year the Tea Party in November was bigger and better than usual. Fr McKeon, Sister Pat, and ladies of the Tuesday prayer group with some kind men worked on it to make it a big success. There were so many delightful prizes that were displayed so nicely. Mention should be made of all the businesses who donated the gifts and to the ladies who decorated the baskets. It was difficult to choose the ones in which I would put a ticket. I was lucky to receive a big basket of Italian delicacies. Young women from **Albertus Magnus HS** were our hostesses for the evening.



THEN AND NOW ~ MARVIN VIVAR'S STORY



Hi, my name is Marvin Vivar. I am 38 years old. I have a beautiful wife and we have a 14 year old daughter and a 5 year old son. I work as a cook in a catering deli.

I am from El Salvador and am the oldest of a family of five. I grew up with my family in a rural town in my country, where we did not have good schools or opportunities for the youth.

When I was fifteen years old, I left school to emigrate to the United States. We took that hard journey with my father and crossed the border because there was no legal way for us to come to this country. We decided to come here to look for a better future for us.

When I came here, I really wanted to go to school, but I never had the opportunity because I had to work to help my father pay back the money we spent to get here. Also, we needed money to help our family in our country. After a few years I started to go to **One to One Learning** to learn English and that helped me a lot. When I was a student of **One to One**, I met good people who really enjoyed helping immigrants like me.

I was happy with my life in this country, but something was needed. That was a paper, a simple paper that for a lot of people is insignificant, but for the ones who do not have it, it means everything. I was looking for different ways to legalize myself, and my biggest dream was to be able to visit my country, to hug my mother after many years without seeing her.

In 2012 President Barack Obama made an executive action to reinstate DACA. It is a deferred action that gives to the youth the opportunity to get a work permit to work legally in this country. And it also gives the opportunity to travel to their country and to return the legal way.

Knowing that was the only opportunity I had at that moment to legalize my status in this country, I applied for it. Thank God, they approved me to get the permit, and that gave me the opportunity to travel to my country to have my dream of seeing my mother and my family. I also visited some of the graves of my relatives who had passed away while I was here.

Having DACA has changed my life a lot. I feel safer here working legally, leaving my life out of the shadows.

I give thanks to God and all the people like **Sister Cecilia** who have dedicated themselves to help many immigrants. We come to this big country with many dreams and goals to achieve.

My hope in God is to see my children grow, be successful and good people, and always remember what we have done for them.



thank you...

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Response From Our Benefactors

We are grateful to you as you assist us in paying our monthly bills in support of our programs. At this time of Thanksgiving and Christmas, you have been especially generous so that some of the proceeds will go into our reserve legacy fund as we look to developing a new administration into the future. The following donations total \$31,210. We remember our friends and benefactors in prayer each morning.



Ewig Family Foundation
Robert Gunderson
Kerry Haggerty
Ramona Whitney
Memory of Shelton Townsend
Al Birkmaier
Dr. MaryAnne Evangelist



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Sr. Ann Tahaney
Marilyn Buck Timberger
Eileen Wasserman
Doris Zukerberg
Memory of Kate Greg

Interested in becoming a member of the
One to One Learning Family?
Call Sister Cecilia at 845-512-8176 or 845-216-9799
clpangel59@gmail.com
and sr.cecilia@one2one-learning.org

PEACE AND LIGHT DONATIONS

\$5000
Catholic Charities of Archdiocese of NY
Table
"Language empowers; Language unites"

\$1,250
Ridgewood Savings Bank Table

\$1,250
Dominican Sisters of Sparkill Table

\$500
Paul Fitzpatrick Sponsor Cocktail Hour

\$500
Margaret Grace



Howard Andrews/Maxine Silverman
Maureen Hatch
Jim and Mary Joyce
William Kivlehan
Rosemary Lundberg
Martha Schindele
Spanish Restaurant
Virginia and John Wall



Tom and Cathy Conway
Margaret Mapelli
Maria Nest
Paula and Robert Novak

DONATION TOWARD FURTHER EDUCATION FOR STUDENT

\$600
John Cardinal McCloskey
K of C Council

\$324
Student Raffle Fiesta de Los Reyes
Magos

IMMIGRATION FUND
(for food gift cards, immigration applications, etc.)



Sr. Peggy Gannon
Maryann Turrise



Sr. Kathleen Donnelly
Sr. Mary Jo Heman
Sr. Dolores Shortal
Sr. Magaret Strychoski

DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF RITA CALLAN

Carol Jasnosz, Helen Hsu,
Barbara Smith

GIVING TUESDAY DONATIONS

\$505
Network for Good bulk donations



Minette Duran
Jim Covell
Cheryl Burton
Michael Davidson



Rosemary Amabile
Rosemary Ambry
Katherine Benezra
Robert Blixt
Judy Dolfi
John Hurlbut
Johanna Krumm
Richard Maier
Joanna Tellis
Claudia Uccellani

SPECIAL DONATIONS

\$20 000
Achilles Foundation

\$6,500
St. Francis Tea Party

\$3,262
Completion of Estate

\$2,500
St Francis Friary

\$1,000
IMPAX Dolores Antoinette Fontana



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UPCOMING EVENTS...

Friday, May 3, 2024

6:30 Hands of Hope Gala

Monday, June 10, 2024

7:00 PM Awards Ceremony
for On-Line Students

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

7:00 PM Awards Ceremony
for In-Person Students

September 4, 2024

Welcome Teacher Supper

September 9, 2024

Classes Begin

Sunday, September 15, 2024

3:30 STAR-FEST XV

PEACE AND LIGHTS OF THE SEASON CONCERT

The second **Peace and Light** event took place on December 8, 2023 at "Terrace on the Hudson" in the evening with a Holiday Buffet, starting with tempting appetizers, provided by **Manny Acosta and his staff**. Our MC for the evening



was **Michael Patrick Davidson** who provided a pleasant and comfortable atmosphere for our guests. We began with the lighting of a Peace candle by **Sister Cecilia** and a prayer by **Charlotte Murry** for harmony among people, uniting our candle with the flames of Advent, Hanukkah, Islam, and Kwanzaa candles. Our honoree, **Hon. Harriet Cornell**, was introduced by MC Davidson who cited her years of service, the first woman elected to the Rockland County Legislature. Her focus on women's issues and starting Rockland 21 to enhance learning for children and families were noted among her many accomplishments. Certainly, the main attraction of the evening came with **Sue Matsuki and her Ensemble** treating us to sounds of the season, getting us all into holiday spirits. Another treat came with a guest singer, from **St Thomas Aquinas College**, **Kevin De Lucca** who sang a medley of his favorite Elvis Songs, including "Blue Christmas." We ended the evening with delicious cookies and cake, with a sing-a-long of all our favorite Christmas and holiday songs.

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