

## A LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As we near Fall's end and start to reflect on what we've accomplished this past year, I am utterly amazed at how much we've grown as an organization. We now have over 500 students registered, 12 group classes offered, and have doubled the capacity of our Language and Learning Lab. I think this dramatic growth speaks not only to the magnificent work our volunteers and students do, but also to the tremendous need that exists in our community.

In addition to expanding the number of workstations in our Language and Learning Lab, we have also added two new programs for our students: English Discoveries and Mango Languages. While students continue to have access to Elevate (our original program), we believe that these new programs, which are designed specifically for English language learners, will help our students to progress more quickly and with more pragmatic vocabulary skills.

As you know, it takes tremendous hard-work and perseverance for our students to learn English, but sometimes I think we forget how challenging foreign language acquisition can be. Which is why I want to let you know of an exciting opportunity for you to also learn a new language at the LCofGI. Mango Languages has given us access to their Spanish for English-speakers software. If any of you would like to learn Spanish, please come in to see us so we can get you registered and set-up to use the program. You are welcome to access the program in our Language and Learning Lab or from any smartphone, tablet, or computer you have at home.

Every day I walk into the LCofGI, I think about the adage: *We all have something to teach, we all have something to learn.* Please encourage your friends, neighbors, and relatives to get involved with our organization so that Grand Island can continue to learn and grow together.

Best,

Kurt Stoppkotte,  
Executive Director



*Pictured: Safiya Ahmed (student)*

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## LITERACY COUNCIL BOARD

Vikki Deuel	PRESIDENT
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Lori DePue	Steve Millnitz
Jean McFarland	Tracy Noble

# Student Stories

## ABDELHFEIZ ALI, Sudan

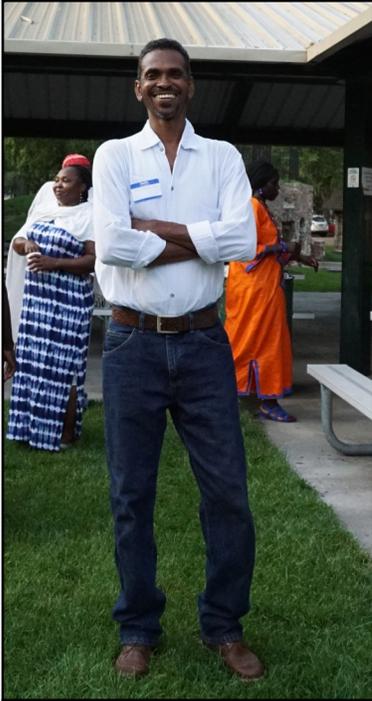
“Living in the United States is the dream that inspires everyone in the Republic of Sudan, but sometimes—when I think back in time on my memories of my previous life among all of my family back home, I feel a certain kind of ache, a longing for that time,” said Abdelhfeiz Ali as he contemplated his life in the US.

Ali graduated from Sudan University of Science and Technology with a degree in electrical engineering. He now works as a trimmer at JBS (a meat packing plant in Grand Island). He hopes to study to be a certified electrician in English; he knows that to reach this goal he must first study the English language.

“I think that the Literacy Council of Grand Island is a good place to learn the English language; they have helpful and patient tutors, excellent staff, and everyone gives a hand to whoever has a need,” said Ali.

Ali has been studying at the Literacy Council for almost seven months. He believes that there are two parts to improving their lives and financial situations: the fact that an organization, like the Literacy Council, has services available is key— but it is on the students to know how to study hard and to show up prepared. Ali has proven his dedication: he’s attended over 55 group classes in 7 months.

“I love the Literacy Council, because when I am here I feel as if I have come home.”



Pictured: Abdelhfeiz Ali (student)

## Tutor Updates & Resource Center

### Tutor Support Meetings

**When:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of every month

**Where:** Literacy Council Office

**Time:** 2:30 PM

**Greg Stultz** from New Readers Press came to give a presentation to our tutors on teaching materials. Many of our books have bonus online components. These can be easily accessed on one of the laptops we moved into the one-on-one tutoring space.

“English No Problem” has five levels ranging from Literacy to High Intermediate with supplemental components that are MP3 files available for free online along with reproducible masters and vocabulary cards from Literacy Level to Level 2. Additionally, ENP has a companion website where you can create and save customized lesson plans at [www.enp.newreaderspress.com](http://www.enp.newreaderspress.com)

“News for You” is a weekly news publication for adult learners with 48 issues produced per year that uses current events and human interest pieces to engage learners. In each publication, there are 7 authentic stories with four written at levels 4-6 and three written from levels 3-4.

Our Citizenship materials, Laubach Way to Reading, and the Challenger series are also from New Readers Press. Each has online audio or audio CD’s available for use to aide in comprehension. An interesting tidbit about the Challenger series is that the odd-numbered books contain fictional stories and the even-numbered books contain non-fiction stories.

### New Group Class for Somali Speaking Students

**When:** Saturdays

**Where:** GI Public Library

**Time:** 10:00 AM — 11:00 AM

**Teacher:** Dyanne Medlock

# Student Stories



Pictured: Salua Toto (student)

## SALUA TOTO, Sudan

When asked what memories or traditions she missed most about home in Sudan, Salua chose to talk about their Christmas time celebrations.

“In Sudan, at Christmastime, everyone would contribute to the holiday. We would come together to celebrate. The adults would gather lots of meat. On the day of Christmas, everyone in the town gets together to have lots of meat that they all killed beforehand and we’d eat and we’d celebrate as one big family. But the celebrating doesn’t stop; afterwards, for a couple of hours a week, many from the churches get together and we’d celebrate together till New Years,” said Salua.

Salua left Sudan because her husband, Almluk, came to the United States and she wanted to be with him. They sought a better life and better job opportunities. They picked Nebraska because they believed that it would be good for their kids to be in a smaller town that is quiet and safer for all of us.

Salua never attended school in Sudan because she’s the oldest daughter in her family and she needed to take care of her brothers and sisters. Salua has been studying at the Literacy Council of Grand Island since December of 2016, but she still has trouble reading and writing in English. She can speak Nuba, Arabic, and thinks she speaks English relatively well. She would like to learn English to hopefully get a better job — she’s currently working at JBS in packaging — and is working with her tutors, Susan and her sons, toward getting her GED.

## The Literacy Council Welcomes Student Intern: *Madison Leigh Imig*

“This is such a wonderful opportunity,” said Ms. Imig. “I cannot express how honored and excited I am to be apart of the Literacy Council of Grand Island’s team. I am overjoyed that I have been given the chance to work towards spreading the message and mission of the Literacy Council of Grand Island.”

Imig (17) is a senior at Grand Island Northwest High School. She plans to attend Oklahoma State University in the fall of 2018. She brings with her a great work ethic, a passion for learning, and a commitment to raising awareness for the Literacy Council.

“I actually learned about the Literacy Council through Tracy Noble! I remember seeing a presentation at school for the organization, so I filled out a form for it on a whim. About a week later, Tracy Noble called me while I was walking home from school—and the rest is history,” Imig said.

As a student herself, Imig can relate to the struggles students go through and hopes that she can offer a fresh perspective to her students and on new tutor outreach to other high school age students. She’s very excited to work for a place whose mission is to help people through teaching, and can’t wait to see what the Literacy Council can teach her in return.



Pictured: Madison Leigh Imig (Student Intern)

## GROUP CLASS SCHEDULE

We are currently offering **11 GROUP CLASSES** as a part of our literacy education services:

### Mondays

#### Lori

Advanced English & GED Skills  
Level: High Intermediate/Advanced

#### Antonio

Basic English Vocabulary & Grammar  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

### Tuesdays

#### Danielle

Daily Vocabulary: Idioms, etc.  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

#### Madison

Citizenship: Civics & Literacy  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

### Wednesdays

#### Lori

Life Skills through Mathematics  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

#### John

Daily Vocabulary: Conversational  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

#### Valerie

Basic English Vocabulary & Grammar  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

### Thursdays

#### Diane

Basic English Vocabulary & Grammar  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

#### Barbara

Introduction to English Basics  
Level: Literacy

#### Barbara

Basic English Vocabulary & Grammar  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

#### Kurt

Special Topics in English  
Level: Beginning/Low Intermediate

*\*Please see website for up-to-date info on times and descriptions\**

## THANK YOU!!!



To the Literacy Council  
volunteers who worked at  
Scoops Ice-Cream  
Parlor during the  
Nebraska State Fair!

# TUTOR SPOTLIGHT

## Three Generations of Albers



Pictured (Back Row): Jacob, Samira, Bode, Joyce (Front Row) Salua, Susan

The Albers Family — Susan, Bode, Jacob and their grandmother, Joyce McKinny — each described how big a role reading and literacy have played in each of their lives; for Susan, ever since she was a little girl, her mother took her to the city library. Susan did the same with her sons, Bode and Jacob, when they were little. Jacob said that one of the small things that makes his days better is when he's able to read a good book after he finishes a project for school. Joyce, their grandmother, said that she loves to read about new topics to learn new things. One of the moments that stood out for Bode during his time at the Literacy Council, was when his student, Salua, was able to finish her book and advanced to the next level. He loves learning, and is happy to be able to share that with someone else.

“Literacy is the key to everything,” commented Susan. Susan loves the fact that by teaching her students they're learning to be more independent and self-sufficient. Susan and her boys decided to become tutors for the Literacy Council, because it was something they could do together as a family. They're able to share their love of reading while doing what Joyce refers to as, “a small part to welcome people to our country.”

“I think it is important, too, to remember the importance of our own family's history. Many of us can thank our ancestors for *their* immigration experiences so that we can live as we do now,” said Joyce. “For instance, my grandfather immigrated to the United States from Germany. It was not so long ago that mine was the family of immigrants who did not speak or read English.”

### Literacy Council Needs Wish List

The Literacy Council of Grand Island subsists entirely off of charitable donations, in-kind donations, and grants. Please contact us if you would like to donate any of the following as an in-kind donation:

An outdoor bench (donate or build)	Bottled water or funding for a water dispenser
Outdoor furniture (chairs, umbrella, small tables)	Spiral (or similar type) lined notebooks
Mechanical pencils	Kleenex
Hand sanitizer	Readers/Reading glasses

# Community Development: Language & Learning Lab



Pictured: Max Lorenzo (student)

In our Language and Learning Lab, many things have been changing for the better! It started in the spring when students from the Career Pathways Institute constructed our new tables — and the improvements have continued ever since!

This fall brings new software possibilities. Our students now have full access to *Mango Languages* which is a program that integrates our students' native languages alongside English. It facilitates English language acquisition through side-by-side, real-time comparisons and native language definitions.

Additionally, we are very excited to announce that we have a new program that is all in English. *English Discoveries* accommodates students from the most basic literacy level (ABC's) as well as students who are looking to explore future career options.

Our new software programs — as well as the old — are more easily accessed using our new laptop computers!

These new programs and machines will make it much easier for our students to learn independently. The Language and Learning Lab can service more students than ever before: our capacity has soared from 7 stations to 15!

## Karla's Korner

As the Director of Programs here at the Literacy Council, I'm inspired and humbled by the desire of our students to improve their literacy skills and thus have a better chance of improving their lives. We've registered almost **50 new** students since September! Despite the struggles our students face throughout their lives, they remain dedicated to becoming literate in English.

Can you imagine getting a bill in the mail and not being able to interpret what it says? Whenever I'm able to help a student in such a small way, either to explain a letter or e-mail that can affect their status in the US or their finances, I realize how extremely important the services we offer are.

In October, I had the pleasure of attending Nebraska's 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Adult Education Conference with many organizations from across the state who have missions similar to ours. I was particularly inspired by the impact of Crete Public Schools' Special Programs. Alongside multiple non-profit organizations, they're assisting the immigrant and refugee populations in their community to acclimatize. Their goal is to assist these individuals to grow into thriving, contributing members of their local community.

*In Memory  
of Our Board  
Member and Friend.  
You Are Missed.*



*Carol Hansen*

(1949–2017)

# Thank you to all those who donated and attended our 9th Annual Fall Banquet & Auction!



Pictured: Marilyn Davis (volunteer) & Tracy Noble (Board Member)

## OUR MISSION

To teach any willing adult individuals, free of charge, the literacy skills necessary to communicate, grow, and thrive within our community.



**LITERACY COUNCIL  
OF  
GRAND ISLAND**

312 N Elm St.

Suite #101

Grand Island, NE 68801

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Wednesday

9:00 AM-12:30 PM

1:00 PM-5:00 PM

Thursday

9:00 AM-12:30 PM

1:00 PM-8:00 PM

**Phone:** (308) 385-5515

**E-Mail:** info@giliteracy.org

**Website:** www.giliteracy.org

**Facebook:** Literacy Council of Grand Island

**Twitter:** @litcouncilofgi

**Instagram:** litcouncilofgi

## Would You Like to Get Involved?

### TEACH

One of our *Group Classes* on the English language or a topic in your field!



### ASSIST

Students our *Community Connection Center* or with independent learners on the computer in our *Language and Learning Lab!*



### CONNECT

It's casual! Meet, converse, and connect with our students in the *Community Connection Center!*



### VOLUNTEER

### TUTOR

You don't need to have experience as a teacher!

*One-on-One Tutoring* only takes one hour of your time a week!



### LEARN

More about our organization, find our calendar, or donate to our cause by visiting our website at

[www.giliteracy.org](http://www.giliteracy.org)

### DONATE

### THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS!

Bank of the West  
First National Bank  
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Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska  
Wish You Well Foundation  
Sunrise Rotary

