

ADULT EDUCATION

NEWSLETTER

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English is Key to Success for Two ESL Students

From Lyft driver to accounting assistant. From house cleaner to medical assistant.

These are the journeys of two current English as a Second Language (ESL) students, **Anna Venzak** and **Solomiia Iarema**, who will both graduate from Triton's ESL program in May 2018. When asked what has been the key to the upward mobility in their work life, their answers are the same—"English."

Anna Venzak enrolled in ESL classes at Triton College in 2015. "At that time, I didn't understand any English," she says. But that didn't last long. Anna worked hard in all of her classes, and she soon gained enough confidence to begin working as a driver for Lyft. "This is when my English really improved," Anna says. She later applied for a job in the accounting department at O'Hare Int. Airport, where she worked as an office supervisor for about one year. Today, Anna works as an accounting assistant at CR Express Inc., a trucking and transportation company in Elk Grove Village. While Anna holds a law degree from her home country of Ukraine, she plans to study accounting and finance at Triton College after she completes the ESL program, with the goal of one day becoming an accounting manager and giving back to society. "I'm a goal-oriented and energetic person. I have a family, a little daughter and a husband, and I'm focused on my goals. I hope I can be useful with my skills and experience in this country."

Solomiia Iarema also enrolled in ESL classes in 2015. Solomiia has always wanted to be a doctor, and before she arrived in the U.S., she completed a degree in Medicine from Ivano-Frankivsk National Medical University in Ukraine. Despite moving to a foreign country, Solomiia's goal remains the same, and it is the constant motivation for her study of English. When she first began ESL classes, she worked several different jobs, one in retail, another as a house cleaner, and yet another as an in-home caregiver. As her confidence in English grew, however, she aimed to get a job in the medical field so that she could begin learning the practice of medicine in the U.S. Solomiia now works as a medical assistant at Northwest Suburban Pain Center, located in Northwest Community Hospital in Arlington Heights. When she graduates from the ESL program this May, she plans to continue taking English classes here at Triton College before she enrolls in a medical program.

For more information on enrolling in Triton's ESL Program, you can visit the adult education office in **A Building, Room A-203**, or contact the office at **(708) 456-0300, Ext. 3513**.

Student Spotlight



Advice from Fall 2017 GED® Graduate Ninti White

How did the GED® courses that you took here at Triton College prepare you for the GED® test?

For me, taking the classes helped me in refreshing up on everything and allowed me to do it with a set schedule; seeing as I do work, it's easy to get tired and not study if you're doing it all on your own. Taking the classes made me make sure I was putting in the time to study and complete my GED®.

What are you doing now?

Right now, I'm looking for a better job, now that there are more options for me than there were previously, before having my GED®, which I am really excited about. I'm also looking into furthering my education and taking the necessary steps to do so.

What are your educational and career goals?

I'm looking into a career in anesthesiology, so I plan on taking all the needed classes to do so, and of course brushing up on whatever I can on my own.

What would your advice and encouragement be to other students who are preparing for the GED® test?

First, I would say STUDY! Secondly, be prepared. The greatest athletes have to prepare for every single game. The test is your game and if you want to hear the crowd cheering when you make the winning shot, you've got to be prepared to do so. Repetition is key. Even if you feel like you've studied this subject ten times over, do it again, so that way it's second nature to you. Don't be afraid to start at the beginning. I don't care if it's first grade, make sure you cover your bases because you may be missing that one thing from first grade that's stopping you from truly understanding Algebra. Lastly, relax. Take your time, don't rush, and relax. The best thing you can do is answer the questions you do know how to solve, as accurately as possible, so the questions you may be shaky on won't break your entire score.

Ninti White

Is there anything else you would like to share with your fellow students?

If I can work a job, help out with a large family, study through kids playing and fighting, and take classes all at the same time, it just goes to show you can do anything you put your mind to. No matter your age, background, or situation, as long as you work hard you can and you will do it. I was home schooled my entire life and just need a piece of paper to say, "Hey, you're done with this part", and I did everything I could to make that possible. Do it for you. Make the changes in your life to take yourself to the next level and never doubt yourself, because before anyone else, you've got to be your number one cheerleader.

ESL Student Lewis Castilla Wins Triton College Chess Tournament



ESL Level 2 student Lewis Castilla has not yet mastered English, but he has mastered the game of chess. Lewis defeated 10 opponents in Triton's chess tournament last month to win first prize.

Lewis started playing Chess in his home country of Colombia when he was just 10 years old. "My dad started teaching me chess when I was a young boy," Lewis says. "He said that it would be good for my brain." Lewis has been a dedicated chess player ever since. He taught the game for a non-profit organization in Colombia and has played in several chess tournaments, though the Triton chess tournament was his first since he's been living in the U.S. When he's not playing chess, Lewis works as a machine operator for the international company Interlake Mecalux in Melrose Park and takes ESL and citizenship classes here at Triton College.

Are you a chess player? Want to give Lewis a run for his money? The Triton chess club meets every Thursday afternoon in the library from 1-3 p.m. If you're interested in joining the club, please contact librarian **Dr. Dubravka Juraga** at dubravkajuraga@triton.edu or (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3591.

Student Voices

Was I?

By Selene Perez, Advanced ESL Student

What is poverty? That is a tricky question for myself. Have I ever been poor? Yes and no. Furthermore, life involves a lot of changes and challenges. The circumstances aren't the same for everybody. But, there's another question: Do we choose to be poor?

Poverty is defined as "the state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support" (dictionary.com). I remember when I was a child, living in a house with two small rooms: one of them served us as a kitchen, and the other one with two humble beds, and also the smallest, ugly bathroom. Can you even imagine it? My home's walls were falling apart by the humidity inside of the place. In my "kitchen", there were only an old stove; next to it there was a closet. Maybe at this moments you're asking yourself: why a closet in the kitchen next to the stove? Well, because it couldn't fit in the bedroom. We also had a sink in the other corner of the kitchen, and in the middle there was the table with rusty chairs. In the bedroom area there were only two beds. The mattresses had wires sticking out, and the pillow I dreamed on was hard as a rock. My favorite thing there was a photo of us on the wall. It was amazing and everybody was smiling. There were five members of family: myself, mom, dad, and my two-baby siblings.

Despite the horrible imagery of my house, I was really happy. I didn't even realize I was poor, because when you are a child nothing matters to you. But you know what? I cannot remember my family ever being without having a meal or being hungry.

My situation wasn't the best, but I have great childhood memories. Per chance I wasn't born rich and with comforts, but throughout my short life, my situation has gotten better. Since I was a kid, I dreamed about studying hard and later got a good job to buy my parents the house they deserved. If you visit my home now, you'll find a proud mother of her daughter, who was one the best student. After each time my mom had to attend a school meeting, she arrived home with a big smile on her beautiful face. She held diploma with honors in her hands because I always was one of the best students. Sometimes I didn't sleep the hours I had to, and all of that because I was recapping materials from my classes, doing homework and working on projects. To show a point, there were students with big houses, who had rich parents, who had every single popular toy, but their grades were shameful. I asked myself once: why they were like that if they had everything they could wish for?

"You were born poor, and you will stay poor the rest of your life" – I have heard a lot of ignorant people saying that, but I think it isn't true. What makes us poor is our mentality about life, because the only thing that falls from the sky is rain. If you don't fight for the things you want, they won't be yours. You have to deserve them.

Educate not Execute

By Erika Macias, GED® Student

You're getting robbed and your dog bites the aggressor to protect you. The state gets involved and your only savior gets executed. What would you do in this situation? You are no longer in harm, but your loyal companion pays the consequences instead of the assailant. The state considers executing dogs that have bitten someone. Have they thought about why they bite someone?

There's always a reason why. Dogs should not be executed just for biting someone; we have to dissect the problem.

A dog's bite comes from their protective instincts. A loyal canine will protect their owner at all costs. They have a foreboding sense before anything serious happens. This means that, they are faster with responding to dangerous situations before a human does, and it does not give the person a chance to react, to call for help, or to run away from harm. This is the reason why dogs bite – for protection or when they feel threatened.

What seems to be a protective action can be mistaken for aggression. A dog is an animal and it's understandable if it has aggression. That should not be an excuse for any dog owner. It is the owner's responsibility to correct the behavior at first sight. Therefore, it is the owner who should be penalized. It is not the dog's fault for what the human is neglecting.

Instead of the state funding executions, all funds should go towards training the animal's behavior. This benefits the state, dog owner, and the animal. Costs would be going towards fixing a problem, not eliminating it. People would be educated on how to handle their pets in certain situations, and the animal would be a lot happier. That way, both the state and the person won't lose. It's better to be safe than sorry.

The state should not execute dogs that have bitten someone, especially when protecting their owners. It is the owner's responsibility to correct the dog's behavior before it escalates. Without hesitation, a dog will always be there for their owner. They should be rewarded instead of punished for being loyal.

Who is the pope? Where does he live?

By Saul Arcos, ESL Level 4 Student

When I was 5 or 6 years old, I remember that my whole family and I went to church to attend mass because an important festive religious celebration was going to take place. I recall that the church was crowded, that I was a little boy holding my mom's hand and the only thing I could see was everyone's rears and children playing and running in the crowd. I wasn't able to see the Archbishop giving his sermons but I could hear his voice, a deep and loud voice that echoed on the church walls.

So there I was, listening and looking around, standing on my toes, trying to catch a glimpse of the Archbishop. Then, suddenly, I heard him saying the name of Pope John Paul the Second. I looked around in doubt because that was the first time I was hearing about the Pope. I looked up and I asked my mom: "Ma, who's the Pope? Where does he live?" She looked down and said: "He is the Saint Pope (Santo Papa, as we say in Spanish), he lives in Rome," but her answer didn't help me. Now I was in greater doubt and asking myself "Where is Rome? Where is it located?" I gazed to the skies then to a distant range of mountains and thought to myself, like answering my own question: "Oh, Rome must be behind those mountains." Then I smiled a little and I felt relieved and content because I thought I was giving myself an accurate answer.

Years later I learned that the world was bigger than I thought, that Rome wasn't behind those mountains, but miles away across the ocean in a distant land.

Student Voices

Poems by Shyla Rankin's Level 5 ESL Class

What is Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco to me?

It is my mother with her arms always open, waiting for me
It is musical streets adorned with red, white, and purple and Diego Rivera murals
It is piquant tastes in my mouth and a big family sharing together
The smell of wet earth and perfume of Star roses feel like being in heaven
Always in my mind and heart (Elsa Garcia)

What is Venezuela to me?

It is the vast, shifting landscape of the Medanos de Loro
The enormous, striking dunes under the stunning, azure sky
A magical place, whipped and reformed by trade winds
Transporting you from the tropics of the south to the deserts of the Middle East
It is my treasured place to be (Ivanna Faria)

What is Sinaloa to me?

A place of honest people cultivating their land and enjoying life every, single day
It is sensational, sapphire blue beaches and majestic, green landscapes inviting you
It is exquisite, homemade barbacoa with all my family on Sundays
It is my heart feeling out of my chest when I listen to Banda music
All my memories, my essence, my feelings- that is Sinaloa (Laura Cisneros)

What is Peru to me?

It is the amazing Andes, beautiful, natural forests, and magical waterfalls
It is fresh, spicy ceviche and crunchy, sweet picarones
It is joyful people celebrating Candelaria, drinking and dancing in the streets
My beloved family, awesome friends, and precious memories of a lifetime
(Luzmila Alvarez)

What is Guadalajara to me?

It is beautiful, soft, sandy beaches
Instrumental harp music under the moon
It is colorful buildings and gorgeous theatres
It is tortas ahogadas and carne en su jugo in my dreams
Guadalajara is my blessing (Griselda Michel)

What is Mexico to me?

It is intense, multi-colored, traditional clothes
The most beautiful hand-embroidered shawls and dresses
The romantic songs that make you feel like in a dream
It is spicy, mouth-watering mole with warm, fresh tortillas
My traditions, my Mexico (Maria Zamora)

What is Durango to me?

It is red geraniums and brick buildings
It is the vibrant colors of Independence Day every year
It is delicious, soft, cheesy, green enchiladas
Durango- my memorable home (Luz Saenz)

What is Poland to me?

It is ancient, royal castles built on steep hills
Charming streets with historical churches and colorful, Baroque buildings
It is parents and grandparents
It is celebrating warm, summer nights in a garden filled with red roses
The sounds of a creek and birds around us, and eating traditional cheesecake
(Magdalene Strama)

What is Bulgaria to me?

It is a land of remarkable people who have given a lot to the world
Who have changed it and make me feel proud
It is snow capped mountains, monasteries, and the shimmering Black Sea
It is the fragrant Bulgarian rose and delicious banitsa that you can never forget
Bulgaria is a fabulous song in my heart (Ana Petrov)

Guacamole

by Isabel Lopez, ESL Level 2 Student

We all love it and know where to get it, but do we know how to make it?
Now, you can try to make your own guacamole from scratch.

Ingredients:

5 avocados
1 white onion
3 Roma tomatoes
2 jalapeno peppers
1 bunch of cilantro
2 limes
salt and pepper

Instructions:

1. Rinse the cilantro, jalapeno peppers and tomatoes.
2. Chop the onion, jalapeno peppers and cilantro.
3. Dice the tomatoes, and mix everything in a bowl.
4. In another bowl smash and whip the avocado.
5. Add salt and pepper and mix everything.

Enjoy!



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Adult Education Newsletter welcomes writing submissions from all ESL and HSE students.
Please email submissions to Mitchell Goins at mitchellgoins@triton.edu.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES SCHOLARSHIP

All GED® and ESL graduates are encouraged to apply for the BOT scholarship which provides four free college courses.
Applications are available in the AE office and are due by Dec. 21, 2017.

ESL students, are you looking for more opportunities to practice your English?

Join the ESL Conversation Table Mon. – Thursdays, Noon-1 p.m., in the Academic Success Center.
Located in A Building, Room A-106. For more information, call (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3341.