English Language Institute

Interactions

2019 ANNUAL HOLIDAY MAGAZINE FOR OUR FRIENDS IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Cheers to 40 Years!

English Language Institute
Dear ELI Friends,

As we come to the end of 2019, we close out a year-long celebration of the ELI’s 40th anniversary, which we marked with a series of alumni reunions at venues around the world. It seemed only fitting to connect with our nearly 20,000 alumni in recognizing the many milestones achieved by the Institute over the past 40 years while also learning how their ELI experience impacted their lives and careers, and why so many chose to send their children, family and friends to the ELI as well. The anniversary year culminated in a UD campus-wide celebration in November.

From its modest launch in 1979, the ELI has grown to become one of the largest and most respected intensive English programs in the United States. I believe we have earned this esteem because we have remained true to four guiding principles.

First, we have relentlessly pursued academic excellence by hiring exceptional faculty, supporting them in their professional development and creating paths to rewarding lifetime careers. In return, our faculty have dedicated themselves to supporting each student in their journey of language acquisition and cross-cultural competency.

Faculty research has advanced the wider field of TESL and established the ELI as a world-renowned center for teacher training.

Second, the culture of the ELI has always fostered a spirit of innovation. The ELI may be unique among intensive English programs in embedding tutoring into the fabric of the program to address each student’s needs and learning styles. Tutors have offered small experiential clusters focusing on art, cooking and museum studies, to name a few. Our faculty have been especially creative in designing language courses incorporating history, science, music, drama and film. The ELI’s Academic Transitions pathways program fully manifested the ELI’s innovative spirit by incorporating sheltered university credit courses, peer mentoring, close advising and early intervention to support struggling students.

Our third guiding principle has been to focus on inclusive engagement, or, as our mission statement articulates, “to contribute to international understanding by engaging students in meaningful inter-cultural exploration.” We want our ELI students to be welcomed and embraced as Blue Hens, sharing their culture and worldviews with their UD peers so that the lives of both groups might be enriched and transformed through the encounter. To this end, ELI’s Student Life team has promoted engagement between ELI and American students through living/learning communities, American Host Partner programs, Art Bridging Culture events, intramural sports, our annual Festival of Nations and our recently launched e-sports center.

Finally, all of us—faculty, staff, tutors and students—have hoped to make the ELI a true learning community, a diverse family where we teach, learn, share and grow together. Our main office is a home with an expansive lawn where we come together to celebrate holidays, hold picnics and play pick-up games of volleyball or soccer. Like a family, we rejoice in each other’s triumphs and mourn personal tragedies. Little wonder Isa chose an ELI graduation to get down on one knee and propose to his future wife, Serra. And when Maria’s father died and she could not return home for the funeral, her ELI family arranged a memorial service, standing in for her faraway loved ones. Like other families, we are bonded together by time-honored traditions, such as our honors T-shirt ceremony at graduations, complete with our own theme song, Queen’s “We Are the Champions.”

Little wonder alumni return each year to reconnect with their ELI family and show their spouses and children the program that forever changed their lives, transforming them into bilingual, bicultural citizens of the world. I close in thanking all of us who have contributed to the global and campus colleagues, partners, sponsors and alumni for your support throughout these past four decades.

Sincerely,

Scott Stevens
Director

From the Director’s Desk

40th Anniversary Celebration

Dr. Stevens addressed alumni who joined him in Seoul, South Korea, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the ELI.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEATURES

4 30 Professional Activities

6 28 Student Sampler

8 The World Celebrates the ELI’s 40th

18 Cohort News

19 Student News

20 Special Programs

24 Personnel Notes

25 Classroom Notes

26 Alumni News

28 Festival of Nations

29 Maki Yasunaga

30 Professional Activities

40 Years of Milestones

As Time Goes By at the ELI

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Special thanks to Lowell Riemhuber for sharing so many nostalgic photos from his personal ELI collection.

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30 Professional Activities

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images provided by freepik.com
From six teachers and tutors serving 40 students each session in 1979 to 220 employees supporting over 500 students per session in 2019, the following pages summarize the rich story of the ELI’s growth from success to new success over four decades.

That story actually begins in 1976 as a gleam in the eye of Louis Arena. A UD linguistics professor and director of the University’s writing center, Arena observed that the Center attracted international students. Reasoning that these students needed more consistent and integral support in their English language development, Arena proposed that the University establish an English Language Institute.

The idea took a tentative but important step from vision towards reality in 1979, when the University authorized a preliminary ELI under Arena’s direction in Dover, in space rented from Wesley College.

It was quickly recognized that Dover, an hour south of UD’s main campus and off the beaten path from the major metropolitan centers of the East Coast, was a poor fit for a cosmopolitan student body. Within the year, the ELI was moved to the UD campus in Newark, where Arena invited it to share space with the writing center on the fourth floor of Morris Library.

The young ELI was already beginning to thrive when, in 1980, good news arrived: The University’s Faculty Senate had approved the English Language Institute as a fully recognized unit of the University, thus affirming its official existence. The rest is history.

Louis Arena conceives the idea of an English Language Institute at UD

First ELI classes in Dover. Louis Arena, Director

by Sarah Petersen
1980

ELI moves to Amstel Avenue. The ELI’s three-room space in the Sociology Department building at 25 Amstel Avenue served as classrooms, tutoring center, student lounge and director’s office. Classes also took place in the basement of Memorial Hall. ELI’s second director: Patricia Dyer

1980

Homestay program begins. According to the ELI’s first orientation coordinator, Scott Stevens, “I moved [students] in personally, suitcase in hand.”

Language Partners program begins.

1982

ELI moves to UD campus in Newark: Morris Library 4th floor, a former storage space.

1982

Scott Stevens becomes ELI director.

ELI expands to Rodney Complex. The ELI’s new space in Hall F of the Caesar Rodney Residence Complex provided two dedicated classrooms, faculty offices, and a spacious meeting room that accommodated afternoon tutoring as well as cultural activities and graduation ceremonies.

1983

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ITI training program begins. The International Teaching Assistants training program was developed by Katharine Schneider and Scott Stevens to prepare international graduate students to assist UD professors in classroom instruction in diverse disciplines across campus.

First teacher training program. 40 teachers from Togo and Rwanda constituted the program funded by USIA.

English for Academic Purposes is launched. The Level VI English for Academic Purposes course, created by Assistant Professor Ruth Jackson, was granted credit-bearing status by the University in 1987.

Associate Director position created. Katharine Schneider was hired for the position of Associate Director to help shoulder the responsibility of the ELI’s rapidly multiplying and diversifying programming.

Separate study tracks established. The ELI established the English for Academic Purposes, Business/Professional, and American Culture tracks to meet its clients’ specific needs.

Summer International Business Institute inaugurated. SIBI drew business people from Ukraine, Bulgaria and South Korea. It ran from 1988 to 1996, when it was superseded by the preMBA program.

LEP program initiated in area schools. The ELI partnered with the Christina School District to run the Limited English Proficiency program supporting the District’s young learners of English as a second language. The partnership continued for 27 years.

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ELI wins its first externally funded training grant. The U.S. Information Agency (USIA) awarded the grant for the 1986 teacher training program for Central African English teachers.
Assistant Director position created.
With student enrollment burgeoning to 175 per session in 1994, Joseph Matterer, teacher at the ELI since 1984, was promoted to the new position of Assistant Director to coordinate course scheduling and curriculum.

ALLEI program established.
The American Law and Legal English Institute was created to familiarize foreign attorneys, judges and law students with the U.S. legal system through classes as well as visits to courthouses, law firms and government agencies.

1990

New home at 189 West Main Street.
189 W. Main, still the ELI’s headquarters, was inaugurated on September 17, 1992. At the time, the 17-room mansion consisted of seven classrooms, a library and orientation room, the Tutoring Center, a student lounge, and administrative, faculty and staff offices. In the ELI newsletter that year, Scott Stevens wrote, “We’ve already outgrown our new quarters!”

1991

1992

PreMBA created.
Conceived by business track coordinator June Quigley, the PreMBA program was designed for students aiming at pursuing a Master’s in Business Administration. The program has grown in prestige and is now the required preparation curriculum for international students who have been conditionally admitted to the MBA program at the University of Delaware or the ELI’s partner institutions.

SALC opens.
The ELI’s year-old computer lab, with nine computers and access to Internet, merged with the long-standing reading lab to become the Self Access Learning Center.

“The Annex” opens.
Rented space on the second floor of 136 Elkton Road provided six additional classrooms plus a new home for the Tutoring Center.

1993

1994

Service learning introduced to curriculum.
The Community Outreach course, developed by Lisa Grimsley, allowed students to experience the American spirit of volunteerism while interacting with American volunteers and the local community. Today, service learning continues to be an important component of ELI programming.

ELI gets on the Worldwide Web.
The ELI’s first home page was authored by Lowell Riethmuller, who continued as the Institute’s webmaster until his retirement in 2017.

Homestay coordinator position created.
Since the homestay program’s beginnings in 1983, ELI faculty and staff members had matched students to American families as a side duty. By 1999, the program had reached a size that warranted more systematic coordination. Nancy Purcell became the first official Homestay Program coordinator and filled that role for 17 years, passing it on in 2016 to the current coordinator, Stacey Leonard, and her assistant, Mandy Dunn.

1995

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1999
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>ELI earns CEA accreditation. The ELI became one of only 25 intensive English programs in the United States to be accredited by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>CAP gets the thumbs up. UD officially approved the undergraduate Conditional Admissions Program for international students. Number of ELI alumni tops 10,000. ELI partners with School of Education in coordination of UD’s MA-TESL program.</td>
</tr>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>First ELI online course. Effective Business Writing for English Language Learners, a four-week, 30-hour course developed and taught by Mary Beth Worrilow, met the needs of professionals scattered across the globe who sought greater proficiency in business writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>ELI expands to 102 East Main Street. The rented property nestled behind a restaurant at the corner of East Main and Academy streets provided six additional classrooms. More classroom space: Amstel Square and Elkton Corner. With enrollment topping 500 in 2009, two rented locations on Elkton Road added six more classrooms to the ELI’s inventory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Goodbye, Annex. The ELI vacated the aging building that had housed the Annex for over 10 years. The building was demolished soon afterwards. Classrooms and offices galore: 108 East Main Street. As enrollment crept steadily towards 600, the ELI rented the entire second floor of a newly renovated building that yielded 13 classrooms, 16 faculty/staff offices, a student lounge, reception lobby, and a great room to house the upgraded, 70-computer Self Access Learning Center.</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Christina School District decentralizes ESL. In 2013, the District did away with a centralized instruction model for its young English language learners (ELLs) in favor of establishing multiple ESL centers throughout the District. The ELI provided 11 teachers to operate the new centers, serving over 1600 ELLs from over 40 language backgrounds.</td>
</tr>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Associate Director of Academic Programs position created. By September 2011, out of a total ELI enrollment of 166 students, 230 were in the academic track. Karen Asenavage was hired to oversee the complex web of courses and services addressing this group. Cohort Program is launched. Associate director Karen Asenavage and the academic track faculty developed an innovative program to foster students’ social, academic and leadership skills in a small-group setting of peers and an American student mentor.</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>Living/Learning Community is rolled out. ELI housing coordinator Tim Kim spearheaded an ELI student housing option that grouped three CAP students in an apartment with an American Global Fellow—an undergraduate roommate trained to guide the international students in their discovery of UD resources and support networks. Still more classrooms and offices galore. The ELI rented the major portion of a former community center at 318 S. College Ave., allowing for 15 classrooms, a listening lab, and 13 faculty offices. This space evolved into a center for lower-level courses of the culture track while 108 E. Main evolved into the academic track center. Tutoring Center services are now split between the two locations.</td>
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ELI enrollment exceeds 800.

Twenty-five additional full-time teachers hired. As higher student enrollments became the new norm, 25 individuals were hired full time to ensure greater continuity of instructional support. Eight more were hired in the spring of 2015.

The ELI's Academic Transitions gets green light. The AT pathways program was fully launched in 2016, superseding the undergraduate CAP program with improvements that included an impressive slate of credit-bearing courses.

ELI initiates ACE. Additional Certification in ESOL/Bilingual provides training in ESL teaching methods for public school content teachers.

Academic Transitions gets green light. The AT pathways program was fully launched in 2016, superseding the undergraduate CAP program with improvements that included an impressive slate of credit-bearing courses.

Teacher training program earns accreditation. The ELI's Delaware EFL Teacher Training Program, which by 2017 had trained over 1,000 teachers from more than 40 countries, received full-accredited status from the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA). The ELI is one of fewer than three percent of institutions in the CEA's purview that have an approved TESL/TEFL certificate program.

ELI turns 40!

English Language Institute Mission Statement

While the ELI celebrated its 40th anniversary, the institution’s mission statement reached its 20th. Standing the test of time, the document has guided the ELI on its path to prominence ever since it was drafted in 1999.

Through an unwavering commitment to excellence and renewal, the ELI faculty and staff endeavor each day to enhance our reputation as a leader among intensive English programs. Our leadership is based on a clear understanding of our goals and the means to achieve them.

As teacher, tutors, administrators and staff, we strive to:

Meet or exceed our students’ expectations for developing their linguistic, academic, and professional skills.

Contribute to international understanding by engaging students in meaningful inter-cultural exploration.

Provide our students with the support and services they require to make the transition from their own countries to life in the United States.

Meet the ordinary and extraordinary needs of our students, ensuring that their experience at ELI is productive and fulfilling.

Recruit only the most talented and experienced English language specialists and staff and promote their continued professional growth.

Assume personal responsibility for solving problems, value each other as highly as we do our clients, and support each other in our work.

Manage our resources, attaining financial viability without compromising the outstanding value of an ELI education.

Enrich the University of Delaware and the local community, fostering cross-cultural communication and interaction.

KATHY VODOVARKA RETIRES

As the ELI wraps up its 40th year as an Institute, it bids farewell to the veteran instructor Kathy Vodvarka.

For both faculty and students, Kathy’s name is synonymous with “Level I.” The ELI’s listening/speaking and reading/writing courses for beginning English language learners are the direct products of Kathy’s three decades of curriculum design and materials development for that level.

While the lesson plan and materials provided the foundation for a day in Kathy’s Level I class, her unique teacher persona was the spark that set the class on fire. “I love laughing with the students,” Kathy said. “A big part of Level I is making people comfortable. So I had to be like an actress, a T.V. personality, and make them laugh.”

Kathy’s skill at engaging low-level students was widely admired. “At Level I, you’re always on; you never have a break,” said Walt Babich. “To do that every day is exhausting. Kathy was able to do it and to thrive in that situation. My hat’s off to her.”

Kathy retires after almost 33 years on the ELI faculty—and after over a million miles of commuting. She calculates that she put 30,000 miles (48,280 km) a year on her car, driving each workday the two-hour round trip between her home in Hartly, in the middle of the state of Delaware, and the University of Delaware, in the north. While the lesson plan and materials were her norm, 25 individuals were hired full time to offer ELI alumni continued help with their English through one-on-one Skype time with an ELI tutor.

Goodbye, Rodney. The Rodney Dormitory Complex was shuttered by the University in May 2015, ending an era for the ELI. The complex is currently undergoing demolition to make way for a public park.

ELI turns 40! As teachers, tutors, administrators and staff, we strive to:

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Over 40 years, the faces, facilities and features embodying the ELI have undergone constant evolution to offer the superior programming that students and institutions have come to count on. Which just goes to show that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Naturally, faces have changed. Early pioneers Ruth Jackson, Chris Wolfe, Kevin Laughlin, Lynn Poirier, Sandy McCollum, Linda Bigler, Melanie Rahberg and a host of others have long since moved on. But they laid the foundation for the ELI’s reputation as a center for innovative ideas and fostered a professional atmosphere of instructional creativity.

Another faculty member to thrive was a young instructor who began his career at the ELI in 1981 at the age of 24. Scott Stevens. His first class was a group of students from Saudi Arabia.

“Their diversity of students—we thrived in and you could turn on a dime! And something new was going to happen each day,” said Stevens. “You never knew what spontaneity, creativity and flexibility,”

that atmosphere when she joined the ELI in 1981 at the age of 24. Scott Stevens. His first class was a group of students from Saudi Arabia. Scanned 2019 ELI students hanging out together.

Retired Assistant Professor Janet Louise enjoyed the ELI’s diversity.

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The Curtis Mansion on West Main Street became the ELI’s home base in 1992 and buzzed with classes, administrators and the Tutoring Center. Today, administrative offices have now taken over many of the original classrooms, and the Tutoring Center has moved to larger quarters on East Main Street and South College Avenue.

Technology

Before the days of the Internet, the ELI wallowed in paper. Lessons, exercises and tests were churned out in hundreds of paper copies, session after session. Professors Mason and Louise remember jostling for their place in line at the copier in the teachers’ workroom.

A paper limit was enforced, and the faculty chafed. In one memorable faculty meeting, voices were raised together in protest, inspired by a popular 1990’s rock song: “Fight! for the right! to cooooopy!”

Though tutoring at the ELI has evolved over the years, said Tutoring Center manager Ken Hyde, “what has never changed is the special tutoring relationship students develop with their tutors, who provide not only personalized language instruction but counseling and encouragement, and who care for them not just as students but also as people.”

Annual holiday tradition

Every December, the annual holiday party invariably concludes with the classic song “Twelve Days of Christmas,” complete with leaping and twirling, dutifully performed by ELI faculty and staff for the amusement—or puzzlement—of students and guests.

How did this tradition originate? According to erstwhile ELI historian Riethmuller, one day in the early 1960s, not long before Christmas, teachers were hanging out at the Amstel Avenue building, listening to several talented students play and sing together.

“Tutor Frank Gorder suggested this song, which we all sang with great gusto,” Riethmuller said. “At the end, Frank shouted, ‘Let’s do it again!”

This is why, every year, the faculty and staff perform “Twelve Days of Christmas” at the ELI holiday party. And this is why, after the lengthy performance, Stevens never fails to ask the audience, “Do you want to hear it again?” How did this tradition originate? According to erstwhile ELI historian Riethmuller, one day in the early 1960s, not long before Christmas, teachers were “hanging out” at the Amstel Avenue building, listening to several talented students play and sing together. “Tutor Frank Gorder suggested this song, which we all sang with great gusto,” Riethmuller said. “At the end, Frank shouted, ‘Let’s do it again!’

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The faculty/staff performance at the ELI annual holiday party has a long history.

Innovation and excellence

Through 40 years of growth and change, one element that remains constant is the ELI’s drive to deliver excellence in English language education. As Stevens observed, ELI faculty and staff have “a hyperactive work ethic”–a reflection of their deep commitment to their students’ success.

Another unwavering constant is the ELI’s pride in the accomplishments of its students, past and present, many of whom have gone on to reach great heights, becoming leaders in their fields. This affirms the ELI’s mission to provide not only top-quality language instruction but also transformational learning experiences which, it is hoped, will cause ripples of positive impact in this increasingly connected world.

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By Kate Copeland & Sarah Petersen

NIT: Story-wend new ELI teacher Scott Stevens.

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The World Celebrates ELI’s 40th

As the ELI celebrated 40 years of excellence in English instruction, it also celebrated all those who had helped make that excellence possible. For 40 years, students and professionals from all continents have been leaving their homes behind and converging on the ELI to pursue their learning goals. This year, it was the ELI that journeyed forth to hold “ELI-40” alumni events at six locations across the globe as a gesture of thanks to and celebration of the alumni who have helped shape the institution.

Kicking off the event series on Valentine’s Weekend in February was a concert at iconic Carnegie Hall in New York City. Organized by the UD President’s Office and Office of Development and Alumni, the concert featured the University’s violin-erhu-piano “6-WIRE” ensemble as well as its choir and chamber orchestra.

Prior to the performances, 61 guests including ELI alumni, current students, faculty and staff gathered for a VIP dinner reception at The Fishbowl lounge and game room in the Dream Midtown Hotel. It was a spectacular night of sharing memories and making new ones,” Scott Stevens said afterwards.

Fifty alumni and guests attended the anniversary bash at the exquisite Hotel Bogota in Bogota, Colombia, in March. Attending the party were many former beneficiaries of the international recruitment agency Colfuturo. Since 1996, the agency has sent over 650 Colombian professionals to the ELI to improve their English skills.

Also in attendance were ELI faculty members Leslie Criston and Mary Beth Worrilow, who provided a sample business English class for curious guests.

“Offering a sample class in Bogota was an important opportunity for us to give prospective students a first-hand experience of what they would get in the ELI classroom,” Worrollow said. But for Worriow, the trip was not just about business. “Reconnecting with our alumni in person was a reminder on Facebook to all of her old ELI friends: “Once a Blue Hen, always a Blue Hen.”

In total, 53 individuals attended the event at the posh Melia Paulista Hotel. Afterwards, alumna Renata Fields posted a reminder on Facebook to all of her old ELI friends: “Once a Blue Hen, always a Blue Hen.”

Inclement weather did not deter dedicated alumni from attending the reunion in March in São Paulo, Brazil—the ELI’s first ELI-40 celebration to be held outside the United States. “Our Brazilian alumni are so loyal and enthusiastic,” reported ELI assistant director Nadia Redman. “Some of them drove several hours from out of town to attend the event—even with torrential rain pelting against their windshields.” In total, 53 individuals attended the event at the posh Melia Paulista Hotel. Afterwards, alumna Renata Fields posted a reminder on Facebook to all of her old ELI friends: “Once a Blue Hen, always a Blue Hen.”

The Mid-Autumn Festival was under way when 36 guests gathered in September for the ELI-40 bash in Shanghai, China—an impressive turn out during the holiday season. One guest had traveled from as far as Shenzhen, about 2,000 kilometers away.

Many guests spoke emphatically of their affection for the ELI. Alumni Bing Zhou (ELI ’17) and Yixin Zhang (ELI ’14) cited the ELI as instrumental in the development of their English skills and their confidence as public speakers.

Liu said the event was so popular that guests asked if there would be more such opportunities across China. “For them, it is another way to network,” Liu explained.

From the flowers donated by local agents to the balloons in UD colors, Nadia Redman said the gala in Seoul, Republic of South Korea, was “a visual delight.”

Among the 92 guests at the event, held in October at the Novotel Ambassador Seoul Gangnam hotel, was Byong Man Ahn, former president of Hankuk University for Foreign Studies and former minister of education, science and technology. Ahn, is a long-standing friend of UD, having served as a Fulbright scholar and then a 12-time Winter Session instructor. HUFS was the first international institution to establish, in 1991, a study abroad program at the ELI.

Just one day before the ELI’s final international festivities were to take place in Tokyo, Japan, Typhoon Hagibis struck, sending the region reeling and closing down public transportation. Fortunately, systems were restored just in time for Japanese alumni and ELI visitors to converge upon the Shin-Yokohama Kokusai Hotel for what turned out to be a very successful event.

The 72 guests attending the event included almost 20 members of a 1987 teacher training group that has remained close ever since. Eminent ELI alumni attending the party included the bestselling author Kaori Ekuni; Mamoru Tsuru, the chancellor of Hiroshima Institute of Technology; and Masato Yokoyama, the chairperson of Yokohama City Council.

The ELI wrapped up its year-long celebration in November with a party right at home in Newark, Delaware. ELI employees, retirees, students and alumni joined dignitaries and collaborators at UD’s Roselle Center for the Arts for a tribute to the Institute’s 40-year milestone.

Marking the occasion were speeches by John Peleska, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, alumnus Nermin “Zuba” Zubaca (ELI ’08), and Scott Stevens. The formalities were graced by a vocal-instrumental performance by alumnus Esra Değer Konar (ELI ’19), playing the Turkish tanbur. The instrumental performance by alumna Esra Değer Konar (ELI ’19), playing the Turkish tanbur. The

In total, 53 individuals attended the event at the posh Melia Paulista Hotel. Afterwards, alumna Renata Fields posted a reminder on Facebook to all of her old ELI friends: “Once a Blue Hen, always a Blue Hen.”

Just one day before the ELI’s final international festivities were to take place in Tokyo, Japan, Typhoon Hagibis struck, sending the region reeling and closing down public transportation. Fortunately, systems were restored just in time for Japanese alumni and ELI visitors to converge upon the Shin-Yokohama Kokusai Hotel for what turned out to be a very successful event.

The 72 guests attending the event included almost 20 members of a 1987 teacher training group that has remained close ever since. Eminent ELI alumni attending the party included the bestselling author Kaori Ekuni; Mamoru Tsuru, the chancellor of Hiroshima Institute of Technology; and Masato Yokoyama, the chairperson of Yokohama City Council.

By Sarah Whitesel & Sarah Petersen
Academic Transitions, the ELI’s pathway program for international undergraduate students preparing to attend the University of Delaware, is keeping itself at the cutting edge of foundation programs with innovations to its Cohort programming. The Cohort component of AT promotes engagement in the campus community while nurturing the development of personal, social and leadership skills needed to tackle U.S. college life.

For pre-AT students, a pre-Cohort A new course in the spirit of Cohort was piloted this summer for conditionally admitted students who are not yet enrolled in AT. The direction of AT Cohort program coordinator Sarah Jayne, Cohort peer mentors Sherry Kumar and Eli Akerfeld-Howard described this year’s small-group experience that would come to be known as AT Circle. The deliberately relaxed goals of the Circle, according to Jayne, go “to give students a place where they can make friends, learn how to navigate the ELI and its immediate surroundings and have fun together while practicing English.”

Students who enter the ELI with an English proficiency level lower than that required for admission to the academic track pursue general English courses to strengthen language skills. “It’s the way I was raised. I feel relief and joy when I help others. It makes me feel good,” she said. “I have a lot of work to do, but I know I can do it,” she affirmed.

Students sampled
Drifki Sampetoding
During its 40th anniversary year, the ELI is pleased to have counted Drifki Sampetoding among its students. Drifki has an ambition that matches any in the Institute’s history: to become an ambassador for Indonesia.

Drifki said that his ELI experience had a positive impact on his future success in politics. “I have a hard work that lies in her path, people have a lot of work to do, but I know I can do it,” she affirmed.

Adaeze Amambo
Adaeze Amambo is persistent. She follows her dreams no matter where they might lead or leave her ambition of becoming a doctor took her from Nigeria to the University of Delaware in August 2018, she quickly learned about university life in general.”

Her mission to help others extends into her daily life as a university student. Adaeze’s roommate has never before lived away from home; Adaeze, on the other hand, began attending a boarding school when she was 12 years old. Exposed at a young age to the many cultures of Indonesia, she now enjoys making friends, learning about their lifestyle and religious practices. “Indonesia is made up of many islands,” Drifki explained, “and each island has 10 or 12 tribes. Each tribe is different from the other and they can’t do anything by themselves. Drifki is from the Makassar tribe. He stated that the majority of Makassar people are Muslims, leaving only if their cultural practices can’t afford them.”

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Hiroshima Institute of Technology  

The ELI welcomed six engineering students from the Hiroshima Institute of Technology in Hiroshima, Japan, for a three-week program in March coordinated by Wakako Pennington. They actively looked for opportunities to make friends with UD students and participated in many events that were available on campus. They also enjoyed ELI activities, staying with their American host families, and exploring New York and Washington.

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies  

The ELI welcomed two groups of students from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies for a three-week program in March and a four-week program in August-September. They were all language majors in French, Portuguese, Tagalog, Chinese or English. In addition to studying in the ELI’s intensive English courses, they visited the museums and historic sites in Washington, D.C., as well as the famous landmarks in New York City. They also enjoyed making new friends from diverse backgrounds right on campus.

Seinan Gakuin University  

Nakamura Gakuuen University sent two groups of students to the ELI for three-week programs in March and August-September that were coordinated by Wakako Pennington. Their majors included nutritional sciences, food management, child education and business. Both groups enjoyed their visits to the UD Laboratory Preschool, the UD dairy farm, and the cities of New York and Washington. They had wonderful experiences with their homestay families and enjoyed attending ELI classes. Although the second group went home in September, their classmates, Hikari Kuda, stayed behind to continue her studies at the ELI. Nakamura will complete five sessions before returning to Nakamura in May 2020.

Keimyung University  

A chance meeting at a dumpling shop in Philadelphia resulted in a special experience this summer for a group of students from Keimyung University in Daegu, South Korea. Taking a break during the NAFSA 2018 conference, ELI assistant director Tim Kim stepped into the shop for a snack and ran into a delegation from Keimyung, which was likewise attending the conference and included the university’s Outbound coordinator, “J” Kim. The ensuing conversation over dumplings led to interest in the ELI. Fast forward to August 2019: J Kim found himself at the University of Delaware, escorting 19 young women and one young man in a four-week English language and U.S. culture program.

Program assistants Xudong Xue, Jordan Bovankovich and Erica Lane worked hard to actively support the group. While intensively working on their English skills, the students took advantage of every free moment to explore the region, visiting New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Rehoboth Beach (Del.), Longwood Gardens (Pa.). Keimyung and the ELI look forward to strengthening their new relationship, which has lightheartedly come to be called the “Dumpling Partnership.” Students from Keimyung University cherishing their certificates of completion.

Seven young students from Canada, China, Colombia, France and Spain descended upon the ELI for its summertime Language Adventure USA program, coordinated by Xudong Xue and Jordan Bovankovich. Students improved their English skills in listening/speaking and reading/writing classes and through fun activities in the afternoons. They learned about U.S. culture during ELI activities and trips to Washington, New York and Philadelphia. They had fun at the beach in Rehoboth and got a first-hand look at American family life in their homestays.

Nagasaki University  

Eighteen Nagasaki University students, including one who was returning for a second time, joined a three-week special program in August and September coordinated by Wakako Pennington. Their majors included medicine, pharmacy, engineering and business. All students actively participated in events and enjoyed trips to New York City and Washington, D.C., as well as a tour of the University of Delaware’s new STAR campus. They also presented Japanese culture to UD students who were taking Japanese language classes. It was a fruitful experience for both UD and Nagasaki University students.

Seinan Gakuin University  

Seventeen Seinan Gakuin University students from Fukuoka, Japan, joined the ELI for a three-week program in March that was coordinated by Wakako Pennington. Their majors included literature, psychology and business. They all actively participated in ELI events and enjoyed trips to the cities of New York and Washington.

Language Adventure  

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**In Memoriam: Amal Ali S Al Shaebah**

by Kate Copeland

In September, the ELI mourned the loss of a member of its program at UD. She quickly made an impression on those who crossed her path, and her generosity, warmth and kindness will be remembered by everyone who came to know her.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has lost one of its educational leaders who arrived with her for their year-long program at UD. She quietly made an impression on those who crossed her path, and her generosity, warmth and kindness will be remembered by everyone who came to know her.

So, during the 16-week program, Amal was a leader among educators, who arrived with her for their year-long program at UD. She quickly made an impression on those who crossed her path, and her generosity, warmth and kindness will be remembered by everyone who came to know her.

Amal’s name signifies “hope.” Amal herself embodied this hope in her aspirations as a professional educator and with every selfless action supporting the hopes of colleagues who arrived with her for their year-long program at UD. She quietly made an impression on those who crossed her path, and her generosity, warmth and kindness will be remembered by everyone who came to know her.

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The ELI was delighted to welcome her to the ELI in mid-May to begin her year in the KL-Khabar Teacher Training Program, sponsored by the Saudi Ministry of Education. Amal was a leader among educators, who arrived with her for their year-long program at UD. She quietly made an impression on those who crossed her path, and her generosity, warmth and kindness will be remembered by everyone who came to know her.

In Arabic, Amal’s name signifies “hope.” Amal herself embodied this hope in her aspirations as a professional educator and with every selfless action supporting the hopes of colleagues who arrived with her for their year-long program at UD. She quietly made an impression on those who crossed her path, and her generosity, warmth and kindness will be remembered by everyone who came to know her.

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In November, the ELI welcomed eight exceptional scholars from the KAUST Gifted Student Program (KGPS). KGSP admits the most talented young minds in the STEM fields from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, preparing them for the competitive KAUST admission process. The eight-month initiative, coordinated by Ana Kim, aims not only at immersing the students in the English language through the ELI’s intensive English program but also at supporting them with university admission test preparation and STEM courses.

In the summer, the ELI welcomed 19 pre-service teachers from the Panama Bilingüe, seven second-year undergraduate students majoring in English. During the 16-week program, the students strengthened their English language proficiency by fully integrating into ELI classes and activities coordinated by Ana Kim. They engaged in American culture through their homestay experience and networked with students in the Middle Eastern Partnership Initiative and the Study of the U.S. Institutes. The students actively participated in cross-cultural social events, showcasing traditional folk dancing and music at the ELI’s summer picnic. Beyond the integrative activities at the University, the students observed classroom practices at Silver Lake Elementary School. Outside the classroom, they explored popular tourist spots, visiting the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., gazing at the flame of Liberty in New York City, or walking on the sandy shores of Rehoboth Beach (De).
Growing Families

After a stint elsewhere on the UD campus, Lynn Robinson returned to the ELI in March to become Scott Stevens’s executive secretary. Scott Stevens himself was promoted to Associate Professor in May. In June, Rebecca Boyle was hired as ELI Admissions Staff Assistant. In that same month, Karen Asenavege (f) earned her doctorate in organizational leadership, with a focus on higher education, from Eastern University. Karen has been promoted to Associate Director, Director of ELI Academic Programs, while Joe Matterer has been promoted to Associate Director, Director of ELI Intensive Programs. Other promotion congratulations go to Tim Kim, now Assistant Director for ELI Student Life, Bridget Casterline, Assistant Director for ELI Registration, and Tanya Kang, Academic Support Coordinator. At the tail end of the year, Alexis Carr transitioned from a part-time position to become the ELI’s Assistant Registrar.

Goodbyes

Wedding bells rang on January 9 for Aigner Scott (a) and Salvador Peguero. It was Jeanine Chapman’s (b) turn on May 1, when she married Jeremiah Feltner. Jackie Whitney (c) and her husband, Erik Andrade, welcomed their baby boy, Owen James Whitney-Andres, on December 24, 2018. The second daughter of Jon and Julie Lopez (d), Jessie Grace Lopez, arrived on January 21, 2019. Just four days later, on January 25, baby girl Maite Miranda was born to Kate Tomasovic (e) and her husband, Elesvan Jimenez.

At the tail end of the year, Alexis Carr, the ELI’s Assistant Registrar. f.

PERSONNEL NOTES

Goodbyes

The Panama Bilingue (Sessions 3 and 6), DPDI (Session 6) and Kibarat (Session 3) EFL methods courses, taught by Nicole Servais, examined inquiry-based Project-Based Learning (PBL) in a tasty new way by selecting “healthy” choices from a variety of snacks and fast foods. Program participants examined nutrition labels of famous American snack foods, compared whole and processed foods, and created menus as they explored the PBL instructional model. Participants even engaged in a fast-food restaurant role play with real nutritional information. At the end of the project, the group with the healthiest menu received a prize: They could steal any snack food from anyone in the room. There was a downside, though. Once the unit was finished, they didn’t want to eat the snacks. “We know too much now,” joked Kibarat participant Sarah Alharthi.

Teaching assistant Kim Stock led Nonie Bell’s Session 6 Listening/Speaking 4 students through the steps of a simplified Socratic seminar to help them prepare for end-of-session speaking tests. The students viewed a video clip related to a particular discussion topic. Students were seated around a table in two concentric circles. The inner circle appointed a discussion leader who was responsible for starting the discussion and seeing that everyone contributed. When the first time segment ended, each student in the inner circle, student by student, passed the discussion leader’s responsibilities to the next student in line. After the second segment, each student in the outer circle of students for a brief coaching session. Using the coaches’ feedback, the inner circle participants reviewed the discussion, each improving their participation. With the help of this activity, students welcomed their end-of-session speaking assessment, expressing their readiness to be tested.

What’s a powerful way to show you have understood something and can communicate the contents clearly? Bullet points! In ARSC 150, Ken Cranker and Jack Crist’s students write bullet point lists for the chapters and articles they are reading. Students stand during class and contribute an important point from the reading; they may not sit down until they have added one unique point. A similar activity after student presentations, with classmates listing off the speakers’ main ideas, informs presenters whether they have effectively conveyed their information.

In a new ARSC 151 elective class, Music Listening: The Basics, created by Kendra Bradecich, students in sessions 1 and 2 participated in a “field trip” across campus to Puglisi Orchestra Hall. They learned about concert pieces and the composers who wrote them while preparing to attend a UD Symphony performance together. They also prepared by learning about classical music concert etiquette. For many of them, this was the first experience in listening to a live symphony concert.

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In October, Claudia López (Colombia ’01) became the first woman to be elected mayor of Bogotá, Colombia’s largest city. Claudia, who had previously served four years as a senator and ran as the vice presidential candidate for the Green Alliance Party in 2018, was reported by the Washington Post as saying, “This is a small step for me, but for Colombian women this is a huge step forward.”

Claudia López, candidate for mayor of Bogotá with the Green Alliance, celebrated her election victory.

Julien Courret, julien.courret@free.fr (France ’08) and Jenny Hernandez, jennyh@holmail.com (Colombia 09), who met at the ELI and married in 2011, rejoiced in the birth of their daughter, Catalina, in September 2018. The family lives in Orleans, France, where Julien works as France deputy CEO for Viasat Systems.

Kezula Ines, kezula@udel.edu (Colombia ’16) has started his own company in the food processing industry. He wrote, “I have to say thanks to you all and that all were related to our Nicaraguan Peace Scholarship. That opportunity that you gave us guys was very helpful for us to be what today we are.”

Kathi Pierre Yao, assistant professor of mechanical engineering at the University of Delaware, uncovered novel insights about lithium ion batteries.

Janaína Alves, janaina.alves@o2i.com (Brazil ’14) welcomed her first son, Jake, in April.

Janaína Alves (right) and Luzimara Barros (left) report that it is very rainy in Limerick, Ireland.

Naoko Iwai co-authored a paper in biochemistry that was published in ChemBioChem, a peer-refereed journal of chemical biology.

Catalina and her husband, Dan Weinberg, welcomed their baby son, Jake, in April.

Han Yu, yuan99001116@asia.com (China) and her husband, Dan Weinberg, welcomed their baby son, Jake, in April.

Jenny and Dan Weinberg welcomed their baby son, Jake, in April.

Amaal Almutairi, amaalmtr@udel.edu, a master’s student in the Computer Science Department at UD’s College of Engineering, started a master’s program this year in cybersecurity in the Computer Science Department at George Washington University.

Amaal Almutairi (left) and Luzimara Barros (right) report that it is very rainy in Limerick, Ireland.

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Luzimara Barros (right) and Janaína Alves (left) report that it is very rainy in Limerick, Ireland.

Orhan Demir graduated this year from Auburn University, where he was the president of the Turkish Student Association.

Rafael Diaz-Carabatesco, pelusor@ciencia.org (Venezuela 00), opened up a fabulous coffee shop this year in Madrid, Spain.

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Elisabeth Mercante’s oral intelligibility class for ITAs got creative with Post-it® notes.

Hunan University students giving the ELI a thumbs up on the balcony of 108 E. Main St.

In July and August, the CAPES agency of Brazil’s Ministry of Education sponsored 40 Brazilian educators in a six-week professional development program for English language teachers (PDPI). The program contained three major strands: teaching methodology, personal English language development and cultural immersion. Workshops, tutoring clusters, classroom observations in a local school and trips to major Mid-Atlantic cultural destinations supplemented these strands. The program culminated with a “What Works” conference, at which the participants showcased the knowledge and skills they had acquired during the program. The Brazilians impressed their instructors with their dedication and enthusiasm for the work of teaching English as a foreign language.

International Teaching Assistants
The IIA Training program, coordinated by Ken Hyde with help from assistant coordinators Amanda Brunson and Lori Fisher, welcomed over 100 students this year to train as teaching assistants at the University of Delaware. In January, Hyde and ELI teacher Mary Beth Worrilow taught 22 students as part of the winter training program. Hyde was joined by Brunson, fellow ELI teachers Leslie Criston and Monica Farling and visiting instructors Toni McLaughlan and Elisabeth Mercante for the summer iteration of the program. Ninety-two students from 29 countries and representing 23 different graduate programs at the University participated in the summer program.

Overall this year, ITA trainees came from such diverse backgrounds as Argentina, Botswana, Cameroon, Israel, and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as more familiar ITA countries such as Brazil, China, India and Korea. The ITA program welcomed its first student from the Biden School of Public Policy and Administration, who joined students from the departments of medical and molecular science, biomechanics, chemistry, economics, geography, mechanical engineering and others in improving their spoken English and learning about American classroom practices.

Hunan Normal University
Twenty-seven graduate students from Hunan Normal University in Hunan Province, China, joined the ELI from September to December for a program coordinated by Ana Kim. In addition to improving their language skills in the ELI’s intensive English program, students also had the opportunity to interact with departments that aligned with their concentrations: linguistics, English and American literature, English teaching, translation/interpretation, and curriculum and teaching methodologies. The students participated in linguistics colloquia, numerous workshops and graduate classroom observations.

A Bent for Bentos Pays Off
Maki Yasunaga, an ELI alumna who introduced Japanese boxed lunches to UD students in 2017 and sold hundreds of her boxed “bento” lunches in New York City, has won a very prestigious award for her project. As a Japanese government scholarship recipient attending classes at the ELI, Maki was required to report her Stateside activity and achievements upon returning to Japan. She presented her project results in a regional competition and won first prize in Kyushu, one of eight regions nationwide. She was then invited to enter the national competition sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in January. From among 13 participants who had placed either first or second in their local regional competitions, Maki won first prize. The event made national news and was reported all over Japan.

Maki has since landed a job at the well respected Kubara Honke Company, which makes traditional Kayanoya-dashi food sauces and bases in Fukuoka. She is developing new recipes and a menu for the company, which has a restaurant in Fukuoka and plans to open a restaurant in New York. Maki is excited about the prospect of being involved in this big project.
For further information or an application form, contact the director's office or e-mail stevens@udel.edu or visit www.udel.edu/eli.

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