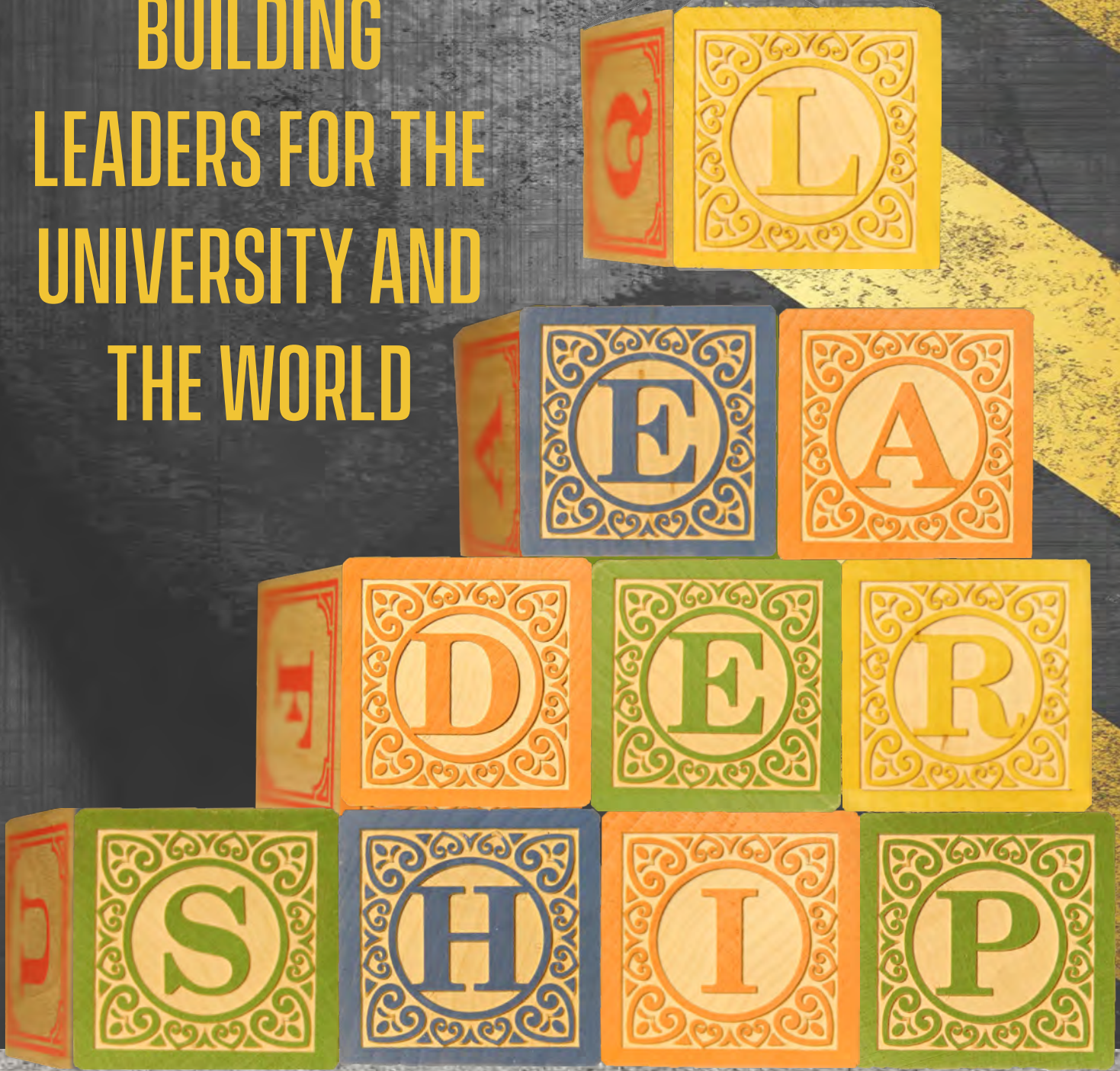


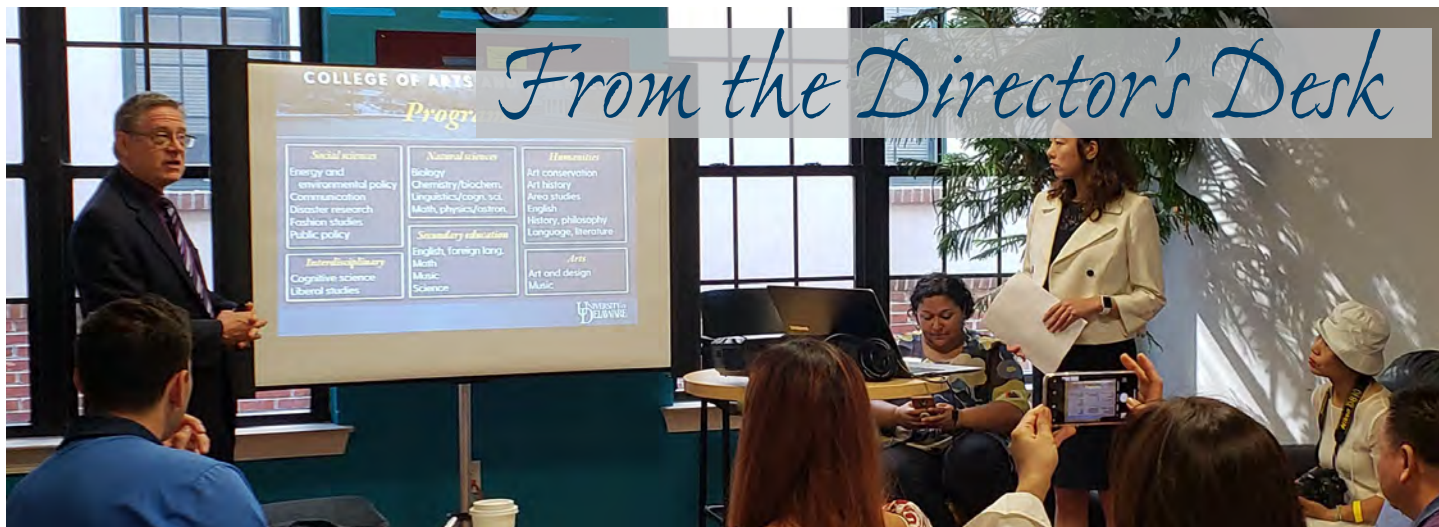
English Language Institute

# *Interactions*

2018 ANNUAL HOLIDAY MAGAZINE FOR OUR FRIENDS IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

**BUILDING  
LEADERS FOR THE  
UNIVERSITY AND  
THE WORLD**





Dr. Stevens takes the lead in welcoming parents of incoming Academic Transitions students and informing them about various aspects of the program.

Dear ELI Friend,

The theme of this year's annual magazine for you, our alumni, sponsors, and supporters, is leadership—fittingly chosen given that January 1, 2019, will launch a yearlong celebration of the Institute's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Over the four decades since its founding, the ELI has grown to become one of the nation's most respected intensive English programs, known for its innovative programs and outstanding teaching. We recognize that enduring leadership is not a state of being, but rather an aspirational pursuit of new possibilities that each successive achievement reveals. Such is the mission that has guided and challenged us these many years: "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" (excerpt from ELI mission statement).

The cultivation of leadership is an individual as well as a collective ELI goal. Through publications and international conference presentations and through service on campus and to ESL professional organizations, ELI faculty and professional staff have earned the respect of their colleagues in the field.

Cultivating leaders is also an intended outcome of our educational program for our students. Our curriculum reflects John F. Kennedy's maxim that "leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." Leaders and successful students face similar challenges, such as pursuing goals with diligence, persisting in the face of difficulties, learning from setbacks, setting high personal standards for conduct and performance, being accountable to oneself and others, and believing that one's vision will be realized.

Becoming leaders is an even stronger imperative for international students than it is for their domestic peers, for in addition to grappling with the rigor of their studies, they must also master a new language as they simultaneously navigate a new cultural milieu. International students often face a crisis of identity as they endeavor to establish new friendships within and across cultures. Yet, in surmounting these obstacles, they also build confidence in their own resilience and often feel emboldened to risk taking new challenges. Living and studying abroad confers on visitors the gift of perspective, as they reflect on societal needs in their home countries and conjure up imaginative solutions inspired, in part, by encounters with diverse approaches to tackling problems.

Small wonder, then, that so many ELI graduates have returned home as agents for change. Many have achieved traditional leadership positions as CEOs of major corporations or as senior government officials. Others have embraced the role of servant leader, impacting society by sacrificially sharing their talents and time. Ana Pinasthika Widjaja ('97) is one such

leader, having fostered collaboration among governmental agencies and churches in her hometown in Indonesia to build badly needed schools and day care centers. Maryam Alahmar ('15) returned to Iraq as a representative and member of the Women in Engineering (WIE) steering committee to promote and mentor women in the field. Orlando Molano ('08), in his role as Bogota's Director of Parks, has developed over 500 city parks, giving all residents, including and especially the poor, access to clean, safe and serene havens from the din, dangers and congestion of urban life.

Some alumni leveraged their well-honed English skills to effect change beyond their borders. Italian Isabella Nazionale (2000) found her passion taking her to northern Kenya to promote the human rights of tribal groups like the Samburu people. Priscilla Moraes ('09) returned to UD after her ELI studies to complete a doctorate in computer science before securing a key position with Google. She now gives TED talks to help women juggle STEM field careers and family responsibilities. Ibrahim Alkhaldi ('82) pays forward his immense success in the oil industry by providing scholarships for promising international students from economically disadvantaged families.

Other ELI alumni have expressed their leadership through art. Eunjung Cho ('10) writes musicals and translates popular children's books from English into Korean. Syrian artist Emad Hemed uses the message of his paintings to draw attention to the Syrian humanitarian crisis. No doubt each of our 18,000 alumni has a story of how they drew upon their experience at the UD ELI to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

As James Humes observed, "The art of communication is the language of leadership." In acquiring and refining a language spoken by a billion global citizens and in being transformed through friendships with student ambassadors from more than 30 nations, the ELI's alumni leave UD equipped and energized to fulfill their dreams in service to others. May you be inspired by their stories chronicled in these pages, and by my dedicated ELI colleagues who every day model the highest ideals of leadership.

Sincerely,

Scott G. Stevens

I want to thank the leadership of the News Magazine Committee, Sarah Petersen and Scott Duarte, as well as their entire team of editors and writers, for their labor of love in crafting this year's excellent publication.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## FEATURES

4



Christina Kelly

Khbrat Delaware “Building Leadership for Change through School Immersion”

6



Maria José Riera

SABIC team makes a difference in Puerto Rico

8



Christina Kelly

Breaking the fast together

14



Ceridkurt

UD ELI alumna runs for vice president of Colombia

10	Classroom Notes
11	New Faculty
12	Profiles
16	Year in Pictures
18	Student Sampler
19	Tutoring Center
20	Special Programs
22	Personnel Notes
23	In Memoriam
24	Professional Activities
26	Alumni News
30	Festival of Nations

*The annual ELI Interactions Magazine is published by the English Language Institute, University of Delaware, 189 West Main Street, Newark, Delaware 19716, USA  
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Kate Copeland

Saudi teachers observing a third grade class at Marshall Elementary School to learn best practices

# SAUDI KHBRAT TEACHERS BUILD LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE

By Kate Copeland

The Khbrat Delaware “Building Leadership for Change through School Immersion” program launched at the University of Delaware in February, with 48 Saudi elementary and secondary school teachers participating.

The year-long professional development program is part of the Saudi Ministry of Education’s mission to prepare K-12 educators to serve as “change agents,” galvanizing all stakeholders in their educational communities in pursuit of the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 strategic growth plan. In fact, the word “Khbrat” means “experience.”

The University of Delaware’s ambitious version of the program was fashioned through a collaborative partnership between the ELI, under its director, Scott Stevens, and UD’s College of Education and Human Development, led by Dean Carol Vukelich.

The UD team of faculty advisors, workshop leaders, and English instructors bring a range of resources and expertise to the project, guided by academic coordinators Ahlam Musa and Anna Tigan and project

director Kate Copeland. Twenty-five of the program participants are teachers of English as a Foreign Language. Twenty-three teach math, science, computer science, Arabic, home economics or special education. With their family members, who are supported by community liaison Callie Zimmerman, the entire group numbers more than 150, including 85 children.

The Khbrat group's "experience" began with intensive English classes at the ELI from February through May to prepare the participants for the content of the program.

Beginning in June, the focus shifted to workshops led by both ELI and UD faculty that further built the educators' knowledge of best practices in curriculum and instructional approaches and promoted reflection on ways to introduce this new information to their Saudi educational communities.

The Khbrat scholars entered the school immersion phase of their experience in September, each teaming up with a host teacher from five area school districts. The diversity of the schools is reflected in programs such as Greek and Chinese language immersion, STEM and design entrepreneurship, life sciences, and performing and fine arts, as well as schools committed to creating pathways to college and career success for disadvantaged students.

During their training, participants have been particularly impressed with insights gained about leadership. Participant Dina Alghamdi was inspired by the leadership strategy called co-coaching. "It's like friends sitting with each other having a conversation," Alghamdi explained. "I want to apply it with my fellow computer science teachers, talking about the teaching methods we use, sharing ideas and exchanging experiences."

Alghamdi's sister, Dalia Alghamdi, also a Khbrat participant, was enthused to see the "cognitive coaching" methodology in actual practice at her assigned immersion school. As students worked on a project in small groups, Dalia's host teacher asked them clarification questions to sharpen their thinking.

"After he left the group, they all changed their minds and made new ideas, and their project improved," said Dalia. "This is what I want to do, only with my colleagues rather than with the children. A teacher has a map in her mind, but it's not complete because it's from her view only. After discussing with her, I will be able to see her map and what places aren't filled in, and I will use questions to help her complete her map."

Alongside the school immersion experience from September to December, with the support of special ELI classes, the scholars prepared individual action plan proposals to be submitted to the Ministry of Education. In their remaining time at UD, they will polish these action plans and further hone their organizational leadership skills before bringing their fresh ideas home to Saudi Arabia in February.

Before the program, the Khbrat participants had not thought of themselves as leaders since, as teachers, most do not hold official leadership positions. The program opened their eyes to the many opportunities for taking leadership roles in their schools and classrooms, but also to the realization that they are already all leaders.

Commenting in an anonymous feedback survey, one participant summed up the anticipated impact of the Khbrat program as "a hurricane of new experiences that will sweep most schools in my country, but starting with my small classroom and applying these new experiences step by step."

Abdulaziz Alenazi met his host teacher, Kyriakoula Micha, at a meet-and-greet to kick off the school immersion phase.



Kate Copeland



Maria José Riera

SABIC scholars shored up walls in this house whose second floor was demolished by Hurricane Maria in 2017.

## SAUDI STUDENTS HELP REBUILD IN PUERTO RICO

By Scott Duarte and Tabitha Groh

For the third consecutive year, a group of ELI students embarked on a community service trip to Puerto Rico as part of their SABIC-sponsored Foundation Year. (See “SABIC” in Special programs, Page 21.)

What made this trip different from past excursions was the destruction that Hurricane Maria had inflicted the previous summer upon the island and its residents. Even though 10 months had passed between the hurricane and the arrival of the students, signs of its devastation were ubiquitous.

The students, under the leadership of Global Works Travel, focused their energies in Villa del Rio. The town was founded in the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo, which ravaged the eastern end of Puerto Rico in 1989 as a category 3 hurricane, leaving nearly 28,000 people homeless.

According to the Global Works website, “In the beginning, the families lived in poorly constructed wooden houses while they negotiated the right to own the land with the government. In 1998, the local mayor granted all residents title to their land, and community members began building stronger homes out of concrete.”

Then came Maria.

Through discussion and interviews, the SABIC scholars developed a deep understanding of the immense hardships that many residents currently faced. Each day of work, the young men met different locals, who all had their own unique stories of tragedy. These stories of pain and suffering created a sense of sympathy and built a strong desire to help the community.

Donning work boots and gloves, the students reinforced walls, poured cement flooring and built additional safety exits for local houses. While the work brought about sore muscles, it also created a sense of pride—especially when the group saw buildings that earlier SABIC service learning teams had worked on, still standing after the hurricane.

Although the trip spanned only eight days, the students experienced a transformation from thinking mainly about themselves to being part of something greater.

"It wasn't my first volunteer work, but it was the first time to hurt myself for the sake of someone I didn't know," said Khalid Alhindi, SABIC student. "I knew that I benefited others, that I made a difference."

"While I thought that my trip to Puerto Rico would be a single volunteering experience, it was actually eye-opening to the world of community service," said Fahad Alqabaa, another SABIC student.

ELI SABIC coordinator MariaJosé Riera and assistant Professor Scott Duarte used their familiarity with the community, the work and the students to adeptly push, pull, nurture and nag the students to help facilitate those transformations. First day groans and grumbles morphed into hugs and smiles at journey's end.

This distinctive service learning model pioneered by the ELI will soon be implemented in all SABIC Foundation Year programs across the United States.

A student-generated documentary of the entire trip can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tv3Hd4RwG44>.



MariaJosé Riera

MariaJosé Riera (center, fourth from left), Scott Duarte (top right), and the SABIC students relaxing at the end of the day with Global Works crew and the young family whose house they helped build

## English Language Institute Mission Statement

**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 teachers, 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.**



THE

**By Tabitha Groh**

On a beautiful late May afternoon, more than 300 University of Delaware students, staff and faculty gathered on the Old College lawn to wait for sunset to celebrate Iftar together—the daily breaking of the Ramadan fast.

“The Iftar was held not only for those who were fasting but for anyone that wanted to know more about the culture,” said Ahmed Altaha, a SABIC Cohort 4 scholar. “We welcomed everyone with open arms because we wanted to tell the people all about our fasting ritual.”

The Iftar was organized by students in the SABIC Foundation Year program (See “Special programs” on Page 21). The ELI Women’s Group and Khbrat program participants (See article on Page 4) also participated in planning the event.

As the crowd waited for the sun to fall below the horizon, ELI students and undergraduate students discussed how Ramadan is significant for them and fielded questions about the traditions of fasting during Ramadan and breaking the fast at sundown.

“It was amazing to see so many fascinated in the tradition, which was why we had a panel for those who were curious about Ramadan,” said Mohammed Mohammed, a SABIC Cohort 3 scholar. “It was a great experience for all.”

Professor Debra Hess Norris, the Unidel Henry Francis du Pont Chair in Fine Arts and a member of the UD Board of Trustees, attended the Iftar.

“I appreciated the opportunity to interact with students, colleagues and their families during such a meaningful,





Christina Kelly

# IFTAR: BREAKING FAST TOGETHER

inspiring and uplifting event,” Norris said. “During that moment on the lawn of Old College, our campus community and the world were connected in powerful ways.”

Just after sunset, SABIC students circulated with water and dates to break the fast, a tradition rooted in Islamic teachings. As the Iftar meal was served by the students, the line for the buffet of Middle Eastern food wrapped well outside of the tent set up for the event.

“It was an honor to see the University of Delaware community

come out to learn more about Ramadan and to celebrate Iftar together,” said Mandy Thomas, academic advisor for educational programs at SABIC.

In May 2017, the ELI and SABIC signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that created a foundation for faculty exchange and further opportunities for students.

“This Iftar event was another very visible example of the way in which the ELI and SABIC continue to collaborate to implement the MOU, which emphasizes

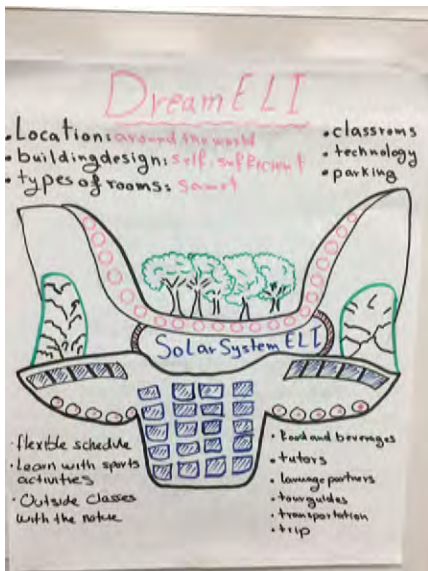
the development of an admissions pipeline, research development, and cultural understanding,” said Karen Asenavage, ELI associate director.

Thomas concurred. “SABIC Educational Programs values its partnership with UD and appreciates its dedication to our students and their culture.”

*The unabridged version of this article appeared in UDaily News, June 22, 2018.*

# CLASSROOM NOTES

In Session 6, **Meghan Graham's Listening and Speaking 3** class practiced spontaneous speaking through collaborative group work. The students were given an unlimited budget and creative freedom to design a dream ELI. In their groups, they discussed features such as the physical layout, services, and class schedules. They created a poster illustrating what the new ELI would look like and included only key words to guide them while sharing their creation. With little time to prepare and no notes, they gave lively presentations trying to "sell" their ideal ELI while speaking spontaneously. Features included free helicopter rides home, a floating island school, and classes under the



Meghan Graham's LS 3 students concocted a dream ELI.

sea. The students enjoyed challenging their classmates' ideas and had a lively discussion about which school plan was the best.

In Sessions 2, 4, and 6, **English Through the 1960s**, taught by **Mikki Washburn, Tom Panter,** and **Kendra Bradecich**, welcomed guest speaker Robert W. Baird, who had served in the U.S. Marine Corps in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969. Baird, who

had landed in Vietnam at age 19, described experiences in the jungle and on mountain tops and detailed the dangers of war: encounters with Vietcong guerrilla fighters, tigers, bamboo vipers and friendly fire. Baird also trained and served as a scuba diver while in Vietnam, where he was assigned to duty in rivers checking bridges for explosives. Of his visit, one student reflected, "I was amazed to listen to a live source, someone who was there."



Robert W. Baird, a U. S. Marine Corps veteran, discussed Vietnam with the 1960's class.

Savory expressions characterized the group paragraph writing task given to **Nonie Bell's Reading and Writing 3** students to practice past tense time clauses. In pairs, the Session 1 students listed steps in the food preparation process as viewed in mini-films produced by their classmate Bashaer Koffiyah. The pairs chose one of four two-minute videos in which Bashaer demonstrated cooking chicken, beef or shrimp entrees. The students hungrily engaged in describing their classmate's culinary triumphs.

In Session 4, **Lindsay Pennington's** undergraduate **Cohort R** volunteered at a Port of Wilmington Maritime Society (POWMS) event, where they rubbed elbows with local business leaders



Cohort R posing with Wilmington Mayor Michael Purzycki

and posed for a photo with Mayor Michael S. Purzycki. POWMS, a nonprofit that liaises between port-affiliated businesses and port management, has several member luncheons per year, and at this particular event, held at the Chase Center on the Riverfront, the cohort students acted as interns, assisting with check-ins and welcoming 100 prominent Wilmingtonians, including guest speaker Mayor Purzycki.

**Nancy Turner's Kitchen Class** welcomed extra cooks to join their wedding-themed programs in Session 5, but even with so many "cooks in the kitchen," there was no "spoiling the broth." About two dozen Master Food Educator volunteers from the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, an organization that offers the community healthy eating workshops and food safety programs, came to observe this successful cluster of cooking and culture. While there, they sampled student-made strawberry pretzel salad and dark chocolate cake.

# ELI WELCOMES TWO NEW FACULTY MEMBERS

By Sarah Petersen  
Photos by Ariel Ramirez

## Nicole Servais

Nicole Servais is a familiar face at the ELI, probably best known to students as the “Drama Queen” thanks to the 40 sessions and counting in which she has taught the “English Through Drama” course. She began at the Institute as adjunct faculty in 2009 and became an academic development specialist in 2014 before her new faculty appointment.

Nicole’s diverse contributions to the Institute pack even more punch than her classes’ performances. In 2010, Nicole was principal designer of the space at 108 E. Main St. that would become the ELI’s new Self Access Learning Center, planning its physical arrangement, learning resources, technology and operations. She was then appointed coordinator of the facility and continued in that role until her appointment this fall to the continuing-track faculty.

With her keen interest in reading strategies, Nicole uses experiential learning to help students realize that “we read not simply to understand or to summarize but to connect, to visualize, to question, to predict, and to monitor our own beliefs and practices.”

Nicole’s pedagogical approach, which was first tested during her four years as a middle school ESOL teacher in a nationally recognized program in



Fairfax County,

Virginia, placed her on track to become a teacher of teachers. She developed the EFL methods course that now comprises the core of the ELI’s teacher training programs.

Along with designing the core course, Nicole chaired the task force that crystallized the entire training program’s structure and objectives, produced a program handbook and created a website to outline the program’s mission. This 18-month effort led to the Delaware English as a Foreign Language Teacher Training (DEFT) program’s full accreditation in 2016 by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation.

Nicole is currently assisting Khbrat DEFT participants (See article on Page 4) to wrap up their year-long training before she turns her energy to ELI academic track courses.

## Adil Bentahar

Adil Bentahar has made his mark as an educator both in the United States and in his native Morocco. Straight out of college, while teaching English at a Moroccan high school, he demonstrated a passion for civic education and social justice both within and beyond the EFL classroom. Adil wrote articles on the subject for Moroccan newspapers, spoke on radio shows and on Moroccan national television, and organized national and international conferences on civic education.

Adil’s involvement in the 2008 World Congress on Civic Education in Morocco led to an invitation to assist with a youth leadership program in the U.S. state of Idaho. This experience was the key to his decision to pursue graduate studies in the United States. He went on to earn his master’s degree in curriculum and instruction at Boise State University in Idaho and ultimately received his doctoral degree in that field from the University of Wyoming.

Upon completing his studies in 2015, Adil moved to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University to teach English as a Second Language at its Language and Culture Institute. While there, he also trained ESL tutors both for Virginia Tech

and for the Blacksburg Refugee Partnership, which sponsors and helps to re-settle families from war-torn countries. He gave over a dozen presentations on topics in ESL and civic education across the American South and in Morocco. He reviewed articles for education journals, assisted with nationwide candidate screening for Fulbright programs, and managed to squeeze in time to serve as second vice president of the Virginia TESOL professional association.

Adil’s research interests include ESL students’ writing challenges and metacognitive reading strategies. He, like Nicole, has been assisting Khbrat participants with the research and writing of their capstone project, and he looks forward to getting more deeply involved in the ELI’s academic track.



## FACULTY PROFILE: MICHAEL FIELDS



South Korea. Gabon. São Tomé and Príncipe. Turkey. United Arab Emirates. With such a rich tapestry of cultural experiences, it's no wonder Michael Fields has built a reputation at the ELI as a teacher of culture.

After 19 years teaching abroad, Mike returned to the United States and landed at the ELI, where he was assigned to teach high intermediate courses. He nurtured the notion that students at that level were ripe for a

general introduction to U.S. culture.

"I've had so many students who thought that Microsoft belonged to the government and that the U.S. president was Bill Gates' boss," Mike said. "It's the natural thing to assume if that's how business works in your own country. And how are they going to learn otherwise if we don't tell them?"

Mike collaborated with fellow Level 4 instructor Monica Farling to weave art, literature, government, values and lifestyles with Level 4 reading, writing and grammar outcomes. The American Culture course was piloted in fall 2013 and soon became a popular elective.

While enriching the ELI's culture track, Mike was also infusing culture—U.S. university culture—into the academic track. When he had been at the ELI four short months, he was already invited to teach a group of graduate students in the innovative Cohort Program, which provided preparation for the challenges of U.S. academic culture for students headed to the University of Delaware for their undergraduate or graduate studies.

Mike recognized that expectations for graduate students differed markedly from those for undergrads in the U.S. university environment. He and a like-minded colleague, Sarah Cherian, joined forces under the supervision of ELI associate director Karen Asenavage to create a curriculum that addressed grad students' distinct needs. Mike and Sarah's curriculum was adopted in 2014 and continues to serve as the backbone of the ELI's graduate Conditional Admission Cohort Program.

"That was a very big, very meaningful part of my life," Mike said.

Mike is currently focusing on the undergraduate side of the ELI's academic track, its Academic Transitions program. (See "Academic Transitions turns one year old" on Page 15.) He has taught the program's first-semester, three-credit ARSC (Arts & Sciences) 150 course, Foundations of English for Academic Purposes, since it was formally inaugurated in January 2017.

Another focus for Mike is assessment, which was his specialization during his master's degree program at Leicester University, England. This year he wrote a chapter on "Common Errors in Teacher-made Assessments" for the edited volume *Assessment Literacy and Teacher-Made Testing in the Language Classroom*. (The publication information can be found under Michael Fields in the "Professional activities" section, Page 24.) Mike was appointed chair of the ELI's testing committee in June.

With the retirement this year of Grant Wolf (See article on Page 15), Mike has taken over as instructor of the fall semester *Methods in Teaching English as a Second Language* course in the University of Delaware MA-TESL program.

When he can find a moment to breathe, Mike enjoys reading, playing chess, and spending quality time with his wife, Banu, and their children, Su and Sofia.

## STAFF PROFILE: REBECCA USHER

When the ELI, with a burgeoning student body, was feeling overwhelmed by increasingly more complex financial operations, it reached out to a bartender for help.

Rebecca Usher, who had been tending bar at a Wilmington ale house, set aside her apron to become the ELI's part-time accounting assistant in 2013 and its full-time financial coordinator in 2015.

What do bartending and working in the ELI's Finance Office have in common? Besides dealing with money, a bartender ...

- Is friendly and welcoming,
- Can establish immediate rapport with people of all backgrounds,
- Listens sympathetically,
- Is deft at helping others solve their problems and
- Can multitask in a fast-paced environment.

Becca draws on all of these talents to accomplish her many duties.

At the cashier's window, the half door between the Finance Office and the conference room at 189 W. Main St., Becca greets students with a smile and listens carefully to anxious questions about bills and payments—especially in the first and last weeks of a

session, when most student account activity occurs. As direct manager of the 500-plus accounts in any given session, Becca has her finger on the answers that will put students at ease.

In addition to student accounts, there is the payroll to process semi-monthly for close to 200 ELI employees, staff purchasing cards to sign off, agent commissions to pay, invoices to process, ELI culture trip pricing to calculate, student health insurance information to upload, and a hefty load of email communication to maintain.

Appraising Becca's impact, the ELI's business administrator, Dru Arban, summarized, "She is in charge of the day-to-day operation of the Finance Office. ... Her adroitness contributes greatly to the efficient operation of the office."

While each week of an ELI session has a different finance-related task to complete, the highlight of any day, Becca said, is the students.

"They are all very gracious and eager, like sponges that want to absorb everything. I love witnessing it."

One eager Iraqi student came to Becca distraught when her country's government, struggling with political and economic instability, discontinued her scholarship. Becca helped the young woman research, apply for and obtain alternative funding that allowed her not only to complete her studies at the ELI but ultimately to earn her master's degree at UD.

Outside of work, Becca enjoys gardening, watching or playing soccer, and spending time with her two cats.

Still, she said, she loves her job just as much. This bartender-turned-accountant values the family atmosphere of the ELI and the wonderful co-workers that she is privileged to work alongside.

What is more, she said, "It's just a fun place to work."



By Sarah Petersen

Fields Photo by Ariel Ramirez  
Usher Photo by Scott Duarte

# ELI helps bring cleansing stations to Perkins Student Center

By Sarah Petersen

With input from the ELI, washing areas have been installed in Perkins Student Center to facilitate Muslim Friday prayer.

The men's and women's restrooms adjacent to the Scrounge eatery were reconfigured over the summer and re-opened for the fall semester with the new ablu-tion stations ready to serve Muslim worshippers.

Ablutions are the ritual washing of specific parts of the body as a symbol of spiritual purification before prayer.

The Rodney Room, a large conference room at Perkins, is set aside for use by Muslim UD students and faculty for Friday afternoon observances, which are required of Muslim men and optional for women. The gathering attracts about 100 attendees weekly.

Rodney is just across the hall from the Scrounge restrooms.

Before the installation of the dedicated washing rooms, Muslims used the restroom sinks to prepare for prayer. Since foot washing is included, ablu-tions involved a balancing act that sent a good deal of water to the floor, causing a safety risk not only for the worshiper but for other restroom users.

When a request for ablu-tion facilities was made in 2011, logistical and financial issues moved the proposal to the back burner. A chance encounter between ELI director Scott Stevens and an ELI

alumnus at a formal dinner in December 2016 re-ignited the spark.

The 2015 alumnus, Fatih Gezer, then a graduate student at UD, was also serving as the vice president of the Muslim Student Association and the president of the Turkish-American Student Association (TASA). Gezer expressed to Stevens his fellow Muslim students' desire for an appropriate place to perform ablu-tions.

Stevens helped Gezer make contact with senior administrators in the Office of the Provost. Within the month, with Stevens' encouragement, TASA had drawn up a formal proposal, even suggesting designs for the facilities.

At the request of the Provost's office, a feasibility study was conducted, and the restrooms next to the Scrounge were determined to be the most feasible location. A committee was then formed,



Ablutions are the ritual washing of specific parts of the body.

including ELI associate director Joe Matterer, to share cultural and practical insights with the architectural design team.

Work on the design continued through

the 2017-2018 school year, and actual construction was scheduled for the summer so that the stations would be up and running in time for the new academic year.

Gezer, now pursuing his doctoral studies at Leeds University in England, is pleased with the news.

"People are now able to use ablu-tion stations instead of bathroom sinks or even going back home for a prayer," said Gezer. "We saw again how UD cares about each of its students and their happiness, which makes UD exceptional."

**A big THANK YOU to the staff and students of the**

**Brennen School**  
part of the  
**Delaware Autism Program**

**who prepare the thousands of envelopes needed to mail  
this newsletter to our readers every year!**





Photo Courtesy of Claudia López

# UD ELI alumna runs for vice president of Colombia

By Tabitha Groh

## Senator Claudia López runs on Coalition Colombia ticket

When Colombia held its presidential election on May 27, the ELI had a connection: a candidate for vice president, Claudia López, was an ELI alumna.

“Claudia was a very determined and hard-working student,” said Barbara Morris, a retired ELI assistant professor who had had López in class in 2001. “It was obvious she was going somewhere.”

When Claudia López Hernández turned 18, she was looking forward to voting in the upcoming presidential elections in Colombia. Before the 1990 elections could take place, however, three presidential candidates were assassinated. Shocked and motivated to change a political system that had been affected by corruption, she joined the Seventh Ballot, a student movement for constitutional reform. Her public life was born.

López continued studying at the Universidad Externado de Colombia, graduating with a degree in finance, government and international relations. Next, she set her sights on obtaining a graduate degree in public administration at an American university but needed to improve her English.

In January 2001, López arrived in Newark to start at the ELI. Though English had never come easily to her, she studied diligently and graduated as co-valedictorian of her ELI class.

“Her sensitive and caring nature became apparent to her teachers not only through class discussions about social issues, but also, to those of us who knew her outside of class, through her relation to her friends,” Morris said.

That caring nature extended to animals, especially a bloodhound named Ramón she raised from a puppy.

“When she called Colombia every few days from Delaware, she could hear Ramón crying at the sound of her voice,” Morris said. “Claudia jumped through all the medical and bureaucratic hoops to bring Ramón to Newark, including making sure he had the human escort required by the airlines, and then moved to a pet-friendly apartment complex to house him and adopted a second dog to keep him company during the day.”

At her graduation, López spoke of her hope to eventually return to Colombia to build the country of her dreams, but she added that her friends from the ELI would be with her forever.

From Delaware, López headed to Columbia University in New York City to study public administration and urban planning, and she eventually completed her doctorate in political science from Northwestern University as a Fulbright scholar.

A respected political researcher, López has written for Colombian news outlets Vanguardia, La Silla Vacía, El Tiempo and Semana. She has served as a consultant to the United Nations and to researchers at Arcoiris Corporation and the Electoral Observation Mission.

While López’s party did not win the presidential election this year, she continues as a political force to contend with, striving undeterred to build the Colombia of her dreams.

# ACADEMIC TRANSITIONS TURNS ONE YEAR OLD

The fall 2018 semester marked the first anniversary of the Academic Transitions program at the ELI.

Academic Transitions (AT) is a pathway program, meaning it includes English training through the ELI, credit-bearing UD courses in a variety of content areas and other activities that help prepare students linguistically, academically and socially to be fully integrated into the fabric of scholarship and life at the University of Delaware.

Like mainstream UD courses, AT content courses are taught by UD faculty. However, class sizes are smaller, class times are longer, and each course has a dedicated instructional assistant (IA) who plays an integral support role. In their twice-weekly discussion classes, IAs help students develop and practice study skills, strategies and scholarly mindsets that will serve them well as they matriculate to their chosen majors.

As the AT program grows, the ELI and University of Delaware continue to work together to broaden the menu of course offerings. The program started with eight different content courses in fall 2017 and expanded to offer 14 in fall 2018. In the summer semester, the program was privileged to have Chungmin Tu from

the Department of Languages, Literature and Culture teach The Art of Chinese Calligraphy. The classes range from Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology to Analytic Geometry and Calculus. One exciting new class added to the AT menu was Geology 105: Geological Hazards and their Human Impact.

The AT program, which evolved out of the ELI's earlier Conditional Admissions Program and Bridge Program, is the most recent collaboration between the ELI and UD in their efforts toward integrating international students into a scholarly life on campus. Deans and chairs in UD colleges were introduced to the program and invited to collaborate. Karen Asenavage, associate director for academic programming, found their response overwhelming.

"I was encouraged by the willingness of the departments to collaborate with us in this initiative," Asenavage said. "I was honored by the trust that the departments placed in us to deliver, support, and maintain the rigor of their courses. They provided insights, gave suggestions for courses, and offered instructors immediately."

As the program has grown, it has begun to attract more attention from UD faculty interested in being a part of the active internationalization of



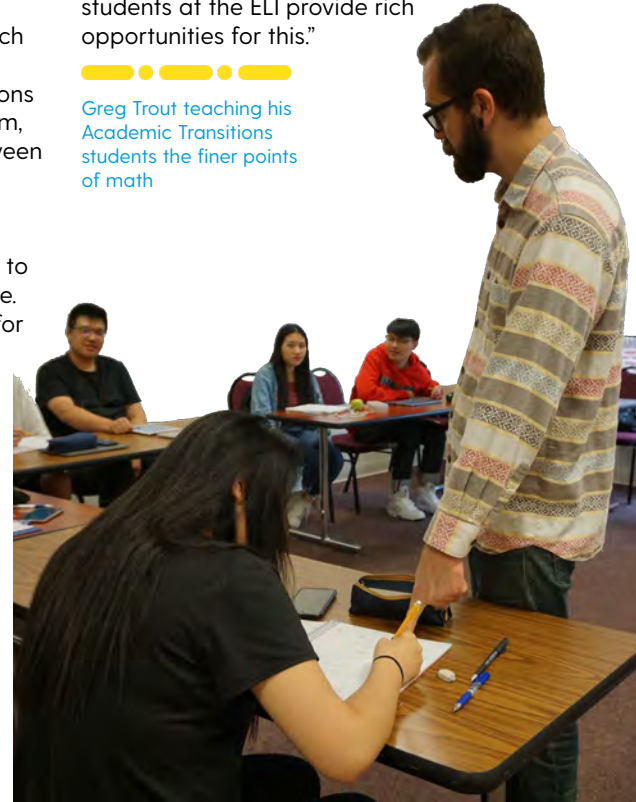
By Karen Asenavage and Emily Thayer

Photos by Tabitha Groh

the university aligned with UD President Assanis' strategic growth plan. AT faculty have reported that teaching in the program gives them the chance to reflect on and improve their pedagogy.

Greg Trout, an AT math instructor, reported, "Working with the ELI AT program has been a wonderful experience. Learning from my students is always a plus as a teacher, and my students at the ELI provide rich opportunities for this."

Greg Trout teaching his Academic Transitions students the finer points of math



# GRANT WOLF RETIRES AFTER 25 YEARS

By Sarah Petersen Photo by Evan Krape

Assistant Professor Grant Wolf retired this year after 25 years at the ELI. A virtuoso teacher of multiple course levels in the ELI's Intensive English Program, Grant also widened the range of the IEP's course options, coordinated teacher training programs, and taught in UD's Master of Arts program in Teaching English as a Second Language.

Grant's contributions to the IEP course offerings began with "English Through Health," which addressed the needs of international students facing culture shock, including upended dietary and exercise routines and the loneliness of being far from family and friends. The course made its debut in 1996.

With his love for music—he had earned a bachelor's degree in it—Grant found ways to weave music into language instruction. He introduced new material into the already extant "English Through Music" advanced-level course and later created an additional music-themed option, "Listening and Speaking Through Broadway Musicals," which joined the IEP course menu in 2002.

In 2004, Grant accepted a two-year assignment as visiting professor at Kobe Shoin Women's University. While there, he was asked to give a lecture on English as a tool for international communication. Intrigued, Grant continued even after the lecture to research the topic. Upon his return to the ELI in 2006, the course "English as an International Language" was born.

The materials that Grant developed for EIL were refined and collated to become a textbook, *Globally Speaking*, made available electronically in 2011 through English360 (currently printed in hard copy by Lieberman's Bookstore, Newark, De.).

While teaching IEP courses, Grant also oversaw groups in the ELI's program for international teachers of English as a Foreign Language. He was assigned his first group right out of the starting gate in 1993: a summer institute for educators from Africa, which ended up running three consecutive years. Over time, Grant coordinated more than a dozen teacher training programs, ranging in





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# 2018 IN PICTURES

Photos by ELI Staff



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# STUDENT SAMPLER: LEADERS IN THE MAKING

Leadership expresses itself in diverse ways. Below is just a sampling of the many students from the 2018 student body who sharpened not only their English language expertise but also their leadership skills while at the ELI.

## MAKI YASUNAGA

By Randall Pennington

Maki Yasunaga, a nutrition student at Nakamura University in Fukuoka, Japan, was awarded a "Tobitate!" (Leap for Tomorrow) Study Abroad scholarship from Japan's Ministry of Education to study English at the ELI for eight months.

When she arrived, she was shy and very hesitant to try to speak English. "I lacked confidence to say anything in English at first," she said.

As she became accustomed to life in the United States and classes at the ELI, her skills started progressing. She began to understand more of what she heard and bit by bit tried to speak more. She took chances.

"Every experience I got from the ELI made my vision of things more positive," she said.

Then, Maki started to blossom.

Alongside her English training, the University of Delaware arranged to allow Maki to take some nutrition courses, which she said were impressive and professional for their broad scope. Through these experiences her speaking and listening skills naturally grew exponentially, culminating in her applying for the funds to pursue a nutrition project in New York City.



Maki wanted to introduce "bento," or Japanese style boxed lunches, to the American public. Her foray into the highly competitive New York lunch market proved very successful because Maki was able to make and present delicious and aesthetically pleasing bento while freely and easily interacting with customers, answering their questions and explaining the nutritional advantages of a bento over the usual American lunch fare.

Maki said the one thing that really contributed to her success was being able to show her personality and express her ideas in English.

Maki's bento project has been featured in publications in both the United States and Japan. She credits her success to her time at the ELI, her teachers and fellow students, and being in an American university culture that nourished her individuality and creativity.

"Everyone was so wonderful to me," she said.

With one look at the confident, poised and articulate Maki of today, it's easy to see that she has fully blossomed into what she was meant to be.

## ROLA GHABRAH AND MOHAMMAD TONKAL

By Robert Bushong

For married couple Rola Ghabrah and Mohammad Tonkal, education is as much about striving for success as it is about the importance of family, and it has always been that way. Both came from families where high academic achievement was the expectation, both strive to model this for their young child, and both exemplified excellence as students at the ELI.

When Rola and Mohammad arrived at the ELI in May 2017 with their infant daughter, they both placed into advanced-level classes, a testament to the high level of English proficiency they had developed through years of study and practice in their home country, Saudi Arabia. While here, they continued to challenge themselves both in and out of the classroom.

"Because of their professional and academic backgrounds, both Rola and Mohammad brought as much to the class as they took away from it," said Walt Babich, who taught them in Reading and Writing Through the Media. "They helped create a stimulating learning environment in class, but what I will always remember about this wonderful couple was their kindness and sense of humor."

Rola and Mohammad found the ELI to be a comfortable atmosphere where they could learn from their mistakes and



gain confidence. "Teachers encouraged mistakes," Mohammad said.

Rola was the class valedictorian at their graduation in June, and Mohammad was the only ELI student ever to perform stand-up comedy at an ELI graduation.

For Rola, being valedictorian was an opportunity to share her journey away from perfectionism. In her speech, she described the futility of being too hard on oneself and said that instead of trying to

satisfy others, she "should make myself proud by believing in myself and my strength, and the most important thing is to accept my weaknesses."

Months before Rola's valedictorian speech, at another ELI graduation, Mohammad was featured during the talent show portion of the ceremony as a stand-up comedian. His most memorable comedy bit involved a description of the two meanings of "insha Allah"—a genuine "God willing" in some situations and an implied "no" in others. Not only was this the ELI's first stand-up routine, it was also Mohammad's, a way to challenge himself beyond his comfort zone. "Being funny came in the U.S.," he said.

Having finished at the ELI, they moved to California, where Mohammad began working this fall toward a master's in mechanical engineering at the University of Southern California and where Rola awaits admission to a graduate dentistry program in the greater Los Angeles area.

When they return to Saudi Arabia, both would like to continue in higher education but as faculty members. To Rola and Mohammad, education is about applying what they have learned, and this is what they would like to impart to the next generation of high-achieving students, including their own children.

# 2018 SEES NEW CLUSTERS

By Ken Hyde

Every session, on Tuesday of Week One, the halls of the ELI Tutoring Center at 318 S. College Ave. are abuzz with students eagerly making their way through the Cluster Faire. They study the colorful posters and ply tutors with questions, trying to decide which of the many enticing choices to sign up for.

To many ELI students, clusters—small, informal classes based on a specific theme, each facilitated by an ELI tutor—are the most relaxing and enjoyable way to improve their English skills.

Clusters can focus on any number of themes, from grammar or pronunciation to public speaking or the TOEFL and IELTS standardized tests—and, of course, the best known and most popular cluster, the Kitchen Cluster, taught by Nancy Turner in her home kitchen.

In 2018, these clusters were joined by three new options: the Driving Skills, Crafts, and Travel clusters.

The Driving Skills Cluster, brainchild of veteran tutor Brady Smith, helps students build their English fluency as they learn how to get a driver's license in Delaware. Brady helps them learn about Delaware traffic laws, safety tips, and the skills needed to go to the Division of Motor Vehicles and actually take the driving test. In fact, the only thing students don't do in this cluster is drive a car. Not even an ELI cluster can have everything.

Participants of the Crafts Cluster, working with

Jill McCracken, complete a variety of craft projects during the session. Along the way, they learn vocabulary and practice their listening and speaking skills, particularly how to give and follow directions. During different sessions this year, crafts students learned how to make a clock out of ordinary paper, how to etch glass



and create a decorated glass jar from an old wine bottle, how to create a multi-colored, battery-powered light display using LEDs, and how to mold and paint clay to make a winter-themed paper weight.

Elaine Heyden, popular writing tutor, took time this year to develop the Travel Cluster. Students in this cluster learned about important travel skills and language to help them at the airport or car rental agency. In addition, Elaine and her students researched and discussed different travel destinations in the United States and created vacation plans based on personal interests. Finally, students tested their skills by taking a day trip to a nearby city and reporting on it in the cluster.

With so many enriching topics to choose from at the Cluster Faire, students know that, no matter what they end up deciding, they will have a fascinating time as they learn English and so much more.

# TUTORING CENTER PROFILE: LIZZY LEE

By Ken Hyde Photo by Scott Duarte

“When you plant a seed, it’s amazing to see it grow,” said Lizzy Lee. She has been planting seeds at the ELI since 2014, serving first as tutor and currently as assistant coordinator of the Tutoring Center.

During Lizzy’s college summers, she loved creating safe and fun environments for kids to learn, grow and explore at Asian Art Initiative’s (AAI) Youth Arts program in Philadelphia’s Chinatown. Fostering shy kids and seeing them blossom and open up more and more each day of the summer, Lizzy saw timid students become budding activists.

It is experiences like these that have shaped Lizzy’s commitment to education.

Lizzy graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 2014 with a degree in Growth and Structure of Cities. Her senior thesis addressed how Asian-American nonprofits navigated increasing gentrification in Philadelphia’s Chinatown. While interning for these organizations, she got involved in community activism, education initiatives and socially engaged art.

After graduating, Lizzy began working as a tutor at the English Language Institute. She quickly climbed the ranks to become the most popular and highly requested tutor.

“Students really loved Lizzy because she could relate to them on an emotional and cultural level, being Asian-American herself,” said Lori Fisher, a fellow tutor and Lizzy’s long-term mentor. “She was not only great at helping students learn but also so encouraging and compassionate.”

“The relationships I have with the students have transformed the way I see life. I’m grateful for the empathy and new perspectives I’ve learned,” Lizzy said.

Lizzy was promoted to site leader, and, in 2016, she was promoted again to assistant coordinator. She hired a fellow tutor to program a web-based email notification system that significantly reduced student absences. She also redesigned promotional materials for the Tutoring Center to make communication to students more streamlined and creative.

“Lizzy has revolutionized the Tutoring Center,” said Ken Hyde, Tutoring Center manager. “Her people-focused leadership and innovative initiatives have significantly increased the visibility and communication of the Tutoring Center.”

In addition to her responsibilities as assistant coordinator, Lizzy assists Ken with the International Teaching Assistants training program and, with ELI faculty advisor Ruwida Alkrekshi, leads the ELI Women’s Group. She said that her favorite parts of Women’s Group are cultivating a welcoming community, planning meaningful cultural events and mentoring students to become leaders.

In her spare time, Lizzy is involved with her church in Philadelphia and is the co-head of the Philadelphia chapter for the national Progressive Asian-American Christians group. She is an activist for women’s empowerment and immigrant communities. Lizzy is also taking radio journalism courses and is currently co-producing Terrace Homies, a podcast exploring Japanese media on Netflix.



# SPECIAL PROGRAMS

## SHORT-TERM STUDENTS

### Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS)

Students from HUFS in Seoul, South Korea, came in two groups, 17 arriving in January and 14 in June, to study in the ELI's Intensive English Program for a period of four or eight weeks in a program coordinated by Tim Kim. The HUFS program manager reported that the students had a great time on their trips to Washington and New York as well as in their reading/writing and listening/speaking classes and tutoring.

Tim Kim



The summer HUFS group enjoyed traditional diner food at Cheeburger, Cheeburger in Newark.

### Hiroshima Institute of Technology

The ELI welcomed 15 engineering students from the Hiroshima Institute of Technology in Hiroshima, Japan, for a three-week program in March coordinated by Wakako Pennington. They were excited to experience a different culture and were curious to learn anything new. They enjoyed participating in the ELI's cultural activities and events, making new friends, staying with their American host families, and exploring New York City and Washington.

Wakako Pennington



HIT students posing at the World War II Memorial in Washington

### Seinan Gakuin University

Fourteen 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 ranged from business and early childhood education to English literature and psychology. They actively participated in the ELI's cultural events and enjoyed trips to New York City and Washington. All the students had a wonderful time meeting people from all around the world and had a fantastic homestay experience.



Wakako Pennington

Seinan Gakuin University students proudly displaying their certificates

### Nakamura Gakuen University

Nakamura Gakuen University sent two groups of students to the ELI for three-week programs in March and August that were coordinated by Wakako Pennington. Both groups enjoyed their visits to the UD Laboratory Preschool, the UD Dairy Farm, New York City and Washington. The March group of three students participated in a UD Nihongo Table club activity weekly, and the 14 August participants enjoyed afternoon activities such as swimming, watching movies and a sushi party hosted by one of the homestay families.



Wakako Pennington

March Nakamura Gakuen students with ELI Associate Director Joe Matterer



Wakako Pennington

The August Nakamura Gakuen group on the Brooklyn Bridge in New York

## Language Adventure

Young students from China, Colombia, Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela descended upon the ELI for its summertime Language Adventure program, coordinated by Camille Mapua. They improved their English skills in listening/ speaking and reading/writing classes and learned about U.S. culture during ELI activities and trips to Washington, New York and Philadelphia. The adventurers sampled a variety of ice cream flavors at UDairy, had fun at the beach in Rehoboth, and got a first-hand look at family life in their homestays.

Tabitha Groh



Language Adventure students jumped into summer at UD.

## Kobe Shoin Women's University

Kobe Shoin Women's University and the ELI have been enjoying a long-lasting relationship. This year, the Institute was delighted to welcome four Kobe Shoin students in the fall, who actively got involved in ELI activities, made friends with UD students, and took the initiative to find events and participate in activities on campus. Their strong determination to improve their English skills bore fruit in the classroom and in their personal lives.



Kobe Shoin students posing in class

## Nagasaki University

A group of 26 students from Nagasaki University in Nagasaki, Japan, joined a three-week special program in September coordinated by Wakako Pennington. Their majors ranged from dentistry, nursing and pharmacy to business and engineering. They actively participated in their classes and enjoyed touring UD's Science, Technology and Advanced Research campus, Herr's Snack Factory, and the cities of New York and Washington. They also presented Japanese culture to students of the Japanese language at UD and had good discussions with them. They had a wonderful experience living with American homestay families as well.



Students from Nagasaki University tasted the sweet life at UDairy Creamery.

## Teikyo University

This fall, the ELI welcomed its first group of students from Teikyo University in Tokyo, Japan. The 24 students worked extensively to complete a demanding four-month program which required them to take additional clusters and Listening Lab for credit. Although their afternoons were booked every day, they still participated in activities on campus and enjoyed making friends. They also got to experience American culture and holiday traditions such as Halloween and Thanksgiving through the homestay program.



Teikyo University students awaiting the flight that would carry them to the United States

## LONG-TERM STUDENTS

### SABIC Foundation Year

In January 2017, the ELI welcomed its third cohort of SABIC scholars—students selected through a highly competitive process to be sponsored by SABIC, a leading global chemical-petrol company based in Saudi Arabia. In October of that year, a fourth cohort began their Foundation Year (FY) at the ELI, bringing the number of FY scholars in 2018 to 17, while the number of undergraduate SABIC scholars at UD has grown to 12. Their FY programs, coordinated by Maria José Riera, included not only intensive English for academic purposes and university admission support with SAT and TOEFL preparation classes, but also a series of university-level classes in pre-calculus, calculus, chemistry, physics, computer technology and leadership.

SEE SPECIAL PROGRAMS ON PAGE 27.

Maria José Riera





Best wishes to **Kate Tomaskovic**, who married **Elesvan Jimenez** on October 5<sup>th</sup>.

*The noble stork made a number of special deliveries to the ELI,*

beginning with baby girl **Evangeline**, born to **Rachel Lapp** and **Michail Alzumut** on December 4, 2017.



Baby boy **Ian** was born May 4 to **Santiago and Mikie Sarmiento**.



**Kamal Alqattawi**, born July 11, is the joy of his mother, **Ahlam Musa**, and her family.



A baby girl, **Bellamy Blythe**, joined **Phil Rice's** family on October 17.

**Tom Panter's** crew welcomed **Elias River** on October 24.

*Congratulations to the happy families.*



# PERSONNEL NOTES

New names have appeared amongst the ELI faculty and staff while some familiar names have changed their title. **Chim English** joined the Human Resources & Payroll Office as HR assistant in October 2017. **Blythe Milbury-Steen** was promoted to AT academic advisor in January. In March, **Callie Zimmerman** was hired as ELI community liaison for the Khbrat program while **Tabitha Groh** came on as ELI communications coordinator. In April, **Baerbel Schumacher** was promoted to assistant director for international projects, **Kirsten Brown** to assistant director of ELI admissions, and **Rebecca Usher** to financial coordinator while



**Krista Urbaniak** was hired as ELI admissions assistant. **Jackie Whitney** became an academic development specialist in May. **Michael Fields, Sarah Petersen** and **Phil Rice** were promoted to assistant professor in July. In the same month, **Lin McDowell** was promoted to administrative assistant for international programs, and **Christina Kelly** came on board as Khbrat program monitor and assistant. Instructor **Nicole Servais** and assistant Professor **Adil Bentahar** joined the continuing track faculty in September. (See "ELI welcomes two new faculty members" on Page 11.) Also in September, **Aura Draper** was promoted to Self-Access Learning Center coordinator. Kudos for these well-deserved accolades.



The ELI family grieved the passing this year of three well-loved tutors, **Keila Brown, Paula Rusinko** and **Patrick Ruffin**. (See "In Memoriam" on next page.) They are sorely missed.



The ELI extends its best wishes to **Kathy Kutchen**, who retired from her position as admissions assistant in December 2017, and to assistant Professor **Grant Wolf**, who retired this year in June. (See "Grant Wolf retires" on Page 15.)

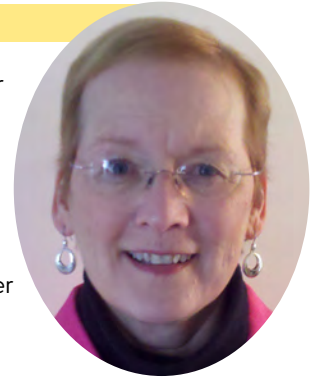
# IN MEMORIAM

By Jeremy Penna

It was a decidedly tragic year for the ELI's Tutoring Center with the unexpected passing of two long-term tutors, Paula Rusinko and Keila Brown, within days of one another and the loss of a third colleague, Patrick Ruffin, several months later. All three had worked at the ELI for many years and were much admired by their colleagues.

## PAULA RUSINKO

Paula was born in Butler, Pennsylvania, in 1953. After graduating from Butler High School, she received her bachelor's and master's degrees in audiology from Pennsylvania State University. Motivated by compassion for the injured, disabled and vulnerable, she worked as a speech therapist at the Butler Veterans Hospital, where she helped former military servicepersons to recover their ability to speak. After a diagnosis of terminal cancer in 1999, Paula left Butler and fought her disease with vigor and determination, beating her prognosis by many years and, despite the constant pain from her treatment, living life with enviable courage and vitality. In 2009, she began to work at the ELI, where her skills as a speech therapist made her particularly effective as a teacher of pronunciation to low-level students. Her students and colleagues all remember her as soft-spoken and easy-going with almost inexhaustible patience and good humor. As one of her colleagues remarked at her memorial service, "Paula was the sweetest. She often had bad news but always said it in that lovely bedtime-lullaby voice. As bad as her cancer was, she was determined to keep that sweetness in a place no tumor or chemotherapy or physical incapacity could ever touch, and she saved it for herself and for us."



## KEILA BROWN

Born to Christian missionary parents in Lima, Peru, in 1975, Keila Brown Gutierrez lived a life both broadly international and singularly focused. After receiving her bachelor's in Bible studies from Columbia International University in 1997, she spent the rest of her life devoted to missionary and ministry work, helping to plant, and becoming a pillar in, small churches in the United States and South America. Naturally gregarious and drawn toward people, she found her secular calling as a tutor at the ELI, where her experience in Peru and her fluency in Spanish made her especially helpful to the Latin American population. Approaching her students with a liveliness that was at once forthright and disarming, Keila was able to forge long-lasting friendships with many of her former tutees, who—as was frequently remarked at her memorial—thought of her as a mother or a sister rather than simply an instructor. Her dedication to her students was so thorough that she chose to live at the INNternationale, where she would frequently have late-night chats over games of Uno or Scrabble in the lounge with the same students she would be teaching the next day. Her colleagues loved her as well, remembering her for her mischievous sense of humor, which would catch many off guard, but a warmth and empathy that would do no harm once the guard was down.



## PATRICK RUFFIN

A gentle ruffian, Patrick Ruffin was born in Indianapolis in 1946; yet, as anyone who heard his musical Mid-Atlantic accent can attest, he lived most of his life in northern Delaware. After serving as a staff sergeant in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War, where his love of languages was awakened through his experience of teaching English to newly-arrived cadets, Patrick completed master's degrees in both TEFL and linguistics and embarked on a long career in education. He taught ESL at Temple, Drexel, Delaware Technical and Community College, and the University of Delaware, where he served both as the Tutoring Center coordinator and as a tutor. His talents as an educator were strengthened by the depths of his linguistic training, but Patrick is remembered as much for his lively persona outside the classroom as for his scholarly rigor as a teacher. A "bon viveur" with a deep, raucous laugh, a quick wit, and a swashbuckling way with words, Patrick made many friends and had a devoted following among his students. Those who knew him will remember his extensive historical knowledge, his knack for German grammar, and his devotion to St. Patrick's Church.



## GRANT WOLF FROM PAGE 15

length from four weeks to one year, for educators from Africa, Central and South America, Asia and the Middle East.

In 2006, Grant was asked to take on the first-year foundations course in UD's graduate program in TESL. As he taught Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language every fall semester until his retirement, he reflected that it was gratifying to see some of his former students eventually become ELI instructors.

"They used to be my students, and now they are my esteemed colleagues," Grant said.

One of those students-turned-colleagues, Jim Weaver, observed, "Grant's instruction and feedback provided the foundation for just about everything I do today in my classroom."

In his retirement, Grant looks forward to pursuing his passion for gardening. In fact, gardening was the theme of his keynote speech at his last ELI graduation ceremony. Citing a metaphor in the sacred writings of the Bahá'í Faith, in which the destiny of a united humanity is compared to the "trees, flowers and roses which adorn and beautify the same garden," Grant addressed the graduates:

"You have the unique honor and privilege to be the next generation of gardeners, who will cultivate this new garden, one which humanity has never seen before, one which all races, nationalities and cultures create together."

Some of the fruit born in that new garden will be traced back to the seeds that Grant planted at the University of Delaware and the ELI.

# PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF FACULTY AND STAFF

**Karen Asenavage**, Associate Director

*Presentation:*

"The Learning Curve of Building a Pathways Model Program: Academic Transitions at the University of Delaware" (with Nigel Caplan, Scott Duarte and Scott Partridge). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Walt Babich**, Faculty

*Presentation:*

"Using the Subjunctive to Fine-tune Complaints." Maryland TESOL 38th Annual Fall Conference. Baltimore, MD, November 2018.

**Nonie Bell**, Faculty

*Publications:*

"Conversation Champions" (with Amanda Strickland). In *New Ways in Teaching Speaking, Second Edition*, edited by Julie Vorholt. Alexandria: TESOL Press, 2018.

"From Scrabble to Scribble: Helping ESL Students Improve Note Taking Skills" (with Robert Bushong and Wakako Pennington). *PTE Voices*, Winter 2018. <http://www.penntesol-east.org/resources/Documents/PTE%20VOICES%20Winter%202018.pdf>

*Presentation:*

"Win-Win!: Student Generated Materials Increase Engagement" (with Phil Rice). 10<sup>th</sup> Annual IEP Professional Development Conference—English USA 2018, Monterey, CA, January 2018.

**Adil Bentahar**, Faculty

*Publication:*

"Empowering ELLs through Civic Learning." *Virginia TESOL Newsletter*, 21.1 (2018): 10-11.

*Presentations:*

"Developing Insights into Teaching ELLs" (with Pamela Smart-Smith). Workshop for community ESL tutors in the New River Valley, Blacksburg, VA, January 2018.

"ELL Education and Cultural Sensitivity." Virginia TESOL study day for Lynchburg ESL professionals, Lynchburg, VA, April 2018.

"Integrating ELLs in Multicultural Societies: Implications for Language Teachers." First International Conference on Multilingualism and Multilingual Education, The Laboratory of Values, Society and Development, Agadir, Morocco, May 2018.

"Working with Refugees in Public Schools: What Not to Forget." Training session, Coalition for Refugee Resettlement ESL tutors and Volunteers, Blacksburg, VA, September 2018.

**Adil Bentahar** *continued*

"Effective Differentiation of Reading Instruction in IEPs: Five Considerations" (with Jason O'Brien). Virginia TESOL Annual Conference, Charlottesville, VA, October 2018.

"Ensuring Effective Reading Instruction Across Levels Through Modeling Metacognitive Strategies." PennTESOL-East Fall Conference, Philadelphia, PA, November 2018.

*Leadership:*

Member 2016-2018, Fulbright National Screening Committee, English Language Assistants for Morocco  
Vice President 2016-2018, Virginia TESOL Conference co-chair and Program co-chair, Virginia TESOL 2018 Annual Convention  
Virginia Representative, Southeast TESOL (SETESOL) Affiliate Council  
Proposal reviewer: TESOL, Virginia TESOL  
Peer reviewer: Democracy & Education, Educational Research and Reviews, Journal of Social Studies Education Research

**Rebecca Boyle**, Admissions Office assistant

*Presentation:*

"Emergency Action Plans: Preparing for the Worst to Support our Students' Best." PennTESOL-East Fall Conference, Philadelphia, PA, November 2018.

**Kendra Bradecich**, Faculty

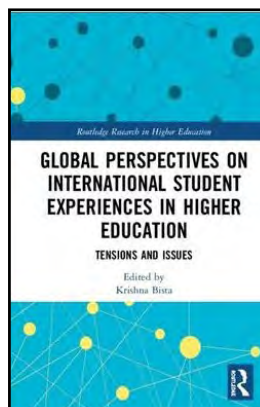
*Presentation:*

"Challenges in Implementing Extensive Reading in IEPs" (with Chris Pinkerton). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Amanda Brunson**, Adjunct Faculty

*Publication:*

"Concepts of Friendship among Chinese International Students." In *Global Perspectives of International Student Experience in Higher Education: Tensions and Issues*, edited by Krishna Bista, 47-59. New York: Routledge, 2018.



**Amanda Brunson** *continued*

*Presentations:*

"Sister Oh Sister: Being Responsible Feminist Researchers in a Politically Charged Climate" (with C. Potts and A. Irwin). 14<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, IL, May 2018.

**Robert Bushong**, ADS

*Publication:*

"From Scrabble to Scribble: Helping ESL Students Improve Note Taking Skills" (with Nonie Bell and Wakako Pennington). *PTE Voices*, Winter 2018. <http://www.penntesol-east.org/resources/Documents/PTE%20VOICES%20Winter%202018.pdf>

*Presentation:*

"Playposit or Edpuzzle? Making the Right Choice for Your Class" (with Phil Rice). Electronic Village Fair at TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

*Leadership:*

Proposal reviewer, TESOL

**Nigel Caplan**, Faculty

*Presentations:*

"Collaborative Writing: Controlling Language, Mastering Genre." AAAL Conference, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

"The Learning Curve of Building a Pathways Model Program: Academic Transitions at the University of Delaware" (with Karen Asenavage, Scott Duarte and Scott Partridge). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

*Publication:*

"Planning Engaging Collaborative Writing Tasks" (with Monica Farling). TESOL Connections, April 2018. <http://newsmanager.commpartners.com/tesolc/issues/2018-04-01/4.html>

*Leadership:*

Chair, TESOL Second Language Writing Interest Section  
Treasurer, Consortium on Graduate Communication  
Advisory Council, Delaware English Language Learner and Teacher Advocates (DELLTA)  
Proposal reviewer: TESOL, AAAL

**Ken Cranker**, Faculty

*Publications:*

*Practical English Grammar for Academic Writers*. Eugene, OR: Wayzgoose Press, 2018.

"The Power of Nominalization." *PTE Voices*, Winter 2018. <http://www.penntesol-east.org/resources/Documents/PTE%20VOICES%20Winter%202018.pdf>



**Ken Cranker** *continued*

*Presentations:*

"Action-Packed Writing: Transformation Through Nominalization" (with Sarah Petersen). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

"Balancing Approaches to Teaching Advanced Reading." PennTESOL-East Fall Conference, Philadelphia, PA, November 2018.

**Scott Duarte**, Faculty

*Presentation:*

"The Learning Curve of Building a Pathways Model Program: Academic Transitions at the University of Delaware" (with Karen Asenavage, Nigel Caplan and Scott Partridge). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Monica Farling**, ADS

*Presentation:*

"GRE/GMAT Preparation for International Students" (with Daniel Murray). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

*Publication:*

"Planning Engaging Collaborative Writing Tasks" (with Nigel Caplan). *TESOL Connections*, April 2018. <http://newsmanager.commpartners.com/tesolc/issues/2018-04-01/4.html>

**Michael Fields**, Faculty

*Publication:*

"Common Errors in the Design of Teacher-made Tests." In *Assessment Literacy and Teacher-made Testing in the Language Classroom*, edited by Eddy White and Thomas Delaney. Hershey: IGI Global Publications, 2018.

**Ken Hyde**, Tutoring Center Manager

*Presentation:*

"Integrated Tutoring Center Impacts Students' Academic and Cultural Success" (with Elizabeth Lee). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

*Leadership:*

Board member 2017-2018, International Teaching Assistants Interest Section

**Tracy Jentzsch**,

Academic Transitions cohort instructor

*Presentation:*

"Public Humanities in the Delaware Valley." Round table discussion led by Amy Ferrer. National Humanities Conference, New Orleans, LA, November 2018.

**Ana Kim**, ADS

*Presentation:*

"A Dialogue With Students: Writing Enjoyment" (with Sarah Petersen). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Jon Kittle**, CAP Cohort Program assistant

*Presentation:*

"Cross-Language Transfer of Phonological Awareness in Spanish-Speaking Children: A Narrative Review." PennTESOL-East Fall Conference, Philadelphia, PA, November 2018.

**Elizabeth Lee**,

Tutoring Center Assistant Coordinator

*Presentation:*

"Integrated Tutoring Center Impacts Students' Academic and Cultural Success" (with Ken Hyde). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Daniel Murray**, Adjunct Faculty

*Presentation:*

"GRE/GMAT Preparation for International Students" (with Monica Farling). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Shakhlo Nematova**,

Academic Transitions cohort instructor

*Presentation:*

"The Transfer of Morphological Awareness Between Chinese and English: Implications for ESL Literacy Instruction." PennTESOL-East Fall Conference, Philadelphia, PA, November 2018.

**Scott Partridge**, Faculty

*Presentation:*

"The Learning Curve of Building a Pathways Model Program: Academic Transitions at the University of Delaware" (with Karen Asenavage, Nigel Caplan, and Scott Duarte). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

*Publications:*

"Source Work in the First-year L2 Writing Classroom: Undergraduate L2 Writers' Use of Reporting Verbs" (with Monica Kwon and Shelley Staples). *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 38 (July 2018): 86-96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.04.001>

"Building a Local Learner Corpus: Construction of a First-year ESL Writing Corpus for Research, Teaching, Mentoring, and Collaboration" (with Monica Kwon and Shelley Staples). *International Journal of Learner Corpus Research* 4, no. 1 (2018): 112-127. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ijlcr.16017.kwo>

"Examining the Effectiveness of Corpus-Informed Instruction of Reporting Verbs in L2 First-year College Writing" (with Ji-young Shin, Ashley Velázquez, Aleksandra Swatek, and Shelley Staples). *L2 Journal* 10, no. 3 (2018). <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7wb65t7>

**Randall Pennington**, ADS

*Publications:*

"Four 40-Minute English Practice Problems for the National 2019 Center Test." Tokyo: Kawai Juku Publications, 2018.

**Randall Pennington** *continued*

"Sample Problems for the 2019 National Center Test for University Entrance." Tokyo: Kawai Juku Publications, 2018.

"Five Hundred Questions: A Volume of Grammar and Word Usage in the Four Skills with Error Corrections." Tokyo: Kawai Juku Publications, 2018.

**Wakako Pennington**, ADS

*Publication:*

"From Scrabble to Scribble: Helping ESL Students Improve Note Taking Skills" (with Nonie Bell and Robert Bushong). *PTE Voices*, Winter 2018. <http://www.pentesol-east.org/resources/Documents/PTE%20VOICES%20Winter%202018.pdf>

**Sarah Petersen**, Faculty

*Presentations:*

"Action-Packed Writing: Transformation Through Nominalization" (with Ken Cranker). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

"A Dialogue With Students: Writing Enjoyment" (with Ana Kim). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Chris Pinkerton**, ADS

*Presentation:*

"Challenges in Implementing Extensive Reading in IEPs" (with Kendra Bradecich). TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Phil Rice**, Faculty

*Presentation:*

"Win-Win!: Student Generated Materials Increase Engagement" (with Nonie Bell). 10<sup>th</sup> Annual IEP Professional Development Conference – English USA 2018, Monterey, CA, January 2018.

"Playposit or Edpuzzle? Making the Right Choice for Your Class" (with Robert Bushong). Electronic Village Fair at TESOL 2018 International Convention, Chicago, IL, March 2018.

**Scott Stevens**, Director

*Publication:*

*Creating a Culturally Inclusive Campus: A Guide to Supporting International Students*, co-authored with Barbara Hoekje.



New York: Routledge, Taylor, and Frances Group, 2017.

**ADS = Academic Development Specialist**

# ALUMNI NEWS 2018

**Ahood Al Saeed**  
[ahood2sa@gmail.com](mailto:ahood2sa@gmail.com)

(Saudi Arabia '15) and **YeoReum Kim** [kiminkill@naver.com](mailto:kiminkill@naver.com) (South Korea '15) reunited coincidentally in Seoul, South Korea. Ahood was on vacation in Seoul with her family and posted a picture to Facebook. YeoReum excitedly replied to the post, and they were able to meet up for coffee.



Ahood Al Saeed and Yeo Reum Kim

**Esra Ozturk** [oztrkesra@hotmail.com](mailto:oztrkesra@hotmail.com) (Turkey '08) got married in 2017 and gave birth to adorable twins Nil and Duru this spring.



Esra Ozturk's beautiful twins, Nil and Duru

**Gamze Guzel** [gamzeg@udel.edu](mailto:gamzeg@udel.edu) (Turkey '15) completed her MBA degree in finance, graduating from UD in January. She's now working as a loan analyst in Wilmington, Delaware.

**Kelis Zulay Moreno Mosquera** [kezula@udel.edu](mailto:kezula@udel.edu) (Colombia '16) completed her Master of Laws degree this summer. She is now following her dream of working to promote racial equality and equity at the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C.



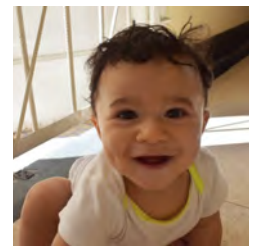
Kelis Zulay Moreno Mosquera

**Majed Alqatari** [majedn@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:majedn@rams.colostate.edu) (Saudi Arabia '16) is currently pursuing his degree in

environmental engineering at Colorado State University. This year, he was selected as an ambassador for the United Nations Youth Council on Sustainability. Majed is the first Arab to be selected for this role. He also recently participated in the 2018 Youth Summit in New York City.

**Maram Alshehri** [alshehri\\_m91@hotmail.com](mailto:alshehri_m91@hotmail.com) (Saudi Arabia '15) graduated from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law with her Master of Laws degree in international business transactions. She is currently working as a paralegal in Saudi Arabia for a year in order to get her law license, after which she plans to open her own law firm.

**María De Lourdes Mariño Fernández** [mdelourdes1984@gmail.com](mailto:mdelourdes1984@gmail.com) (Cuba '16) finished her Masters in Public Administration this year. She also found time in February to have a baby, Mateo Gabriel Miller-Marino.



Mateo Gabriel Miller-Marino

**Sezin Zengin** [sezinzengin@gmail.com](mailto:sezinzengin@gmail.com) (Turkey '09), after completing her doctoral program in economics at the University of Delaware in 2016, has returned to Turkey, where she is now an assistant professor at Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University. She has twins who turned two years old this year.

## ALUMNI WIN THIRD PLACE IN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS COMPETITION

By Kendra Bradecich

Two ELI alums, Xiang Li and Yichang Liu, and their two teammates took third place in UD's 2018 Carol A. Ammon Case Competition. The team surpassed 24 other teams in the competition in order to snag the third place slot.

The annual event, organized by the Lerner College of Business & Economics, "gives graduate student teams the opportunity to create and present recommendations for the competition's focal company," according to the college website. It provides an opportunity for graduate students to test their own abilities at analyzing and presenting in the business world.

The company for this year was Blue Horizons Dive Center, locally owned by Chris and Kelly Donnelly in Glenn Mills, Pa. The owners, along with their systems engineer, Adam Smoot, were the final judges of the competing teams, who focused on technology issues at the company.

The alums' former ELI teacher, Leslie Criston, attended the competition and talked with the students afterwards. "They told

me that the ELI, their teachers and tutors really helped them prepare for their graduate studies," Leslie said.

Congratulations to Xiang and Yichang on this impressive achievement.



Xiang Li, Yichang Liu and their teammates showed off their third place plaques.

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS FROM PAGE 21

### SABIC Foundation Year, *continued*

In the spring, and following the devastation of 2017's Hurricane Maria that ravaged Puerto Rico, Cohort 4 traveled to the island to support locals in rebuilding their houses as part of a service learning project coordinated with Scott Duarte's Film class, after which they produced a documentary about their experience. (See "Saudi students help rebuild in Puerto Rico" on Page 6.) During the season of Ramadan, SABIC scholars organized a campus-wide Iftar celebration on Old College lawn, a gathering to bring cross-cultural exchange and awareness to UD's campus. (See "Iftar: Breaking the fast together" on Page 8.)

When students from Cohort 3 graduated from the ELI in June, both Ammar Alhammadi and Abdulaziz Alessa were awarded the True Blue Hen Award for their outstanding engagement and perfect attendance throughout their 18-month tenure at the ELI. In August, when Cohort 4 completed its 10-month FY program and graduated from the ELI, Anas Alghafri was named valedictorian, and both Anas and Fahad Alqabbaa graduated with honors.

SABIC scholars from both cohorts have gone on to pursue undergraduate degrees in chemical, mechanical and environmental engineering as well as supply chain management in competitive programs across the United States, including at the University of Delaware, Northeastern University, Lehigh University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Michigan State University, North Carolina State University, the University of Georgia, the University of Tennessee, Kansas State University, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

### TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

#### International Teaching Assistants (ITA)

The ITA training program, coordinated by Ken Hyde, welcomed 32 students in its winter session and 101 students in the summer session. More than 20 countries were represented as the graduate students prepared to become teaching assistants in diverse graduate programs at UD. The students came from Albania, Algeria, Bangladesh, Chile, China, Colombia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Venezuela and Vietnam.

Departments in which the ITAs now assist range from nursing, kinesiology and mathematics to chemical engineering, biological sciences and physics.

#### Panama Bilingüe

Panama Bilingüe, an initiative of the Panamanian Ministry of Education, sponsored 18 English teachers to attend the ELI in an eight-week professional development program in January and February. The program, coordinated by Sarah Petersen, had at its core a two-part methods course designed and taught by Nicole Servais. Part One involved classroom instruction and workshops in current teaching trends, complemented by classroom observations both at the ELI and in area schools, which resulted in the formation of individual action plans to be implemented in participants' schools in Panama. Part Two took place upon the teachers' return to Panama, where they delivered weekly online reports and reflections on the progress of their plans.

#### PDPI

Thirty educators sponsored by Brazil's Professional Development Program for English Language Teachers (PDPI) lent their energy to the ELI for six weeks last winter in a teacher training program coordinated by Sarah Petersen. During their morning listening/speaking classes and their visits to area schools, the participants observed in action the teaching principles being introduced in their methodology course, taught by ELI instructors Nicole Servais and Grant Wolf. Afternoon workshops allowed the group to delve more deeply into particular teaching methods such as using drama or readers theater for instructional purposes. A U.S. culture class, taught by Phil Rice, and excursions to Lancaster County (Pa.), Washington, and New York City rounded out the PDPI teachers' cultural experience.



PDPI participants posing with workshop presenter Nigel Coplan (far right)

#### Khbrat Delaware Saudi Educator Training Program

The ELI is collaborating with UD's College of Education and Human Development in a yearlong program for Saudi education professionals. "Building Leadership for Change through School Immersion" is a part of the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education's mission to prepare Saudi K-12 educators to serve as "change agents," galvanizing all stakeholders in their educational communities in pursuit of the Kingdom's "Vision 2030" strategic plan.

In February, the ELI welcomed 48 Saudi K-12 educators in the fields of English, math, science and computer technology to complete a year of training in three core areas: English language development, best practices in teaching, and educational leadership. The scholars completed an immersion experience during the fall semester, in which they spent several hours each week in assigned K-12 schools all across northern Delaware. The program will culminate in an individual research-based action plan which each Saudi scholar will bring back to their school to implement with the support of their Ministry.

The ELI is pleased to have the collaborative support of the Colonial, Brandywine, Red Clay, Appoquinimink, and Cecil County School districts, the Odyssey Charter School and Delaware Design Lab High School, as well as several schools in the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington. (See "Khbrat Delaware" on Page 4.)



Downes Elementary School principal Patricia Prettyman (second from right) welcomed a visit from Panama Bilingüe teachers.

# HOMESTAY BONDS TURN INTO LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS

By Sarah Petersen

Chieko Murakita still refers to Helen Long as her mom, even 30 years later.

It comes as no surprise to Helen, who with her late husband, Charles, hosted upwards of 25 ELI students over 15 years.

"We took them in our house as if they were one of ours," she explained.

Chieko, who hails from Japan, stayed with the Longs during her ELI studies from May to December 1989. Her roommate at the time, Yukiko Saito, stayed for about the same duration—about the average length of time for the couple's homestay students.

One student, the Longs' very first guest, stayed considerably longer.

Helen and Charles' neighbor knocked on their door one day to ask a favor. "We have a young lady who has no place to go," Helen recalls him saying. It was Dean Loomis, UD's International Student Advisor, seeking housing for a newly arrived Chinese student.

That "young lady," Qing Wang, ended up staying with the Longs for seven years.

Before Qing had been at the

Helen Long posing in UD's physics department library



Longs' very long, Loomis was back at their door. "You have one student; you might as well have two," he said.

From then on, the Longs hosted two homestay guests at a time—some of them attending the ELI, some UD, most from China or Japan. Some were graduate students, others undergraduate. The youngest was 16 years old, an ELI student polishing her English for a year before entering a bachelor's program in electrical engineering.

"The ELI does remarkable work. These students didn't take long to learn English," Helen observed.

No matter the age or length of stay of the students, they formed warm bonds with their homestay parents. It might partly have to do with the fact that, in Helen's words, her husband "spoiled them to death."

"They couldn't ride the shuttle bus—oh, no. Charles would drive them," Helen said.

And there were other little perks, such as the time Charles drove the Longs' homestays and their friends from Delaware to Florida to visit Disney World.

With such generous gestures as these, it is no wonder that, in 1991, an envelope came in the mail



Helen and Charles with their homestay student Chieko in 1989

to the Longs containing two round-trip air tickets. The enclosed note, from their 1989 student Yukiko, read, "Getting married. Want you to come—and speak at the wedding."

Although Charles was unable to travel, Helen did indeed attend Yukiko's wedding and did indeed give a speech in her honor.

The Longs' devotion to their international students inspired Chieko to "pay it forward." In her free time, she volunteers for the international organization AFS, providing assistance to students coming from overseas to study in Japan.

Now 89, Helen no longer takes in homestay students, but she remains active. "I've retired three times," she said—but it just doesn't seem to stick. She currently works twice a week as a secretary in UD's physics department.

And, of course, there are all those phone calls and letters to keep up with from her many daughters on the other side of the world.

## BARRIER HOME HAS NO BARRIERS

By Randall Pennington

Since 2005, ELI homestay parents Greg and Martha Barrier have hosted students from countries as diverse as Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cuba, Japan, Saudi Arabia and South Korea.

Martha, a French teacher at Smyrna High School, and Greg, the pastor of Grace Church in Newark, moved to Delaware from their home state of North Carolina in 2004. Within a year, they welcomed their first ELI student.

The Barriers said that they had decided to be a part of the ELI Homestay Program for the cultural opportunity, for both themselves and their four children.

Martha said that students who stay at the Barriers' home get a bonus benefit: empathy. Martha, too, was a homestay student in her youth, traveling to France, and she recently went back for yet another homestay/study experience there. She intimately understands the challenges and issues her homestay students face.

Greg added that when students come to their house for a stay, they experience what it's really like to be in a family in America as the Barriers make it a point to have their evening meal together nearly every day.

The Barriers actively spend time with their students, seeking out places to visit and activities to try in order to help them experience American life fully. Martha recalled the time she took the family car to the automatic car wash while her homestay student was in the car. She didn't realize, until she saw the student excitedly taking photos of the carwash, that the student had never seen one before.

SEE NO BARRIERS ON PAGE 29.



Greg and Martha Barrier share their house and American culture with their students.

*In the spirit of this year's ELI Interactions theme, "Building Leadership for the University and for the World," the ELI faculty and staff would like to share some of their favorite quotations about leadership.*



## NO BARRIERS FROM PAGE 28

Greg and Martha have many more stories to tell about their experiences. Another that stands out to them was the time that a young man from Japan came to stay. One evening, the Barriers planned to go out to a sporting event, but the student couldn't go. Always one to worry about the student's meals, Martha made a very large pan of lasagna for the entire family. Before leaving, she told the young man to "help yourself" to the lasagna while they were gone. Upon returning, they were shocked to discover the student had eaten every last morsel

of the lasagna. The Barriers chalked it up to experience and decided that, much more than a loss to be upset over, the incident made a great story to laugh about.

Greg and Martha said that their experience with the Homestay Program has been an enjoyable and rewarding one. As for the students, the encouragement and loving support that they receive daily helps them to integrate, grow and break down both language and culture barriers—thanks to the Barriers.



# FESTIVAL OF NATIONS 2018

The world strutted its stuff at the ELI's 14th annual Festival of Nations on October 5. Students shared their cultures and customs through colorful exhibits and interactive demonstrations. A fashion show took the audience around the globe as faculty, staff, students and family members modeled traditional costumes from five continents. Talented individuals and groups from both the ELI and the wider UD campus wowed spectators with global music and dance.





Photos by Jessica Eastburn





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