

THE MELTING POT NEWSLETTER



Frederick Abisi Adult Education Center
408 Merrimack St, Lowell MA, 01854
www.lowelladulthoodeducation.com - 978-937-8989

February 2019 - Issue 5

HOLIDAY TREE RAFFLE

In December, AAEC held a holiday tree raffle. Students bought tickets for a chance to win a tree decorated with \$100 donated by the staff. All proceeds are donated to two local charities voted on by students and staff. Together we raised \$500.

The two charities selected to receive our donations were It's All About the Kids and the Merrimack Valley Food Bank. Each will receive \$250. Thank you for all your donations.

It's All About the Kids Foundation is a non-profit organization that helps Greater Lowell families and children with food, clothing, and gifts during the holiday season, and provide emergency assistance year-round. They work with social workers and guidance counselors in the Lowell Public Schools and other local agencies, serving over 300 families.

The Merrimack Valley Food Bank is one of four food banks in Massachusetts that serves local food pantries, shelters, and meal programs. They provide food and personal care items to emergency feeding programs serving the low-income, homeless, and hungry.

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American Heart Month

DNA MURDER MYSTERY LAB



Purple Group

The Purple group is learning about the importance of DNA fingerprinting. A "DNA fingerprint" is similar to a regular fingerprint but found within your cells. You are born with it. It is unique to you (unless you have an identical twin) and you can leave it behind wherever you go. It can be found on a skin cell, hair root cell, or even a cheek cell because your unique DNA is the same in all of your cells.

Students participated in a hands-on, simulated DNA Murder Mystery Lab. They became "Forensic Scientists" for the day and were asked to solve a murder by building DNA sequencing models from the crime scene and comparing the DNA fingerprint of the suspects to the victim's. They performed special DNA fingerprinting activities comparing fragments of bases that could be separated and analyzed to solve the mystery. The students were able to successfully crack the case and got a chance to see how important DNA is in the "real world."

Some student names and pictures have been removed from the newsletter, as some students have taken the option given at registration to request that their names and/or pictures not be used in any publications.

STUDENT INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (HSE) TESTING INFORMATION

The Massachusetts High School Equivalency credential is accepted by virtually all colleges, universities, and employers in the United States as exactly equivalent to a high school diploma. In order to earn the credential, you must take and pass either the HiSET[®] or GED[®] test. These tests are comparable in terms of cognitive complexity and rates of passing.

The Abisi Adult Education Center offers classes that will prepare students to take either exam and is an approved test center. We offer *HiSET*[®] testing appointments for both Paper Based Testing and Computer Based Testing and *GED*[®] Computer Based Testing. Testing dates are posted below and on our website at www.lowelladulthoodeducation.com.

Detailed information about the two testing options, state requirements, accommodation for testers with disabilities, eligibility requirements, and other important information can be found on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website at www.doe.mass.edu/hse/. Denise, in the office, is also available to help you.

HSE Upcoming Testing Dates:

HiSET Computer Based Testing (Thursday afternoons @ 12:30pm)	HiSET Paper Testing Dates (Friday evenings 5:00pm and 7:00pm & Saturday mornings at 8:00am, 9:30am, & 11:00am)	GED Weekend Computer Testing (Friday evenings starting at 5:15pm & Saturday mornings beginning at 8:00am)
February 7, 14, & 28 March 7, 21, & 28 April 4, 11, & 25	February 8 & 9 March 15 & 16 April 12 & 13	February 8 & 9 March 15 & 16 April 12 & 13

HISET 2019 PRICE INCREASE

ETS has announced, effective January 1, 2019, the price for the HISET exam will increase. They will also be implementing new fees and amending their retest policy.

Cost:

- \$125 for the Paper Test Battery (\$29/first subtest, \$24/remaining 4 subtests in initial battery)
- \$103.75 for the Computer Test Battery (\$24.75/first subtest, \$19.75/remaining 4 subtests in initial battery)
- Testers will have the option to select which delivery mode they want for each subject test. Prices will adjust accordingly.

Updated Policies:

- Test takers must pay a \$9 test center fee if they miss or cancel their testing appointment. Included retests must be completed within one year of original purchase. Retest credits can only be applied to the same subtest and delivery mode. A price adjustment will be necessary if the delivery mode changes.
- Test takers have three attempts per calendar year (January—December), to take any subtest.
- A test taker will **forfeit one attempt per subtest**, if they miss a scheduled appointment.

New Fees:

- \$10 Registration by phone (to create an account, register for a test)
- \$10 Reschedule a test by phone (first time no charge).
- \$25 Request a Test Score be reviewed.

More information can be found on their website, www.hiset.ets.org, or by logging onto your HiSET account.

STUDENT INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

STUDENT SUCCESS CELEBRATION

Over the last 13 years, students have achieved numerous goals. It has been a rewarding experience to celebrate and share in our students' achievements. As we approach our second Student Success Celebration of this year, we encourage everyone to review their goals. Make sure you inform your teacher of goals you have achieved since becoming a student here at AAEC and which ones you are currently working on.

On Thursday, February 7, 2019, we will recognize students who achieved goals during the months of November, December, and January. Outstanding Attendance certificates for January will also be handed out.



You could receive a certificate if you have accomplished any of the following:

<p><u>CIVIC PARTICIPATION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a learner's permit • Get a driver's license • Vote in an election • Attain Legal Permanent Residence • Pass the Citizenship exam • Open a bank account • Buy a house or condo • Start a business • Help child with homework for 4 months • Take a school/community leadership role • Volunteer at a community organization 	<p><u>EDUCATION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter Links or transition to College • Enter occupational training • Complete occupational Training • Enroll in college <p><u>EMPLOYMENT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a Job • Get a better job • Increase your earnings • Meet new job requirements
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We will have regular classes on February 7, with specific times for different groups to gather to receive their certificates. After the certificates are handed out, students can enjoy some cake and coffee.

LOWELL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER (LCHC)

Lowell Community Health Center provides high-quality, affordable health care to children and adults in the Greater Lowell area regardless of the ability to pay. LCHC offers many specialty services, including dental and vision, in addition to health care. Visit their website at www.lchealth.org for more information.

Outreach Workers

Wednesdays, February 6, 13, & 27

9:00am—12:00pm

On Wednesdays, a Lowell Community Health worker will be available to answer any questions you may have about health services and health insurance, or to schedule appointments. They will be set up outside the Main Office.



LCHC Clinic

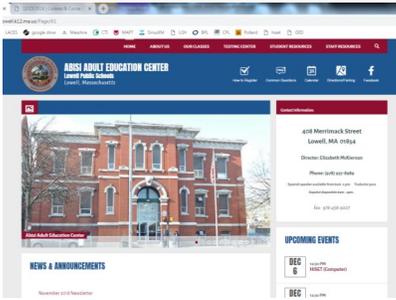
On January 17, Lowell Community Health Center held its second Mini Clinic at AAEC. We had 178 morning students participate by having their blood pressure or blood glucose levels checked, learning about health insurance benefits, and completing a survey about addiction and alcohol use.



STUDENT INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

AAEC WEBSITE

www.lowelladulthoodeducation.com



The Abisi Adult Education Center website has moved! The new website is easier to navigate through and find your favorite links. To access the new website, you must type in the website address.

If you saved it to your favorites, make sure it connects to the new URL, www.lowell.k12.ma.us/Page/61. The old Edline site, www.edline.net/pages/lowellaec, is no longer available.

REWARD CENTER



Reward Program statements will be handed out on February 13th. Your statement will have your accumulated points earned through January 31st.

The Reward Center will be open on February 28th, from 9:00am-12:30pm. It is located outside Room 3 on the first floor. You can redeem your earned points now or continue to accumulate them for a bigger reward later.

If you plan to redeem your points, please bring your updated statement with you.

If you have questions about your Reward Program statement or the Reward Center, please see Adriana.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS



“The Road to Success Begins with Good Attendance”

It is important for you to be here and be on time for your classes. Many students are waiting for the opportunity to join our classes.

Don't forget to inform your teacher if you are going to be absent or call (978) 937-8989. Leave a detailed message, stating your name, teacher, and reason for your absence. You can also send an email to:

ESOL Classes—apearson@lowell.k12.ma.us
or

HSE Classes—swaterhouse@lowell.k12.ma.us

Add Abisi Adult Education Center to your phone's contact list to make it easier for you to call us when you are going to be out.

CONVERSATION CLUB



AAEC Conversation Club

Tuesdays & Thursdays from 10:30-11:00am
Susan's Room (Main Floor, Rm 3)

The Conversation Club is a student-led club. It's a great opportunity for our AAEC students to practice their conversation skills. It can help you improve your English language skills by speaking and interacting with other learners. All students are encouraged to join.

Want more conversation opportunities? The Pollard Memorial Library hosts an *ESL Conversation Café* on Monday evenings from 6:30-8:00pm. There are guided conversations between native and non-native English speakers. It is free and no registration is required.

MISSION STATEMENT AND CULTURE OF RESPECT

Our mission is to provide each and every adult in Greater Lowell with opportunities to develop literacy and math skills needed to qualify for further education, job training and better employment, and to reach his/her full potential as a family member, productive worker, and citizen.

At the AAEC, all students and staff are considerate of each other. We learn from and respect each other's diverse talents and differences in culture, education, economic status, color, race, and religion.

STUDENT INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

AAEC RECYCLING REMINDER

Please keep our school green by helping us recycle correctly. We recycle paper, bottles, and cans properly.

A special thank you to Ana from Ann D.'s class for **volunteering** to be our recycling person.



These blue bins are not trash bins! They are used to recycle any **CLEAN** paper, cardboard, notebooks, etc. They are located in every classroom and in each hallway.



These tall labeled boxes are provided and maintained by the YWCA Green Team Recycling Program. Here you can deposit bottles and cans that were used for water, juice, soda, or sports drinks. **Empty and rinse them out first. Do not crush them.** There is one located on every floor.

STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING



Next Meeting:

Tuesday, February 5, 2019, 10:30am—11:30am
HSE Center/Computer Lab

ESOL DISTANCE LEARNING



Distance Learning is learning outside of the traditional classroom through webinars and/or online courses. Students use email to communicate with the instructors and the internet to complete assignments.

A small group of ESOL students from Meg, Susan, and Liz's classes registered with Jocelyn to participate in the Winter USA Learns Distance Learning course. This online course helps students practice their speaking, listening, vocabulary, pronunciation, reading, spelling, writing, and grammar. It offers a combination of online instruction and face-to-face classroom support. The 11:00am classes will meet on Thursdays from 9:30am-10:30am. The 9:00am classes will meet on Tuesdays from 10:30am-11:30am in the computer lab.

This course began January 29, but there is still time to join. Registration is done through email only. Send an email by February 15, stating your name, teacher, and whether you attend the 9:00am or 11:00am class. Also include a sentence telling her why you want to participate. Jocelyn's email is jmitchell@lowell.k12.ma.us. Students are required to have access to email, the internet, and must be able to commit 5 or more hours a week outside of class.

STUDENT INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

PARKING

Students driving to school are encouraged to park at the Ayotte Garage, 1 Post Office Sq, across from Lowell High School. Bring your ticket with you to class. You can validate it in the office after classes are finished.

On-street, metered parking is also available. Meters have a 2-hour parking limit Monday through Saturday, from 8:00am-6:00pm. It costs \$3.00/2 hours. The kiosk accepts cash and credit/debit cards. If a pay kiosk is not working, go to another one, and enter your space number. You may get ticketed if you don't pay the meter.

Remember:



- Do not park in the school parking lot.
- Do not park in the library parking lot.
- Do not park in the Santander Bank parking lot.
- Do not park in the Olympia Restaurant parking lot.
- Do not park in the Lowell Housing Authority parking lot.

CELL PHONE REMINDERS



Cell phones are not allowed to be used during class time. Turn it off or on silent and put it away.

When a cell phone goes off in class, it distracts everyone and takes away from everyone's learning. You are only here a short time, so make it count!

VISITOR POLICY

For the safety of all our AAEC students, outside visitors are not allowed to contact students during class time or to interrupt classes. If you forget something at home or someone needs to leave something for you, make arrangements to meet them after class. Deliveries and drop-offs are not accepted in the office. Please make sure you have all of your materials and items before you leave for school.

If there is an emergency, please speak with the office staff, and they can assist you.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYS

The weather is always unpredictable in New England. In case of inclement weather, the Lowell Public Schools may cancel school or have a delayed opening. For example, last October, stormy weather and high winds knocked out power to many Lowell schools and residents resulting in school closings or delays.



Remember, we are part of the Lowell Public Schools and follow their school closing and delay policies.

IF THERE IS NO SCHOOL IN THE LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS—MORNING AND EVENING CLASSES ARE CANCELLED.

IF THERE IS A TWO-HOUR DELAY IN THE LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS—ONLY THE 11:00AM CLASSES WILL BE HELD. EVENING CLASSES MEET AT THE REGULAR TIME.

Students who have children attending Lowell Public Schools may receive a phone call from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools informing you whether school is closed or delayed. You can also find this information by:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting our website, www.lowelladulthoodeducation.com • Looking on Facebook | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watching the local news • Listening to WCAP (980AM) or WBZ (1030AM) |
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COMMUNITY INFORMATION

POLLARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY CITIZENSHIP COURSE



10-week FREE Citizenship Preparation Courses

2019 Citizenship Class Schedule
Classes are held Wednesdays, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

- Spring** – March 6th through May (must be registered and have interview by February 28th)
- Summer** – June 5th through August
- Fall** – September 4th through November

Please note: To be eligible to take the Citizenship Preparation Course, students should be able to answer “yes” to the following questions:

- Have you been a lawful permanent resident (Green Card holder) of the U.S. for at least 5 years (3 years if married to a U.S. citizen)?
- Are you able to read, write, and speak intermediate English?
- Will you be able to attend all classes during the 10-week citizenship course?

If you are interested in registering for an upcoming citizenship class or for more information, please call Gail at 978-918-3519. (Please leave a message if she is unavailable.) You can also email Gail at gcpf42@yahoo.com.

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (VITA)

Free Tax Return Preparation

For low income individuals and families

VITA-Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

You may qualify for
EARNED INCOME CREDIT, CHILD TAX CREDIT & more.

Let our IRS Certified Volunteer Preparers help you get all the tax credits you qualify for.

HAVE TO BRING:

- SSA Card or ITIN for everyone on the return
- Government issued photo ID for you and your spouse
- All W-2s, 1099-MISC, 1099-R, 1099-INT, 1099-SSA, 1099-G Forms
- Proof of health insurance for taxpayer, spouse and all dependents (HC-1099, 1095-A, etc.)
- Student loan interest paid (1098-E)
- Child care expenses in 2016/7 includes provider's name, address, EIN or SSA number.
- Tuition payments: 1098T Form, receipts for materials and books.

COMMUNITY TEAMWORK
 17 Kirk St., 1st floor
 Available by **APPOINTMENT ONLY**.

WILL START SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS on Monday, Jan. 14th.
 Call 978-654-5725 or 978-654-5673

SATURDAY MORNINGS Feb. 2 through April 13, 2019 9 AM - 12 Noon	WEDNESDAY NIGHTS Feb. 6 through April 10, 2019 5 PM - 8 PM
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MILLS42 FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
 83 Merrimack St., Lowell
 February 2nd through April 10th
MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY 9AM to 3PM
 Available by **APPOINTMENT ONLY**.
 Call 978-328-5100

IMPORTANT YOU MUST BRING

an original or very clear copy of a Social Security Card (SSA) for yourself and for every person that will be listed on your tax return.
 The **ONLY EXCEPTION** -We can accept a Medicare Card in lieu of an SSA Card.

QUESTIONS? Call Sandra at 978-654-5725

We CANNOT prepare returns for the following:

Cancellation of Debt due to foreclosure or insolvency	Business income
Foreign students	Capital gain or loss
Military income	Rental real estate
International income	Stocks, dividends or bonds

**** FOR A FASTER REFUND ****

Have your refund electronically deposited to your bank account.
 BRING your bank's ROUTING number and your ACCOUNT number.

VITA is a free service offered to low-income individuals, and families who qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit. This is a service available **BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**.

Appointments can be scheduled by calling Community Teamwork Inc. (CTI), (978) 654-5676 or Mills42 Federal Credit Union (978) 328-5100.

Visit CTI's website, www.commteam.org/how-we-help/finance-business/vita/ for more information about the free tax return preparation service. Click on the **VITA Tax Flyer 2019** link for detailed find information to see if you qualify for these services, what you need to bring with you, where and when the services are offered, and more.

Community Teamwork Inc.
17 Kirk St, 1st Floor

<p><u>Saturday Mornings</u> 9:00am—12:00pm</p>	<p><u>Wednesday Nights</u> 5:00pm-8:00pm</p>
<p>Mills42 Credit Union 83 Merrimack St <u>Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday</u> 9:00am-3:00pm</p>	

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

MERRIMACK VALLEY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP (MVHP)

Looking to buy your first home? Project Genesis is a series of training seminars for first-time home buyers. It consists of 10 hours of instruction over four evenings. There is a fee to register for this course.

It is taught by MVHP staff as well as several volunteer real estate professionals. Instructors include lenders, attorneys, home inspectors, real estate brokers, and others.

Topics covered include an overview of the home-buying process, mortgage application process, down payment assistance, home inspections, building good credit, and more. These classes are offered in English, Spanish, and Khmer.

Register online at www.mvhp.org, or call (978) 459-8490 for English and Spanish speakers. Khmer speakers can call (978)459-6200.

If you are thinking about purchasing a multi-unit home, consider attending their Landlord Training program. It is a 4 hour course offered once a month.

Information about other programs, parking information, directions, etc. can be found on their website at www.mvhp.org.



LOWELL WINTERFEST 2019

Friday, February 22, from 5:00pm –10:00pm & Saturday, February 23, from 11:00am-10:00pm

Lowell's 18th Annual Winterfest weekend in downtown Lowell is a free family fun event. Come and listen to live entertainment by local bands, enjoy delicious foods for all your cravings, join in the winter outdoor activities like street curling and ice skating, visit local vendors in the Winter Marketplace, and more. A complete schedule of events can be found on their website, www.lowellwinterfest.com.



Upcoming Home Buyer Training Sessions

*English (2 sessions) Tuesdays & Wednesdays 6:30-9:00pm
February 19, 20, 26, & 27*

*Spanish (1 session) Saturdays 8:00am-1:00pm
February 9 & 16*

*Khmer (1 session) Saturdays 9:30am-2:00pm
February 9 & 16*

Classes are held in Rooms 113 & 114 in the Middlesex Community College Building, 33 Kearney Square, across from the Lowell Auditorium, Downtown Lowell.

Landlord Training Sessions

English Course Thursday, February 21 4:30pm-8:30pm

The Landlord course is offered once a month and held at 67 Middle Street, Downtown Lowell. To register call their office at (978) 459-8490.

HEALTH & WELLNESS @ LGH

Lowell General Hospital offers a variety of health and wellness programs and support groups for FREE!

Check out all of their program offerings online at www.lowellgeneral.org. Click on Health and Wellness. You can register online or call 1-877-544-9355.

Let's Meditate: Going Within to Your Peaceful Space

Thursday, March 28 from 6:00-8:00pm

Freedom From Smoking Program (5 week program)

Tuesdays, March 12, from 6:30pm-7:30pm

There is a \$25.00 fee for this program. Full refund of fee upon completion of the course. Must attend all 5 classes.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Kindergarten and Preschool Information Sessions

The Lowell Public Schools Family Resource Center is encouraging parents who have children eligible for Pre-school or Kindergarten in the 2019-2020 school year to attend one of their Family Information Sessions. Here you will learn more about the placement process, receive registration guidelines, and ask questions.

Date:	February 13, 2019
Time:	10:00am-11:00am or 6:00pm-7:00pm
Where:	Family Resource Center 151 Merrimack St, Lowell

If cancelled due to snow, it will be held on: February 27, from 9:00am-10:00am or 6:00pm-7:00pm)

Kindergarten and Preschool Visitation Days

All Elementary Schools in Lowell will be hosting Kindergarten and Preschool Visitation Days. Visitations can assist families in making informed decisions about school choices within zones. Please contact individual schools directly to schedule a tour, and learn general information about the Kindergarten Program and individual schools.

Tuesdays, February 26 and March 5, 2019
Thursdays, February 28 and March 7, 2019
Between 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Kindergarten and Preschool Registration Information for School Year 2019-2020

Pre-School

If you have a child who is a resident of Lowell and will be 4 years old by September 1, 2019 (born between September 2, 2014, and September 1, 2015), your child is eligible to start preschool in September 2019. Lowell Public Schools offers 1/2 day pre-school, two sessions; morning or afternoon, five days a week.

Kindergarten

If you have a child who is a resident of Lowell and will be 5 years old by September 1, 2019 (born between September 2, 2013 and September 1, 2014), your child is eligible to start Kindergarten in September 2019.

Note: If your child is currently enrolled in PK with LPS, you must come in and register for kindergarten.

Registration for Kindergarten and Preschool will take place from March 1 through April 30, 2019, Monday—Friday 8:00am-4:00pm, and until 6:00pm on Thursdays. No registrations will be taken 1 hour before closing. Please call ahead to ensure they can service you properly.

*Please note: The registration period is viewed as one day of registration. You are **NOT** required to register on the first day in order to be considered eligible. Please consider coming any time during the two-month period to avoid long lines. Contact the Early Childhood Department at (978) 674-4330 if you have any questions or go to their website, www.lowell.k12.ma.us/Domain/84.*



SCHOOL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1  American Heart Association <i>Learn and Live</i>	2 
3 SUPERBOWL   Go Patriots!	4	5 Student Advisory Council Mtg. <i>Computer Lab</i> 10:30am <hr/> ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i>	6 LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm	7 Student Success Celebration <hr/> ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i> <hr/>  CBT @ 12:30pm	8  CBT starting @ 5:15pm <hr/>  PBT starting @ 5:00pm	9  CBT starting @ 8:00am <hr/>  PBT starting @ 8:00am
10	11 ESOL Orientation 8:30 or 10:30am <i>in Susan's Rm.</i>	12 <hr/> ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i>	13 Reward Program Statements LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm	14 Valentines Day  <hr/> ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i> <hr/>  CBT @ 12:30pm	15	16
17	18  Presidents Day	19	20	21	22	23
← Winter Break—No School →						
24	25	26 ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i>	27 LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm	28 Reward Center Open Main Floor, Rm 3 9:00am-12:30pm <hr/> ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i>		