

THE MELTING POT NEWSLETTER



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

January 2019 - Issue 4

HOLIDAY TREE RAFFLE

Our annual Holiday Tree Raffle was a great success!

We raised \$500!

Congratulations to Gorget Kadees from Susan's ESOL class. She was the lucky winner of the Holiday Tree raffle. Her husband gladly accepted the tree on her behalf.

Thanks to all the volunteers for helping sell the raffle tickets and to everyone who bought them. All the money collected will be divided and donated to two local charities voted on by students and staff.

A special thank you to Khazon Ragabekova and Rosalba Garcia for helping sell tickets.



Inside This Issue:

<i>Student Information and Activities</i>	1-7
<i>Community Information</i>	8-9
<i>School Activities Calendar</i>	10



ELIZABETH K. TSAPATSARIS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION



Alexis Tsapatsaris

Every year at our graduation ceremony, the Elizabeth K. Tsapatsaris Scholarship Foundation awards three generous scholarships to our students to help with their future educational costs. These scholarships are in honor of Elizabeth Tsapatsaris, a dedicated and passionate teacher who taught at the Abisi Adult Education Center for many years.

During our holiday celebration on December 20, the Elizabeth Tsapatsaris Scholarship Foundation awarded 30 AAEC students with Market Basket gift cards. Alexis, Elizabeth's daughter, presented the gift cards to the students. All of the recipients were very appreciative.

We are grateful for the continued support and generosity of the Tsapatsaris and Curtis Families.

Congratulations to the recipients: Amina Hasso, Savorn Vorn, Manuel Guevara, Maria Baltan, Phat Huynh Nguyen, Pya Htoo, Yvrose Aristil, Elsie Ismard, Ana Rivas, Irene Toro, Maria Vergara, Micaela Vieira, Htee Clone, Thida Born, Denyse Araujo, Michealia Beal, Somphone Niyomkham, Ingrid Berlin, Diana Delgado, Vincent Mwangi, Gloria Tobon, Stephen Munyiri, Fatima Morsli, Fatma Bangura, Jean Ngnitoudem, and Likhim Mey



Cornelia Beliveau & Charlie Tsapatsaris with our Director Betty

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

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Silver bells were ringing and voices were singing during our Annual Holiday Celebration at the Abisi Adult Education Center. We had great attendance with more than 160 students participating.

Everyone had a good time participating in fun activities and singing Christmas Carols. Then we all enjoyed some sweet treats and cultural dishes. We even got a visit from the Man in Red himself!

A special thank you to Scott McGrath for leading our Christmas Caroling with his guitar and all the students who brought in food to share.



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)
January 10, 24, & 31 February 7, 14, & 28 March 7, 21, & 28	January 11 & 12 February 8 & 9 March 15 & 16	January 11 & 12 February 8 & 9 March 15 & 16

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

WINTER REGISTRATION FOR ESOL AND HSE CLASSES

ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)



ESOL classes are for adult learners whose native language is not English. Students are placed in introductory, beginning, or intermediate classes to improve their reading, writing, and speaking skills. All instruction is in English. Students must be at least 18 years old.

Registration for Morning Classes:

Where: **Abisi Adult Education Center**
408 Merrimack St, Lowell

When:

- Monday—Thursday at 9:00am
- First come, first served basis with limited registrations per day

Registration for Evening Classes:

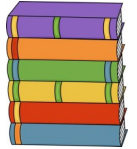
Where: **Lowell High School**
50 Father Morissette Blvd
3rd Floor, Rm 610B

When:

- Monday—Thursday at 6:00pm
- First come, first served basis with limited registrations per night.

HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (HSE)

High School Equivalency (HSE) classes help students improve their reading, writing, and math skills in order to take a high school equivalency exam, increase their career readiness skills, and/or prepare for college entrance exams.



Students ages 16-18 will need to bring a formal withdrawal form from the last school they attended with them.

Registration for Morning Classes:

Where: **Abisi Adult Education Center**
408 Merrimack St, Lowell

When: Monday—Thursday at 9:00am,
Lower Level

Registration for Evening Classes:

Where: **Lowell High School**
50 Father Morissette Blvd,
3rd Floor, Rm 657

When: Mondays & Wednesdays, at 6:00pm

If you have any questions, please refer to our website at www.lowelladulthoodeducation.com or call our main office at (978) 937-8989.

FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOPS

Thank you Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union!

In December, Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union presented a variety of financial workshops to our students. They learned about basic banking, different types of credit and credit scores, budgeting, evaluating marketing, and advertising techniques companies use to get you to purchase products and more.

STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Next Meeting:

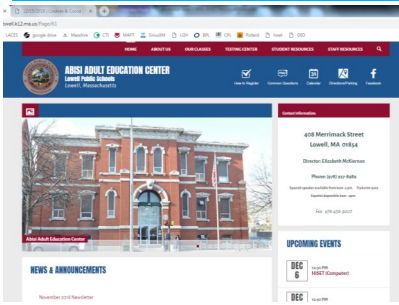
Tuesday, January 8, 2019
10:30am—11:30am
HSE Center/Computer Lab



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



On December 13, we had 26 students cash in their points for prizes at the Reward Center. Stainless steel mugs, gas gift cards, binders, and t-shirts were the most requested items.

Reward Program statements will be handed out on January 15th. Your statement will have your accumulated points earned through December 31st.

The Reward Center will be open on January 24th, 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.

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.

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

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

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, January 9, 23, & 30

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

Lowell Community Health Center (LCHC) will bring its clinic services to the AAEC students.

Thursday, January 17

From 9:00-12:30pm

Bistro Area, Lower Level



Blood Glucose (diabetes) or
Blood Pressure Screening

Get information about LCHC services, programs offered, and health insurance.






Translators are available in many languages.

MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH INSURANCE OPEN ENROLLMENT



If you are enrolled in a ConnectorCare or Health Connector plan, like *MassHealth*, now is the time when you can choose to renew or change health insurance plans for 2019. The Open Enrollment period is from November 1, 2018, through January 23, 2019. If you have *MassHealth* and received a renewal letter, please take action by the designated date on the letter. For more information, visit www.mahealthconnector.org.

Here is what you need to do:

				
Review your 2019 eligibility & plan	Compare changes for 2019	Check providers and prescriptions	Shop during Open Enrollment	Pay your monthly premium

Free in-person help is also available. Enrollment Centers have certified and trained Enrollment Assistants to help you apply for coverage, shop for plans, answer your questions about your eligibility, payments, plan details, and health care reform rules and requirements. Help from an Enrollment Assister is free for people of any income level. Please call ahead because you may need to make an appointment.

Enrollment Centers in Lowell:

Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA)	465 School St, Lowell	(978)454-6200
Lowell Community Health Center	161 Jackson St, Lowell	(978) 937-9700
Lowell General Hospital, Main Campus	295 Varnum Avenue, Lowell	(978) 937-6000

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 your learning. You are only here a short time, 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:

- Visiting our website, www.lowelladulthoodeducation.com
- Looking on Facebook
- Watching the local news
- Listening to WCAP (980AM) or WBZ (1030AM)

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

PLASTIC SINGLE-USE BAG BAN

Plastic single-use bags are now banned in Lowell and Westford for retailers that are 3,000 square feet or larger (Market Basket, Target, Walmart, Hannaford, etc.).

You can bring your own recyclable/reusable bags to use or purchase them at the stores checkout for an additional cost.

Other cities and towns putting this ban into effect in 2019:

Tewksbury in April
Andover in March
Wilmington in May



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.

Citizenship Corner at The Pollard Memorial Library

The Pollard Memorial Library has many resources available for anyone interested in becoming a U.S. Citizen. Their *Citizenship Corner* is located in the Reference Room on the 2nd floor. Here you will find citizenship preparation books, civics and vocabulary flashcards, CD's & DVD's, and free information on the citizenship process.

You can also:

- * Schedule a free informational appointment to discuss the general citizenship process and how best to prepare for the citizenship test (Please note: No legal advice is given or offered at appointments).
- * Visit the Virtual Citizenship Corner at <https://lowelllibrary.org/services/citizenship>. There you will find information about eligibility requirements, applying for citizenship, information on filing a Fee Waiver, a reduced fee request, and preparing and practicing for the Citizenship Test.

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.



Upcoming Home Buyer Training Sessions

English *Tuesdays & Wednesdays*
 (2 sessions) 6:30-9:00pm
 January 8, 9, 15, & 16 or
 January 29, 30, & February 5 & 6

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

Khmer *Saturdays*
 (1 session) 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 *Tuesday, January 22 or 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.

LOWELL RECYCLES

Christmas Tree Drop-off

Christmas Tree Disposal

December 26, 2018-January 19, 2019

There is no City curbside pick-up for Christmas trees in Lowell. Residents need to drop them off at one of the designated drop-off locations.



Remember to remove all the lights and ornaments. No Wreaths or Swags.

Drop-Off Locations

Acre	North Common— 413 Fletcher St
Back Central	South Common—200 South St
Belvidere	Cawley Stadium—512 Douglas Rd or Shedd Park—433 Rogers St
Centralville	Gage Field—78 Thirteenth St
Highlands	Hadley Park—1650 Middlesex St or Callery Park—200 B St
Pawtucketville	Elks Club—40 Old Ferry Rd
Sacred Heart	Ventura Field— 303 Boston Rd

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

January 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<p>1</p>  <p>No School</p>	<p>2</p> <p>LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>
6	7	<p>8</p> <p>Student Advisory Council Mtg. Computer Lab 10:30am</p> <hr/> <p>ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Susan's Room</p>	<p>9</p> <p>LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Outstanding Attendance Certificates</p> <hr/> <p>ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Susan's Room</p> <hr/> <p>ETS HiSET CBT @ 12:30pm</p>	<p>11</p>  <p>CBT starting @ 5:15pm</p> <hr/> <p>ETS HiSET PBT starting @ 5:00pm</p>	<p>12</p>  <p>CBT starting @ 8:00am</p> <hr/> <p>ETS HiSET PBT starting @ 8:00am</p>
13	14	<p>15</p> <p>Reward Program Statements</p> <hr/> <p>ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Susan's Room</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>LCHC Clinic 9:00am—12:30pm</p> <hr/> <p>ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Susan's Room</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
20	<p>21</p>  <p>Martin Luther King Jr. Day No School</p>	<p>22</p> <p>ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Susan's Room</p>	<p>23</p> <p>LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Reward Center Open Main Floor, Outside of Rm 3</p> <hr/> <p>ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Susan's Room</p> <hr/> <p>ETS HiSET CBT @ 12:30pm</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
27	28	<p>29</p> <p>ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Susan's Room</p>	<p>30</p> <p>LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm</p>	<p>31</p> <p>ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Susan's Room</p>	<p>February 1</p>  <p>National WEAR RED Day American Heart Association. Learn and Live.</p>	<p>February 2</p>  <p>HAPPY Groundhog Day</p>