

THE MELTING POT NEWSLETTER



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

March 2019 - Issue 6

GIVING BACK



On Tuesday, February 5th, our AAEC Student Advisory Council presented a check for \$250 to *It's All About the Kids* co-founder and ESOL Teacher, Carrie Carolan. *It's All About the Kids* was one of the organizations students selected to benefit from the proceeds from the holiday tree raffle. It is a non-profit organization helping Greater Lowell families and children with food, clothing, and gifts during the holiday season, and providing emergency assistance year-round. They work with the social workers and guidance counselors from the Lowell Public Schools and other local agencies. With the help of community members and local businesses, they serve more than 300 families each year.

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Spring is in the air!

SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYS

If there is **NO SCHOOL** in the Lowell Public Schools—All Morning and Evening classes are cancelled.

If there is a **one-hour delay**, there will be no 9:00am ESOL classes. HSE classes will begin at 10:00am. Evening classes will meet at the regularly scheduled time.

If there is a **two-hour delay**, there will be no 9:00am ESOL classes. HSE classes will begin at 11:00am. Evening classes will meet at the regularly scheduled 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)

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

STUDENT SUCCESS CELEBRATION

Congratulations to all the students who have achieved some of their goals and to everyone who had outstanding attendance during the month of January.

Our Second Student Success Celebration was held on February 12th. Seventy-two students were recognized for goals they had achieved during the months of November, December, and January.

Ninety-eight students were awarded certificates for having outstanding attendance in their regular classes, and eleven students were awarded certificates in Paul’s Civics and Citizenship course. These students missed no more than 2 days of classes in January.

Everyone enjoyed cake and coffee during the celebration.



Certificates Awarded for Goal Achievement

Getting a Job	12
Getting a Better Job or Increase Earnings	15
Meeting a New Job Requirement	2
Entering/Completing Occupational Training	2
Entering the LINKS Program @ MCC	1
Opening a Bank Account	8
Filing/Attaining Legal Residency	3
Passing the Citizenship Exam	6
Getting a Driver’s License	6
Getting a Learner’s Permit	3
Volunteering at a Community Org. or School	4
Helping Child with Homework for 4 months	4
Taking a School Leadership Role	5
Buying a House	1

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, March 6, 13, 20, & 27
9:00am—12:00pm

Stop by the Main Office to speak with a LCHC Outreach worker to learn about their health services, get information about health insurance, or schedule an appointment. They are here on Wednesdays from 9:00am-12:00pm.

ABISI ADULT EDUCATION ANNUAL FIELD TRIP



Every year in May, AAEC goes on a field trip. We will leave the school at 9:00am and return by 2:00pm. Student Representatives and teachers will work together to select possible places where we can go this year. The school will pay for transportation and provide a bagged lunch. Students pay for the admission fee, if any.

Last year, we went to the JFK Library and Museum in Boston. If you have an suggestion on where to go this year, share it with your class representatives.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP FIELD TRIP



On Wednesday, February 27, fifteen students in the Civics and Citizenship class went on a field trip to the USCIS Field Office in Lawrence, MA to learn about the process of applying for citizenship.

John McCarthy, Community Relations Officer for the USCIS Boston District, and Ana Campas, Immigration Service Officer at the USCIS Lawrence Office, presented valuable information about the citizenship process to our students. They toured the facility and became familiar with where to go for their scheduled appointments. They visited the biometric room where the fingerprinting and photos take place, the waiting area where applicants wait to be called, and an interviewing office where the interviews with an immigration service officer are conducted.



During the tour, Officers Campos and McCarthy explained every relevant aspect related to the different processes, and how and why people use the office's services. This experience was meant to ease the anxiety and stress that accompany any immigration process. Many students found the information useful, especially those that are currently in the process of applying for citizenship.

The USCIS Field Office is located at 2 Mill St, Lawrence, MA. This office is open from 7:00am-4:30pm, Monday through Friday. In order to visit this office or to speak with an immigration services officer, you must have: an appointment scheduled by USCIS, make an *InfoPass* appointment at www.my.uscis.gov/en/appointment, or use the kiosks available in the lobby at the USCIS Lawrence office.



USCIS REMINDER: AVOID IMMIGRATION SCAMS

Many people offer help with immigration services. Unfortunately, not all are authorized to do so. While many of these unauthorized practitioners mean well, many of them are out to cheat you. This is against the law. To learn more about avoiding scams and how to protect yourself, visit their website at www.uscis.gov/avoid-scam.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS



Daylight Savings Time Begins
at 2:00am on
March 11, 2018
 (Turn clocks ahead 1 hour.)



Don't forget to change the batteries in your smoke detectors!



STUDENT INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

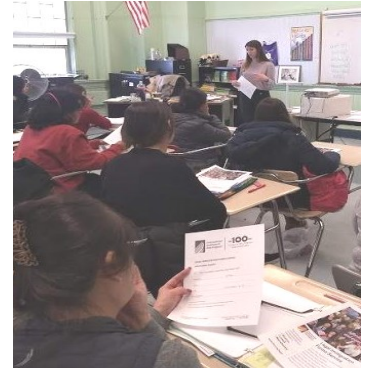
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEW ENGLAND



Thank you Bethany and Chrisanta from the International Institute of New England (IINE) for presenting an information session to our AAEC students on the Legal Immigration Form Service the IINE provides.



International
Institute of
New England



The International Institute of New England’s Legal Immigration Forms Services program is designed to deliver low-cost legal services, expert advice, and guidance to immigrants living in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Their professional staff is available in Boston, MA; Lowell, MA; and Manchester, NH.

Here are some of the services they can help you with:

- Green Card Applications
- Refugee Travel Document
- Employment Authorization Document
- U.S. Citizenship Application
- Marriage Green Card Applications

For detailed information about the International Institute’s services, visit their website at www.iine.org, or call (978)459-9031.

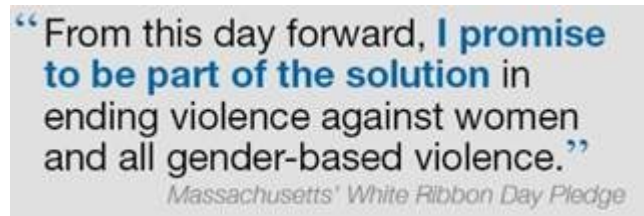
WHITE RIBBON DAY CAMPAIGN

Thursday, March 7, 2019 @ 12:00pm
City Hall Lobby
375 Merrimack St, Lowell

Please join AAEC staff, students, the Lowell City Manager’s Task Force Against Domestic Violence and members of our community, in honoring the annual White Ribbon Day Campaign. Show your support and take the pledge to help end gender-based violence and violence against women.

The White Ribbon Campaign is part of an international campaign created in 1991 by a small group of Canadian men on the second anniversary of one man’s massacre of 14 women in Montreal. Since then, men have worn white ribbons as a pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women and girls.

For more information, visit the campaign’s website, whiteribbonday.janedoe.org.



Domestic Violence Hotlines:

Alternative House:
24hr Hotline 1-888-291-6228
Local Line 978-454-1436

Massachusetts Hotline:
Safelink 1-877-785-2020

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-7233



STUDENT INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING



Next Meeting:

Tuesday, March 12, 2019, 10:30am—11:30am
HSE Center/Computer Lab

REWARD CENTER

Reward Program statements will be handed out on March 13th. Your statement will have your accumulated points earned through February 28th.

The Reward Center will be open on March 28th and April 30th, from 9:00am-12:30pm. In June, we will have a big End of the Year Sale. The Reward Center 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. Points can be accumulated until May 31st.

If you plan to redeem your points, please bring your updated statement with you. There are many rewards to choose from. Check out these recently added items: bottle/can opener, lip balm, USB keychain, mechanical pencil, and pencil sharpener.

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.

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)

March 7, 21, & 28
 April 4, 11, & 25
 May 9, 16, & 23

HiSET Paper Testing Dates

(Friday evenings 5:00pm and 7:00pm
 & Saturday mornings at 8:00am,
 9:30am, & 11:00am)

March 15 & 16
 April 12 & 13
 April 26 & 27
 May 17 & 18

GED Weekend Computer Testing

(Friday evenings starting at 5:15pm
 & Saturday mornings beginning
 at 8:00am)

March 15 & 16
 April 12 & 13
 April 26 & 27
 May 17 & 18

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



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.

STUDENT INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

LOWELL WOMEN'S WEEK

March 8, is International Women's Day!



Lowell Women's Week is held in honor of International Women's Day. Many events will be held from March 3 through March 11, 2019. These events take place throughout the city and recognize women's achievements, struggles, and amazing contributions to our community. Most are free and open to the public.

One series of events will be hosted by Community Teamwork Inc. (CTI) Financial Education Center. They will be offering a financial workshop for women called *Financially Hers: Building Assets—Building Me*. This workshop helps women to be strong and independent financial decision makers.

CTI's Lowell Women's Week workshops on Building Assets will be held at their Financial Education Center, 165 Merrimack St, Lowell:

Saturday, March 9 from 10:00-11:30am	Introduction to Investing
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Space is limited and reservations are required to attend each of this workshop. You can register by calling (978) 654-5673. Visit lowellwomensweek.org for a list of all the events taking place this weekend.

CTI's Finances and Business services help teach people how to create and manage household budgets, save money, and live a more vibrant and stable life. Their education center offers many workshops and trainings throughout the year. Find out more about these services by visiting their website at www.commteam.org.



LOWELL'S MEDICATION AND SHARPS DISPOSAL DAY

UNWANTED MEDICATION AND SHARPS DISPOSAL DAY

Wednesday, March 13, 2019
 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm
 Lowell Health Department
 341 Pine Street, Lowell

Approved by Aging Dept. of Shosholby Distribution on 3/13/14

WE ACCEPT:

- Prescription Medications
- Over-the-Counter Medications
- Liquid Medications
- Inhalers
- Syringes
- Lancets
- Pen and Pump Needles
- Narcan (Naloxone) Nasal Spray

Please remove pills from their bottles and place in a plastic bag.

Residential Disposal Only - No Commercial Disposal.



Free Service! Call 978-674-4304 for more info.



Lowell Health Department, Substance Use and Prevention Division
 978-674-4304 | www.LowellMA.gov

When was the last time you cleaned out your medicine cabinet? Unused prescription medications are often forgotten about, stolen, and sold on the streets. The #1 place teens report getting drugs for the first time is in the family medicine cabinet. Get them out of your home if they are not currently being used for a medical condition!

Do not flush your unused medications down the toilet, rinse them down the sink, or throw them in the trash. Dispose of them properly.

On Wednesday, March 13, the City of Lowell will hold an Unwanted Medication and Sharps Disposal Day. It will provide an opportunity for residents to drop off unwanted medications and sharps. This event will be held at the Lowell Health Department from 2:00pm-6:00pm.

Visit the Lowell Health Department's website, www.lowellma.gov/275/Health, for more information on other places you can discard your unwanted medicines and sharps.

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

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

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER—LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Kindergarten and Preschool Registration Information for the 2019-2020 School Year

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.*



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

<i>English (2 sessions)</i>	<i>Tuesdays & Wednesdays 6:30-9:00pm March 19, 20 , 26, 27</i>
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<i>Spanish (1 session)</i>	<i>Saturdays 8:00am-1:00pm March 6 & 13</i>
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<i>Khmer (1 session)</i>	<i>Saturdays 9:30am-2:00pm March 6 & 13</i>
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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

<i>English</i>	<i>Thursday, March 21, 4:30pm-8:30pm</i>
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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.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

March 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5 <hr/> ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i>	6 LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> Attendance Certificates</div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i></div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> HiSET</div> <div style="text-align: center;">CBT @ 12:30pm</div>	8	9
10  "Spring Ahead." Set your clocks one hour ahead.	11 ESOL Orientation 8:30 or 10:30am in Susan's Rm.	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">12 SAC Mtg. 10:30am <i>Computer Lab</i></div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">MCC-LINKS Presentation for HSE Students</div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i></div>	13 Reward Program Statements LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm	14 π Happy Pi Day ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i>	15  CBT starting @ 5:15pm  PBT starting @ 5:00pm	16  CBT starting @ 8:00am  PBT starting @ 8:00am
17  St Patrick's Day	18	19	20  First Day of Spring LCHC Outreach 9:00am—12:00pm	21  HiSET CBT @ 12:30pm	22 <hr/> NECC's Transitions to College Presentation for HSE Students	23
24 <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;">31</div>	25 New HSE Students ESOL Orientation 8:30 or 10:30am in Susan's Rm.	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 ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Susan's Room</i>	29	30