THE MELTING POT NEWSLETTER



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

March 2020 - Issue 5

NEW PHONE SYSTEM AT AAEC



When you call our school, you will hear a new voice greeting. It says: "Thank you for calling the Abisi Adult Education Center. Your call may be recorded for the safety of the students and staff."

To report a student absence—Press "1".

In your message, please state your first and last name, and S-P-E-L-L your last name. Tell us the reason for your absence.

- <u>ESOL Students</u>: Indicate if you are a student in the 9:00am, 11:00am, or evening classes and the name of your teacher. For example, *"My name is Jose Martin, M-A-R-T-I-N. I am sick today. I am in the 9:00 am class. My teacher is Ann."*
- <u>HSE Students</u>: Indicate whether you are an evening or morning student. For example, *"My name is Susan Smith, S-M-I-T-H. I am working an extra shift this morning and will not be in. I am a morning student."*

You can also report an absence through email:

ESOL Classes—apearson@lowell.k12.ma.us **HSE Classes**—bgoodridge@lowell.k12.ma.us

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Sunday, March 8, @ 2:00am.





PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION DAY



Tuesday, March 3, 2020 Massachusetts Presidential Primary Election Day

If you participated in the election by casting your vote or volunteering at a polling station, please let your teacher know. You may be eligible for rewards points!

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 SUCCESS CELEBRATION

Congratulations to all the students who achieved a goal and to everyone who had outstanding attendance during the month of January.

Our second Student Success Celebration was held on February 11th. During the celebration, eighty-three students received certificates for achieving goals during the months of November, December, and January. One hundred eight students in their regular classes, sixteen students in our Civics and Citizenship class, and eighteen student in our Conversation Class and Conversation Club were recognized and awarded certificates for having outstanding attendance. These students missed no more than 2 days of classes in January.

After the ceremony, everyone enjoyed cake and coffee.

Certificates Awarded for Goal Achievement:

Getting a Job	3	Getting a Learner's Permit	3
Becoming a MassHire Career Center Member	7	Volunteering at a Community Org. or School	4
Creating or Updating a Resume	19	Helping Child with Homework for 4 months	1
Enrolling in College	1	Taking a School Leadership Role	17
Opening a Bank Account	4	Buying a House	2
Passing the Citizenship Exam	1		



CLASSROOM LEARNING

Carrie's ESOL classes celebrated Valentine's Day by creating cards for each other. Students brought in special treats to share.



Students in Mary Gail's Math class worked in small groups to solve a variety of math word problems.





ESOL TECH CORNER

Kathy has been working with our ESOL students in the computer lab. She meets with each class for three weeks at a time. In her class, students are introduced to different websites to help them develop basic computer skills, vocabulary, grammar, and listening skills.

Kathy created a webpage for students to access the websites introduced in class. It lists all the links so students can continue to practice at home.

Eglishtech.weebly.com



ESOL CONVERSATION CLASS

Reminder for Meg and Susan's Students!

Conversation Class Participants

When:	Wednesdays starting January 8th 9:30-10:45 am or 11:00 am—12:15 pm
Where:	AAEC Room 12

All students must have good attendance in their regular ESOL class to participate and be able to attend either before or after their class.

ESOL CONVERSATION CLUB

Carrie, Ann, and Liz's ESOL Students

Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30-11:00am in Liz's Room

This is a great opportunity for you to practice your English language skills by speaking and interacting with other learners. No registration is needed.

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 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 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.lowelladulteducation.com.*

Detailed information about the two testing options, state requirements, accommodations 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	HiSET Paper Testing Dates	GED Weekend Computer Testing
(Thursday afternoons @ 12:30pm)	(Friday evenings 5:00pm and 7:00pm & Saturday mornings at 8:00am, 9:30am, & 11:00am)	(Friday evenings starting at 5:15pm & Saturday mornings beginning at 8:00am)
March 5, 12,& 19 April 2, 16, & 30	March 6 & 7 April 3 & 4	March 6 & 7 April 3 & 4

PARKING

Students are encouraged to park in the Ayotte Garage, 1 Post Office Sq, across from Lowell High School.



On-street, metered parking is also available. Meters have a

2-hour parking limit Monday through Saturday, from 8:00 am-6:00 pm. It costs \$3.00/2 hours. The kiosk accepts cash and credit or debit cards. If a pay kiosk is not working, go to another one, and enter your space number. Do not forget to pay the meter. You may get ticketed.



Do not park in the school lot.

IMMIGRATION LAW WORKSHOP

The Unauthorized Practice of Immigration Law, also known as "Notario" fraud, can be devastating and costly to its victims.

In March, the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office will be presenting a workshop to our ESOL students. Here they will learn important information and be given tips on how to avoid immigration scams.



REWARD PROGRAM

February Reward Program Statements will be given out on March 24th in class. Your statement will have your accumulated points earned through February 29th.

The Reward Center will be open on March 26th, from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm. 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.

Abisi Adult Educa Reward Pro	
Student Name: Pedro Perez	
Class: D-DD	
Stateme Month: Nov	
Summary	
Previous Balance	2
Points Earned	8
Points Redeemed	0
New Balance	10
Activity	
Description	Amount
Goals	3
Attendance	5
	-
Your points are Nor They are valid for the curr Remember redeem your poin school year or before le You can redeem your points in This statement is part of the Ren Betweeting	ent school year only ts before the end of the ming the program! the AAEC Reward Cents ard Program at Abisi Adu

The Rewards Center will have many items for you to choose from. 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 or your teacher.

CELL PHONE REMINDER

Cell phones ringing and buzzing during class distracts everyone.



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 11:00am. 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.

School cancellation or delay information can be found by:

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



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

In February, we asked 172 AAEC students to complete a short survey about mental health. Your responses will help us develop and plan Mental Health Awareness programs at AAEC. Below are the results from the survey.



Do you know the signs or symptoms of these mental health conditions?











MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behavior could be affected. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse
- Family history of mental health problems

Last month, teachers Eileen and Gail came into each class and showed a short video to all the classes titled *Be the One to Make a Difference*.

This video emphasized how "**you can be the one to make a difference in someone's life.**" Statistics show many people who suffer from mental illness or addiction won't ask for help and only 41% will get the treatment they need.

Other Mental Health Statistics:

- 1 in 5 Americans experience a Mental Health disorder in a single year.
- More than 20 million Americans ages 12 and older will face an addiction.
- Almost half of American adults will experience a mental illness during the course of their lifetime.

Sources: mentalhealth.org and www.mentalhealthfirstsid.org

WHY WE SHOULDN'T **BE AFRAID TO TALK ABOUT OUR MENTAL HEALTH** @BELIEVEPHQ Because talking about mental health shows great courage Because by hiding Because talking about mental health mental health shows problems can make 55 great strength things worse Because it is okay to Because not everyone show you are struggling will judge you or want some help Because it is okay to Because there is express how you are nothing wrong with thinking or feeling experiencing a mental health problem Because 1 in 4 of us experience a mental health problem Because there is Because it is okay to not nothing to be feel okay ashamed of

Lowell Community Health Center 978-937-9700

LCHC offers a wide range of Behavioral Health Services for adults, adolescents, and children.

LOWELL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Do you have a question about health services?

Community Health Workers from Lowell Community Health Center will be at AAEC each month, from 9:00 am-12:00 pm. They can help you learn about their health services, get information about health insurance, or schedule an appointment. You can find them outside the Main Office on the First Floor.



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Lowell Community Health Workers will be here on Wednesday, March 11th.

CENSUS 2020

The 2020 Census counts every person living in the United States on April 1—no matter where they are from, why they are here in the United States, and whether or not they are documented. This includes temporary workers, international students, and workers on assignment from overseas.

Everyone <u>must</u> participate in the Census. In March 2020, Census letters will be mailed out. It is easy to complete and only takes a few minutes.

The Abisi Adult Education Center is a designated partner of the U.S. Census and will be working with the U.S. Census Bureau to make sure our students are counted. AAEC staff will be available in the computer lab from Monday, March 16 to Friday, March 27 to help students complete their census information.

Census Timeline Your household will receive a letter in the mail from the Census Bureau with a unique **MARCH 12-20** identification number that is tied to your home address. Complete the questionnaire by Census Day on April 1, 2020. You can complete your census questionnaire either online or by phone. Example of the letter you will receive: Census 2020 Dear Resident: This is your invitation to respond to the **2020 Census**. We need your help to count everyone in the United States by providing basic information about all aduits, children, and babies living or staying at this address. Censu: 2020 Results from the 2020 Census will be used to: Direct billions of dollars in federal funds to local communities for schools, roads, and other public services. OFFICIAL BUSINESS Penalty for Private Us Your response is required by law. · Help your community prepare to meet transportation and emergency readiness needs Determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and your political representation at all levels of government. Resident 408 Merrimack St Lowell MA 01854 Your Census ID is: Respond by April 1 at [url removed] [Census ID removed] նակակակակակակակակակակակական The Census Bureau is using the internet to securely collect your information. Responding online helps us conserve natural resources, save taxpayer money, and process data more efficiently. If you are unable to complete your 2202 Census questionnaire online, we will send you a paper questionnaire in a few weeks for you to complete and mail back. The census is so important that your response is required by law, and your answers are kept completely confidential. If you do not respond, we will need to send a Census Bureau interview to your home to collect your answers in person. If you need help completing your 2020 Census questionnaire, please call toll-free (phone number removed). Thank you for your prompt response. Reminder postcards, letters, and guestionnaires will be sent out to households who have March 16-April 27 not responded. If a household does not respond to any of the invitations, a census taker will follow up in **MAY 2020** person sometime between May 13 and July 31 at your home.

Remember, taking part in the Census is:

- **Important.** It will decide how much money the government will give our programs, community organizations, businesses, schools, Representatives in Congress, and more.
- **Safe.** Your personal information is safe, secure, and protected by federal law. Your answers can only be used to produce statistics—**they cannot be used against you in any way**.
- **Easy.** It takes approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The online questionnaire will be available in 12 non-English languages (Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Arabic, Tagalog, Polish, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Japanese). Help will also be available by phone in some of these languages.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

MASSACHUSETTS HANDS FREE LAW

Massachusetts law prohibits operators of motor vehicles from using **any** electronic devices, including mobile telephones, unless the device is used in hands-free mode.

- Can only use electronic devices and mobile phones in hands-free mode.
- Not permitted to hold or support any electronic device/phone.
- Cannot touch phone <u>except</u> to activate the hands-free mode and can only enable when the device is installed or properly mounted to the windshield, dashboard, or center console in a manner that does not block the operation of the motor vehicle.
- Activation of GPS navigation is permitted when the device is installed or properly mounted.
- Handheld use is allowed only if the vehicle is both stationary and not located in a public travel lane or a bicycle lane, but **is not allowed at red lights or stop signs.**

Penalty for violating the hands-free law: 1st offense - \$100 fine.

WHITE RIBBON DAY

Wednesday, March 4th at 12:00 pm

City Hall Lobby 375 Merrimack St, Lowell

Please join 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.



LOWELL LIBRARY

FINES UP

T0 \$500

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
3	4	5
March Lit	orary Computer W	orkshops
10	11	12
2:00—3:00 PM Intro to PCs- Computer Workshop at Senior Center REGISTER	11	2:00—3:00 PM Internet & Browsers- Computer Workshop at Senior Center REGISTER
17	18	19
2:00—3:00 PM Email - Computer Workshop at Senior Center REGISTER		2:00—3:00 PM Microsoft Word - Computer Workshop at Senior Center REGISTER
24	25	26
2:00–3:00 PM Cell Phones - Computer Workshop at Senior Center REGISTER		2:00–3:00 PM Digital Photos - Computer Workshop at Senior Center REGISTER
31 2:00–3:00 PM Microsoft Excel- Computer Workshop at Senior Center REGISTER		

Class space is limited. You can register over the phone at (978) 674-4121, in person at the second floor Information Desk of the Main Library, or online at www.lowelllibrary.org.

HANDS-FREE

WHILE DRIVING

T'S THE LAW

FEBRUARY 23

EOPSS (massDOT

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS - REGISTRATION INFORMATION



Pre-School Registration Dates March 16-27, 2020 Kindergarten Registration Dates March 30-April 9

Children must be 4 by September 1st to be eligible for pre-school.

Children must be 5 by September 1st to register for kindergarten.



What Documents do I need to enroll my Child?

- Child's birth certificate
- Child's immunizations and current physical
- Parent's photo identification

• Proof of Lowell residency (we accept the following--current gas, electric, or cable bill or current lease or mortgage).

Registration takes place at the Family Resource Center, 155 Merrimack St, downtown Lowell. For more information you can call the Family Resource Center at (978) 674-4321 or go to their website, www.lowell.k12.ma.us/FRC.

COMMUNITY TEAMWORK INC.

Free Tax Return Preparation

Community Teamwork Inc. will be offering a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program at their Financial Education Center. This program offers free tax help to people who generally make \$56,000 or less, persons with disabilities, and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals.

This service is available by **APPOINTMENT ONLY!** Appointments can be scheduled through Community Teamwork Inc. is website or by calling (978) 654-5673.

Check out CTI's website for detailed information about this free tax return preparation service.

www.comteam.org/how-we-help/finance-business/vita/





MERRIMACK VALLEY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Project Genesis is a series of training classes for first-time home buyers. It consists of 10 hours of instruction over four evening sessions. These classes are offered in English, Spanish, and Khmer.

Class registration, locations, and other information can be found on their website, *www.mvhp.org, o*r you can call (978) 459-8490. Khmer speakers call (978)459-6200.

Home Buyer Training Sessions			
English	March 17, 18, 24 & 25 April 7, 8, 14 & 15		
Spanish	April 4 & 11		
Khmer	April 11 & 18		

COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

LOCAL EVENTS



International Women's' Day- March 8!

LOWELL WOMEN'S WEEK 2020 - Celebrating 25 Years!

March 1st -14, 2020

Lowell Women's Week honors the women who have come before us to the woman of today. Events will take place at locations throughout the city and recognize women's achievements, struggles, and extraordinary contributions to our community.

All Lowell Women's Week events are free and open the public, unless otherwise noted. All events and locations can be found on their website: *Lowellwomensweek.org.*





Lowell Walks is back in 2020! This year, they have partnered with the Lowell National Historical Park to offer 25 different Saturday morning walks. Below is a list of the upcoming walks in March. They all start at the Lowell National Park Visitor Center.

- **March 7 at 10am**: *Women's Activism in Lowell Walk* with Resi Polixa, Allison Horrocks, Anne Mulvey, and Sheri Denk
- March 14 at 10am: Irish Acre Walk with Dave McKean
- March 28 at 10am: *Mill Girl Literature Walk* with Allison Horrocks and Bridget Marshall

school activities calendar March 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 No School Massachusetts Presidential Primary Day	4 White Ribbon Event @ City Hall 12:00pm	5 BT @ HiSET CBT @ 12:30pm Civics/Citizenship 9:30 or 11:00am	6 CBT starting @ 5:15pm	7 CBT starting @ 8:00am BET Starting @ 8:00am
8 "Spring Ahead." Set your clocks one hour ahead.	9 ESOL Orientation 8:30 or 10:30am in Susan's Rm. ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Liz, Ann, & Carrie's Class Room 2	10 Civics/Citizenship 9:30 or 11:00am	11 LCHC Outreach 9:00am -12:00pm ESOL Conversation Class 9:30 or 11:00am Meg & Susan's students Room 12 with Gail ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Liz, Ann, & Carrie's Class	12 I HISET. CBT @ 12:30pm Outstanding Attendance Certificates Civics/Citizenship 9:30 or 11:00am	13 MA Attorney General's Immigration Law Workshops ESOL Classes	14 π Happy Pi Day
15	ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Liz, Ann, & Carrie's Class Room 2	17 St Patrick's Day Civics/Citizenship 9:30 or 11:00am	18 ESOL Conversation Class 9:30 or 11:00am Meg & Susan's students Room 12 with Gall ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Liz, Ann, & Carrie's Class	19 In HISET CBT @ 12:30pm First Day of Spring Civics/Citizenship 9:30 or 11:00am	20	21
22	23 ESOL Orientation 8:30 or 10:30am in Susan's Rm. ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Liz, Ann, & Carrie's Class Room 2	24 Reward Program Statements Civics/Citizenship 9:30 or 11:00am	25 ESOL Conversation Class 9:30 or 11:00am Meg & Susan's students Room 12 with Gail ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am Liz, Ann, & Carrie's Class	26 Reward Center Open Main Floor, Rm 3 9:00am-12:30pm Civics/Citizenship 9:30 or 11:00am	27	28
29	ESOL Conversation Club 10:30-11:00am <i>Liz, Ann, & Carrie's Class</i> <i>Room 2</i>	31 Civics/Citizenship 9:30 or 11:00am				