



# Helping ELLs Engage with and Navigate their New Communities

# Agenda

Introduction

Panel

- **Civics Field Trips**, Kenosha Literacy Council
- **Enrichment Outings & Guest Speakers**, International Institute of Wisconsin
- **Adult Education Navigators**, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
- **Community Resources**, SS Michael & Rose Literacy Program

Questions for the Panel

Next steps



# Purpose

- ✓ **Explore replicable practices** in engaging ELL learners in their communities
- ✓ **Create opportunities for mentorship and partnership** to develop community engagement across the state

# Panelists

**Cassie Christianson**, Program Coordinator, Kenosha Literacy Council

**Alek Georgeson**, ELL Program Coordinator, International Institute of Wisconsin

**Shelley Karnz**, Adult Education Navigator, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

**Deborah Lindberg**, ESL Program Coordinator, SS Michael and Rose Literacy Program



# Civics Field Trips

**Cassie Christianson**, Program Coordinator  
Kenosha Literacy Council



# Community Literacy

Ability to:

- engage in the community,
- access every day services, and
- participate in community activities.

More likely to:

- become leaders within their family and the community,
- acquire life skills that relate directly to their needs as community members, and
- help the community as a whole grow stronger.

# Experiential Learning

Actively engages students

- ✓ learn by doing
- ✓ reflect on the experience

Experiential learning:

- makes learning relatable
- increases the effectiveness of learning
- links theory to practice
- assists in memory retention
- increases students' engagement.

# KLC's ELL Civics Class

Experiential learning methods explore topics like:

- public schools
- health
- finance
- safety
- housing
- government

Students improve their English while also learning about the community

- hands-on activities
- field trips
- guest speakers



# KLC's ELL Civics Class

## Health Literacy:

- research to create a medical services guide
- learn about blood pressure and cholesterol from a registered nurse
- practice exercise led by fitness expert
- learn about healthy eating from a nutritionist
- tour a local pharmacy

They are learning much more than how to read; they are learning to become leaders in their families and in our community!

# Planning

1. Choose location based on curriculum and student needs.
2. Contact location to schedule tour (if necessary)
3. Plan for transportation. (carpool or walk as a group?)
4. Prepare students ahead of time
  - a) introduce related vocabulary and concepts
  - b) brainstorm questions to ask on the tour
5. Create an activity for students to complete while on location or following the trip

# Common Council/County Board Meeting

Students learning about government/civics/citizenship

- see government in action at the local level.
- visit the city hall or municipal building where meetings are held.
- experience a meeting and learn the proper etiquette, procedures, etc.
- can speak during the public comments portion of the meeting.

\*Alternative: Invite a representative to visit class and speak with students.



# Police Station

Tour the police station

- meet police officers
- learn about police services
- practice communicating with police

\*Alternative: Invite a police officer to visit class



# Fire Station

Tour the fire station

- meet firefighters
- learn about firefighter & EMT services
- practice communicating emergencies
- learn about and get smoke detectors

\*Alternative: Invite firefighters to visit class with a fire truck or ambulance.



# Public Library

## Tour a local library

- learn about services & programs
- apply for library cards
- check out materials

\*Alternative: Invite library staff to visit a class.  
Arrange for the bookmobile to visit your location.



# Pharmacy

Tour a local pharmacy

- learn about over-the-counter drugs
- compare medicines
- practice communicating at the pharmacy

\*Alternative: Invite a healthcare professional to visit the class.



# The Bank

Tour a local bank

- learn about bank services
- practice communicating with the bank staff

\*Alternative: Invite a banking professional to visit the class or explore an online banking site.





# Other Ideas

- Gym
- Grocery Store
- Hardware Store
- University
- Public School
- Hospital



# Enrichment Outings

**Alek Georgeson**, ELL Program Coordinator  
International Institute of Wisconsin



# Why undertake community outings?

Newcomes face many mental health issues

Social determinants include:

- Income
- Employment
- Housing
- Language barriers

# Why undertake community outings?

## Personal enrichment

- “...intended to better individuals emotionally, physically, or culturally”

Moving the learning space out of the traditional classroom can change things up and provide a memorable learning experience for students.

# Why undertake community outings?

## Community/cultural orientation

- Uncover low-cost or free public spaces and resources available to community members

## Community-building/camaraderie

- Women/children are often underrepresented in our literacy programs
- Language learning

# What outings we've undertaken

## Milwaukee Central Library

- ELL department, conversation hours, etc...
- Educational tour, help learners sign up for library cards, and connect them additional resources (laptops & hotspots for lease)

## Milwaukee Public Museum

- Free days
- Fantastic outing for children
- Something for everybody, movies, rotating exhibits

## Gardens

- Look for free days at a local botanical garden
- Excellent outing for women, children, and families
- Coordinated several Uber rides to deliver families

# How to get started?

- ✓ Ask your colleagues!
- ✓ Reach out to any contacts your workplace may already have
- ✓ Find or create a list of free days in your community
- ✓ Arrange transportation
  - If your community has public transportation, use as a learning opportunity
  - Rideshare/sign-up sheet and coordination
  - Uber/Lyft for business

# Guest speakers

Invite speakers from:

- Other departments in your organization
- Colleges and universities
- Health departments



# Guest speakers

## Planning considerations:

- How many attendees?
- What languages for interpretation?
  - Volunteer interpreters (gain experience)
  - Live translation
- Donations

# Transitions to higher learning

## What to know:

- ✓ English testing center contact
- ✓ Best campus (location, programs)
- ✓ Semester schedules (avoid learning disruptions)
- ✓ Fee waivers

## What to do:

- ✓ Visit campus
- ✓ Contact advisor
  - multilingual/international specific
- ✓ Set up placement tests
- ✓ Research fee waivers
- ✓ Create account/apply for courses

\*Only provide guidance as needed. Goal is for students to build skills to advocate for themselves.

# Adult Education Navigators

**Shelley Karnz**, Adult Education Navigator  
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College



# Adult Education Navigators

## Responsibilities

- Recruit for ELL, GED®/HSED, and Career Pathways Bridge programs
- Case manage – provide support and connect with resources
- Assist with transition to college/career



# What Do We Do

## Recruitment

- English Language Learner classes
- GED®/HSED program
- Career Pathways Bridge programs

## How?

- Collaboration with CBO's
- Employer visits and open houses
- Classroom presentations

# What Do We Do

## Case Management

- Provide Support
- Connect with resources
- Student reach-outs

## How?

- Collaboration with CBO's
- Collaboration with other departments on campus
- Call/Text/Email
  - When a student completes a class
  - When a student is referred by instructor
  - When a student stops attending class

# What Do We Do

## Transition Specialist

- Discuss student goals
- Make referrals
- Help with college application
- Assist with next steps
- Warm hand-off

## How?

- Classroom presentations
- Collaboration with other departments on campus
- 1x1 coaching meetings with students

# Successes!!!

In Academic Year 2023-2024, Adult Education Navigators

- Coached 114 English Language Learners and 134 GED®/HSED students in 1 on 1 meetings
- Held 15 classroom advising sessions
- Recruited 57 adult learners into Career Pathways Bridge programs
- Helped 76 English Language Learners and 94 GED®/HSED students transition to post-secondary programs





# Community Resources

**Deborah Lindberg**, ESL Program Coordinator  
Saint Michael and Saint Rose Literacy Program



# Community Resources

## Research:

- What **information** do students need (picture ID, date of birth for each family member)?
- What is the **process, guidelines, and limitations** (how many items can they receive and how frequently)?
- What are their **hours of operation**? How can the students **connect if they can't go** during hours of operation?



ABO

**ABO**

Still waiting for photo release

Anna Bierer, 2024-07-29T19:09:16.284

# Community Resources

## What we like about this partnership

They:

- Present information with interpreters
- Make medical appointments for the students
- Can accompany students to the appointments



Milwaukee Consortium for Hmong Health  
<https://mkehmonghealth.org/>

# Community Resources

## Encouraging participation in resource fairs

- Recommend the students attend in a group
- Attend with their teacher/tutor



5<sup>th</sup> Annual Refugee and Immigrant Family Resource Fair at Milwaukee H.S. of the Arts

# Questions for the Panel



# Next Steps

- Monday, September 16  
1:00-2:00 pm
- Meet as small groups with the August 12 panelists
- Create action plans to implement community engagement activities
- Register: [https://wisconsinliteracy.org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMlcOmgqjwoH9l0cklRX\\_GbGh50YHBit4Y](https://wisconsinliteracy.org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMlcOmgqjwoH9l0cklRX_GbGh50YHBit4Y)



# Sources

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