

THE ENGLISH CENTER NEWS

A newsletter compiled by students of The English Center

From the ground up: The early years



In 1977, the first group of international women joined the English Center.

By Jin Hong Yao
Level 4

In 1977, the English Center was founded. During its early years, the English Center provided classes for international women who came from over 70 different countries.

Marcy Jackson, the current director and one of the original founders, said that “the English Center was started by 5 instructors who were teaching English to international students at the University of San Francisco in 1977.” The center was started to provide an opportunity for women to come to the U.S. and study English and enter the university, she said.



The founding mothers (from left to right) — Jo Anne Elias, Anne Foreman, Marcy Jackson, Elizabeth Brady and Wendy Wilkins.

The English Center Today

Nil Civelek and Clare Huang write about their experiences coming to the United States and joining the English Center.

Finding The Right School



By Nil Civelek
Level 4

I came to the United States two years ago. At first, I went to adult school. I liked it, but I wasn't learning fast enough. I needed to find a good school in the Bay Area. People told me that I couldn't go to college yet because I didn't have enough English! I thought “I will never learn English!” I started researching international schools, but their costs were very high and I didn't want to spend a lot of money.

One day, a Turkish friend introduced me to his friends who spoke very good English. We asked them how they had learned English. They told us they studied at the English Center. I got some information about the English Center and learned I could get financial aid. I was very excited! I will learn English and I won't spend money, I thought. I did my paper work and started studying at the English Center right away.

My first day was very good. I said this is it! Finally, I found the right school. Now I have so many friends from the English Center. I can speak in English with them. I can spend time with them. All the teachers, classmates and staff at the English Center are like family. I love my school. This school is a very good experience in my life. I'm thankful all my teachers. The teachers are helping us start a new life!

Mills College, a women's college, was chosen as the English Center's first location. “We decided to start a school for women because many families at the time did not want their daughters to go abroad,” said Jackson. “But they would consider letting them study in the safety and security of a women's college.”

When asked if it was difficult to open a new school, Jackson replied that fortunately, “money was not a big issue be-

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Celebrating Thanksgiving In Style

By Million Assefaw
Level 3

Thanksgiving Day is one the biggest holidays in the U.S. Thanksgiving remembers when European migrants came to North America in 1621 and survived winter thanks to the Native. Before, it was celebrated by eating deer, duck, and turkey. Nowadays it's celebrated by eating turkey.

Thanksgiving is my first holiday since I came to the United States and started at English Center. I was very happy to celebrate it with my classmates and teachers on November 19, 2010 at 54 Washington St.

When I first walked into the hall, I was very happy. I saw a beautiful and nicely decorated hall with about 15 to 20 different kinds of food, and a lot of students. There were about 200 people. When I got there, I thought, this is like the world's community, because I saw and met people from many different countries and many different continents like Africa, Asia,

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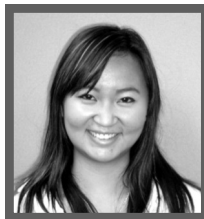
Rob Beckley (above) carves turkeys while Ann Livingston (top right), Seena Clark, Paula Landers and Jeff Issemberg (center right) help greet guests; and teachers and staff (bottom right) get ready to serve the magnificent feast.

What Are You Thankful For?



Desheng Bian
Level 3

"I'm thankful for all our teachers, because they help us improve our English."



Samantha Lu
Level 6

"I am thankful for my family, because they are always beside me when I need them."



Chuluuntogtokh
Lkhamsuren,

"I am thankful for my mother and father because they help me every day."



Jillian Lu
Level 6

"I'm thankful for having a chance to meet people and make new friends."



Mohammed Al-Shargi
Level 2

"I am thankful for the teachers at the English Center, and for my uncle because he has helped me in many ways."



Senait Habte
Level 2

"I am thankful to God for being in America."

Mock Election 2010



On October 19, 2010, more than 100 students voted as part of the English Center's Mock Election. For many, it was their first time casting a ballot. To prepare for the election, students gave speeches about the different candidates running for office. In the end, the election results were a perfect forecast for what would happen in the general election on November 4th.

TODAY

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Journey From China To The US



By Clare Huang
Level 2

Time has gone so fast. One year and three months ago, I moved from China to the United States. In the U.S., I started a new life. Before I came, I knew a little bit of English, but it was not enough to get a job, so I went to adult school. Luckily, after two months, I got a job. It wasn't easy.

I remember that after the manager interviewed me, she said, "Your English is not good enough to work here, but I don't want

to break your heart, so I will give you a chance." I have been working there for a year now.

Four months ago, a cousin introduced me to the English Center. She told that it was a very good school to learn English. I am very happy to learn at the English Center. The teachers are very polite, patient and care about the students. Here, I do not only learn how to read, write and speak English, I also learn about Community English, which helps me understand about the United States. I also have computer classes and career classes where I can learn how to find a better job.

This last year has been very busy, but I feel substantial. I am very happy here. Even though everything was hard at the beginning, I received a lot of help from other people. I am very thankful for all the people who helped me.

HISTORY

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cause Mills College provided the space for our school for free at first and the five [founders] each contributed some money and time until our first students enrolled."

In 1984, the English Center expanded to include immigrant women and it offered courses on career and computer training.

In 2000, afternoon and evening classes were introduced. Then, male students from all over the world became members of the student body. In 2008, the English Center moved to Jack London Square.

THANKSGIVING

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and South America. I really appreciated all the staff and workers from the English Center who brought all the foods, decorated the hall, and brought the drinks. I forgot to thank them on that day. I will remember forever this day. I really enjoyed Thanksgiving and eating turkey.

FARMERS

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degradable bags are also available to purchase at the market.

Farmers' markets connect you to the community, and connect customers and farmers. Farmers' markets are the heartbeat of the community.

For health, environmental, and culinary reasons, many people believe the farmers' market is the best place to shop.

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Make Your Own Holiday Cards!

By Yi Xian Tan

Level 4

Have you ever made your own holiday cards? Making cards is a good hobby to enjoy with your family and friends.

I made holiday cards together with my daughter for the first time this year. Through this activity, not only did we learn more about the festivities but we also improved our creativity.

Making your own cards is easy and not expensive. For a basic homemade card, all you need is paper, scissors, glue and some colored pencils. After that, all you need is to put some time and imagination into it. In the end you'll have a special handmade card with the style you like. Cool!

You can also design your own festival cards using graphic software, or taking a photo with your digital camera. Just upload it to your computer, add an appropriate poem or quote and print it. Voila! A wonderful holiday card you can send to your friends and relatives.



Yi Xian Tan (Canny) and her daughter make Halloween cards.

So whether you are a student or a worker, making festival cards is a great way to relax, be creative and connect with others. So do start making festival cards today!

Farmers' Market: Fresh produce, low prices, and great family fun

By Yi Jiang Pan

Level 4

The Oakland Old Farmers' Market is one of the many farmers' markets sponsored by the City of Oakland. It takes place every Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the corner of Broadway and Ninth Street.

At the Farmers' Market, there are a lot of local fruits, vegetables, fresh eggs, and fresh locally-caught fish to buy. Customers like shopping at the Farmers' Market because everything is fresh, clean, and grown without pesticides. There are also a wide variety of beautiful flowers to choose from.

In addition, there are handcrafts, baked goods, prepared foods, and the beautiful sounds of local musicians. People can shop for fresh and seasonal produce while enjoying nice music and foods!

"I like coming here," said Ms. Wong, a regular customer. "One of the reasons is the



Two shoppers select grapes during Oakland's Old Farmers' Market on Ninth St.

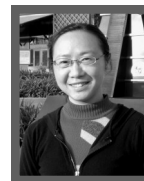
fresh and good quality farm produce. Another reason why I come here is that I enjoy the Farmers' Markets' atmosphere."

Buying at the Farmers' Market during the holidays can not only help you save money but it is also good for the environment.

Starting January 2010, Farmers' Market has not used plastic grocery bags to protect the environment. Customers are encouraged to bring their own reusable bags. Bio-

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What will you do during the break?



Lili Xia

"I'm going to walk down Golden Gate Bridge and visit Chinatown."



Kamini Neu-

"I'm going to make crafts and start my own business selling them."



Nadhir Bahnam

Level 1

"I will sleep during the first three days and then find a place to go visit with my family."



Bhim Rai

Level 2

"I will fly to Alaska to visit family and then look for a job."



Brenda Romo

Level 3

"I'm going to get materials to paint cushion covers and try to sell them."



Thinesh Kangesu

"I'm going to work full-time, take my driving test and play cricket with friends."

