

# International Learning Center

ESL • Citizenship • Math • Computer Skills • Pre-school • Life Skills • Tutoring



The faces of International Learning Center...

FALL 2011

## Newcomer Program Gets People Talking

*Pilot Program Boosts Speaking Skills*



New arrivals Htay Reh, Ta Ter Grae, Kay Meh enjoy a laugh and a lesson in the Newcomer Program.

This fall ILC is piloting an adult Newcomer Program targeting recently arrived refugees who need to get up to speed with basic speaking skills before they start regular ESL classes. Students get a certificate after completing the ten week program hosted at Lutheran Social Services. The pilot program is funded by a grant from the **Faye McBeath Foundation**.

ILC instructor **Lynn Sedivy** worked closely with **Mette Brogden**, the State Refugee Coordinator, to develop the oral instruction curriculum, which is based on work Brogden did in Arizona with Somali Bantu refugees. Meeting the communications skills needs of low literacy and emerging literacy learners is one of the things that sets ILC apart from other ESL programs in the area.

## Out and about...

Karen students from Burma performed traditional bamboo dances at Neighborhood House's Annual Fundraising Dinner at the Pfister Hotel Nov. 2nd, and also performed at the Capitol Rotunda in Madison this summer.



ILC students turned out in force for United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee's 4th Annual Wellness Walk at Kosciusko Park Friday September 9th.



## ...and in the classroom



Student Quita Puchala, right, gets some one-on-one assistance from one of several **United Way Volunteers** who tutored students in English and Math during the 2011 Days of Caring. United Way is a major source of funding for Neighborhood House and ILC.

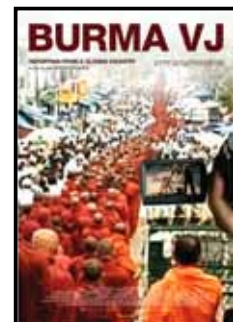
## New Film Series, Guest Speakers Draw Crowds, Highlight Refugee Issues

ILC is grateful for the support of several guest speakers who helped launch our new film series.

*Welcome to Shelbyville*, about a small Tennessee town struggling to adjust to new immigrants, was followed by a panel discussion with **Abdulaziz (Shariff) Mohamed** a W-2 Refugee Supervisor from Somalia; **Hareth Al-Sahan** who hails from Saudi Arabia and spoke about Islam; and **Nancy Lanman**, a Deacon in the United Methodist Church who worked with refugees in the DC area.

For *Crossing Burma*, about the human rights situation on the Thai Burma border, we were honored to have **Khaing Aung** a caseworker who served as a Freedom Fighter and medic in the democracy movement in Burma; **Jo Buth** who helps refugees from Burma in the Waukesha area; and **Dr. Ben Rader** a psychologist at **Sebastian Family Psychology Practice** who counsels refugees and their families.

*Burma VJ*, the final film in our series this fall, will be shown on **Friday Dec. 16th. Doors open at 6:30** with refreshments, screening at 7pm.



~ **SPRING SEMESTER BEGINS WEDNESDAY, JAN. 18th** ~  
**Spring Registration for New Students Only**  
Jan. 9th, 9am-1pm & 5-7pm  
Jan. 10th, 9am - 1pm

## Hellos and Goodbyes



Diana VanMinnen with students Hai Nguyen and Der Vang.

**Diana VanMinnen's** last day at ILC was Thursday, Nov. 10th after thirteen years of teaching English to immigrants like herself. Diana brought to the classroom her rich experiences as the child of Dutch immigrants and

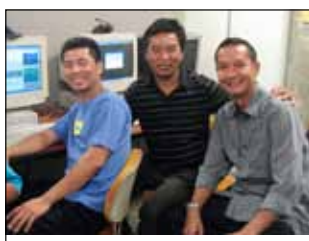
as a Canadian relocated to Wisconsin. She and her family were also actively involved in the Angel Tree project at Elmbrook Church. Diana will be missed!

Former student **Wells Walusai's** had a long awaited family reunion in October. ILC co-founder **Marilyn Hegge** has been helping the Walusai's navigate the immigration labyrinth since 2008. For Marilyn's full account of this long journey, see our website.



From left to right Lenga Lenga, Aleba and Eben. The second picture includes Pastor Micah Wildauer from Hope Lutheran Church. Pastor Wildauer helped raise money needed for DNA testing and flights to the US.

ILC welcomes **Mg Ye Lwin** to our staff. Ye helps students in the computer lab and provides bilingual support in Burmese and a few other languages.



Ye Lwin, right, with students in the computer lab.

## More News...



Instructor and Program Assistant **Song Xiong** took first place in the Halloween Costume contest. Our *Crayon Fairy* will be honored with a day off!

Student **Ilunga Wangoy** and Program Manager **Anna Bierer** were interviewed for Radio 88.9's Meet a Need series.



**Pastor Kate Jones** gave her goodbye sermon at Central United Methodist Church in November. She was not only our generous and gracious landlord, but our advocate in so many ways. We wish her all the best on her sabbatical.

Instructor **Mary Bruce** and her students celebrated their own International Culture Night, sharing food and stories from many lands. See more at



## Student Stories

**Me, Myself, and My Family**  
by *Blessing Wah*

My name is Blessing Wah Kie. My native city is Phapun in Karen State, Myanmar. Now, I'm living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I've been here for more than three months. I'm not married yet. I live with my sister's family in Milwaukee. I have to study and learn English as a second language and math too. I'm so interested in badminton. And I love to go out with a group, travelling from place to place with friends. I like to play music and sing songs with my friends in church. Also when I've free time I like to draw pictures, read and write poems. I like the people who have smiling faces and politely talk to other people. I also love smart people but not over smart. So I want to try my best in IIC School. I thank God for giving me a good opportunity to come to the United States for starting my new life. By the grace, I've very good teachers, wonderful families and many friends that help me to start my life.



PEACE BE WITH U, BEST WISH SHALOM

### INTERNATIONAL LEARNING CENTER

A Program of Neighborhood House of Milwaukee

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The International Learning Center has provided English as a Second Language instruction to over 5,000 African and Southeast Asian adult refugees in the Milwaukee area since 1981. We specialize in literacy and communication skills for refugees who have had little or no prior education in their own country.



ILC is a program of Neighborhood House of Milwaukee, Inc. and has been an outreach site of the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) since 1989. To assist students in reaching their goals, the center offers support services such as translation, referrals, and licensed, on-site pre-school.