

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BEING A TUTOR WITH THE ADULT LITERACY CENTER



### **What is the Adult Literacy Center (ALC) of Ozaukee County?**

For over 30 years, the ALC has been providing a wide range of adult literacy services. Begun as a mission of the Grace Lutheran Church of Grafton, the ALC became an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in 2013. Educational services are provided by trained, volunteer tutors.

### **What adult educational programs does the ALC offer?**

The ALC provides **individualized** instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Development (GED) Preparation, college entrance preparation, and citizenship exam preparation. ALC provides one-on-one tutoring services focused on the individual needs and goals of each student.

### **What is required to be a tutor?**

Tutors must be at least 18 years of age and possess the ability to read and speak English fluently. Training for tutors is provided offered about every two months. Typically, tutors are not assigned students until they have completed the training.

### **Does the ALC look for particular a background for its tutors?**

The ALC does not require a specific background for tutors. While many are current or previous teachers, others come from a wide range of backgrounds. Most importantly, tutors must be interested in helping others succeed.

### **Does the ALC provide training to tutors and is there a specific curriculum to follow?**

ALC provides training for its tutors before they are matched with a student. The training takes about 4 hours and is offered about every other month. Students and tutors are provided with curriculum materials which are the core of the tutoring experience. These materials are supplemented by the wide range of resources available at the Center, as well as materials relevant to the student's goals.

### **How are adult learners different?**

Unlike younger learners who are required to attend school, adult learners are actively seeking out learning. They tend to be very self-directed and motivated with specific goals in mind. They seek relevance in their learning.

### **Where do ALC students come from?**

ALC students are from around the world. A few students are native English speakers looking to improve their academic and literacy skills. Most are English Language Learners representing diverse countries such as Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and Vietnam.

### **Do I need to speak another language?**

No, there is no need to speak another language. The goal is for ELL students to learn English.



### **How are students referred to the Center?**

Students are referred to the Center from a wide range of sources including friends, employers, churches, libraries, schools, workforce development centers and other community organizations.

### **What are the responsibilities of a tutor?**

Tutors are responsible for using the teacher's guide provided to them to plan lessons, teach lessons, coach students, assess student progress and reteach lesson components not mastered. Many tutors assist students with life skills such as resume writing and job searches; navigating the educational system, banks and other institutions; making appointments; and similar activities.

### **How are tutors and students matched?**

Tutors and students are matched taking into account each of their interests and scheduling needs, as well as a student's academic needs and goals.

### **How often do tutors meet with students?**

Tutors and students meet once or twice a week and most find that 1.5 hours is needed for a full lesson. Most ELL lessons involve practice in speaking, reading, listening and writing.

### **Where do tutoring sessions take place?**

Most sessions take place at the Adult Literacy Center housed in the Grace Lutheran Church in Grafton because of vast array of resources available to students and their tutors at the Center. Three individual tutoring rooms as well as a private entrance also are benefits of meeting at the Center. In some cases, students and tutors may meet at local libraries.

### **How long are tutoring commitments?**

The ALC does not have a specific commitment time; however, the typical minimum time for working with a student is anywhere from six months to a year. Some students have needs and goals that involve longer commitments. If a tutor is unable to continue with a student, a new tutor can be found. Very often we find that students and tutors develop lasting friendships.

### **Are students charged for tutoring services?**

No. Students are asked to pay a nominal registration fee and then a book fee to help cover the cost of materials. Ongoing tutoring services are provided free of charge. Tutors are provided companion teacher's manuals for working with their students free of charge. When done with the materials, the ALC asks that tutors return them.

### **How is learning progress tracked for students?**

Tutors are asked to track and report student progress and complete the required tests at the end of each unit. Soon, tutors will be able to complete their reports online. A new more comprehensive assessment system is being implemented during 2017 which will track overall progress. These assessments will be conducted by an education coordinator.

### **What resources are available to tutors?**

The Center has a wide range of print and online resources available including grammar books, ESL dictionaries, and specialized lessons for pronunciation and grammar. Computers are available at the Center for students and tutors to use and explore online resources. ALC staff can always be reached for additional support.