



A publication of the

Arlington Education and Employment Program

Our Vision:

Our learners will be able to access and use information from a variety of sources, voice their ideas and concerns, act independently and continue learning in an ever-changing world.

Our Mission:

To provide for the education and employment related needs of limited English proficient adults who live and work in Arlington.

Our Goals:

Consistent with their aptitudes, interests and educational needs, Limited English Speakers in Arlington will:

- develop communication and literacy skills needed to function in the workplace, home, and community;
- apply social and civic knowledge and critical thinking skills in order to become an empowered citizenry;
- acquire skills to become independent lifelong learners; and
- gain skills to use technology in their lives and learning.



Teachers Nina Sheppard, Sharon McKay and Kerry Carlsen work in a study circle to implement new ELP standards.

REEP Quarterly

The First Word: New standards bring updates

REEP has taken a leading role in the implementation of new national English Language Proficiency standards with a series of study circles helping teachers to develop skills that promote rigorous instruction.

The passage of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) prompted a shift in our understanding of the essential language and skills that enable our learners to succeed in their life and job goals. In addition to basic life skills instruction, adult English language learners must be exposed to complex, content-rich texts in the classroom and have direct instruction in evaluating information and supporting their opinions with evidence from a variety of types of text.

In a world where we must quickly access, process, and evaluate information from myriad sources, robust information literacy skills are critical for achieving personal, social and career goals. New national standards have been created in response to WIOA requirements. The College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), a set of challenging academic content standards, were conceived to ensure that adult learners are prepared for careers and postsecondary education. The CCRS were adopted by the state of Virginia and, in 2016, the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) were released to accompany the CCRS and to help ESL instructors plan effective

lessons that promote rigorous instruction.

The REEP study circles are familiarizing teachers with the ELP Standards and helping them to develop skills needed to implement the standards in the classroom. With funding from an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education grant, cohorts of teachers are working together to identify where and how practice with academic language, language strategies, and critical thinking can be embedded in the REEP Curriculum.

The teams have been working through the curriculum by unit to enhance instructional objectives, write new lesson plans, and update resources.

In addition to the CCRS and ELPS, many states have adopted digital literacy standards that define the basic skills needed to use a computer and the internet in daily life, on the job and in postsecondary education. A team of REEP teachers convened over the winter to incorporate national digital literacy standards into the curriculum and to create new instructional activities and resources that target and strengthen students' digital literacy skills.

As the study groups complete their work, new objectives and lesson plans are being published in the REEP curriculum and will be available on our website. With this effort, REEP fulfills a twin goal of keeping our curriculum current and introducing our teaching staff to the new standards.

— Emily Beckett, REEP Supervisor



Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP)
2110 Washington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22204
Phone: 703-228-4200
Fax: 703-228-8049
www.apsva.us/reep
reep@apsva.us



Statistical Report

REEP operates ESL classes at Syphax Education Center (SEC), Arlington Mill Community Center (AMCC), Wakefield High School (WHS), Arlington County Detention Facility (ACDF), Gates of Ballston and Walter Reed Community and Senior Center.

3rd Quarter Enrollment

During the 3rd Quarter, 978 ESL enrollments were provided, 695 (71%) in intensive classes and 283 (29%) in Non-intensive, Specialty, Workplace, and Outreach classes. Of the 695 intensive enrollments, 66% were tuition slots (457 slots) and 34% were scholarship/voucher slots (238 slots).

Performance Goals

A total of 87% of intensive and non-intensive students completed their courses this quarter. REEP completions continue to well exceed the goal of 70% and to demonstrate a high level of student satisfaction. Of the students who completed their courses, 78% attained the course competencies needed to move to the next instructional level this quarter. Of all students enrolled (completers and non-completers), 66% attained the course competencies needed to advance to the next instructional level this quarter.

Workplace and ESL Contract Classes:

During the 3rd Quarter, REEP provided intensive instruction to three students with workplace vouchers. These students were referred by Arlington Public Schools. In addition, the following businesses/agencies sponsored students this quarter: Arlington Employment Center, Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing, Artisan Renovations, Landscaping/Trails, Trinity Glass Company and Catholic Charities.

✦ SPONSOR A STUDENT ✦

Are you interested in sponsoring a REEP student's studies? Companies, organizations or individuals can make tax deductible donations. Contact Natalia Benefiel at natalia.benefiel@apsva.us or call (703) 228-8024

Table 1. Goals and Year-To-Date Progress

Progress toward our goals by June 30, 2019	
Annual Goal	Year to date
Provide 3,385 ESL class slots	2,754 slots provided
Provide 820 intensive scholarships	648 slots provided
Intensive ESL class slots	1,314 slots provided
Non-intensive ESL, workplace literacy, family literacy, detention ESL, Specialty classes, and/or Outreach classes	792 slots provided
70% of Intensive, Non-Intensive, and Specialty ESL students complete 12-week session	87% completed
75% of Intensive, Non-Intensive, and Specialty ESL students who complete 12 weeks achieve course competencies	78% attained
55% of all Intensive, Non-Intensive, and Specialty ESL students progress to next level	66% progressed
50% of all Workplace Literacy and Family Literacy enrolled will complete the competencies necessary for their course.	46% attained

Table 2. Breakdown by English proficiency level

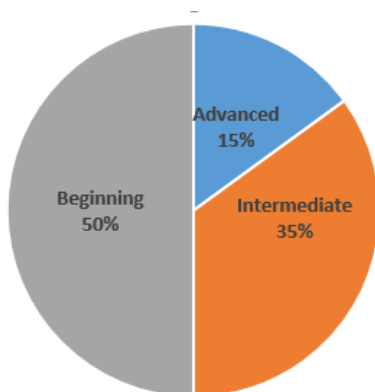


Table 3. Demographic Information

Ethnicity:	66% Hispanic	12% African
	10% Pacific Asian	12% Other
Age:	6% 17-18	13% 19-24
	57% 25-44	16% 45-54
	8% 55 and older	
Gender:	37% Male	63% Female
Educational Background:	13% Less than 7 years of education	
	47% 7-12 years of education	
	40% 13 or more years	
	65% High School Diploma	
Employment Status*:	45% Employed full-time	
	20% Employed part-time	
	65% Employed	

* Employment information is collected from new students upon initial REEP registration and does not reflect changes in employment status during a student's continued enrollment in the program.

Tech News

Our student database is central to everything we do, and the quality of our data management is crucial to REEP's success. After months of preparation, in March REEP started using new database software called Student Manager, by ACEware Systems, Inc. Student Manager is a course management and student registration package designed specifically for continuing education, community education and workforce training organizations.

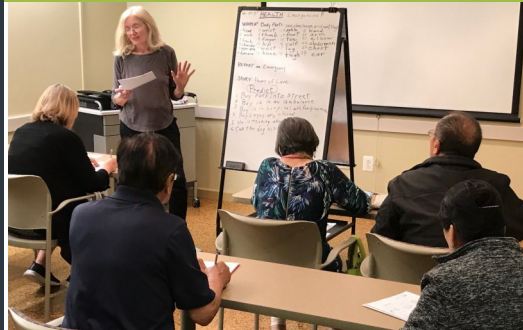
The new system provides the security, accessibility and efficiency that we require for our data management. It is also a scalable platform for our evolving needs, offering tools for volunteer records, community outreach and marketing, web-based staff and client interfaces.

Transitioning from old to new isn't easy, but it's crucial to have the best tool for our work, and we are excited to be moving in that direction. In late 2017, we began investigating different vendors and conducting extensive needs assessment with staff. Since we contracted with ACEware in July 2018, REEP tech coordinator Michele Cona has worked to translate the complex procedures for intake and assessment, designing reports in the new software. Concurrently, our office staff has done double data entry in the old database and the new software to maintain quality control and keep operations running smoothly. There is no 'downtime' at REEP!

Follow REEP on
Instagram!



@reepworld



A reading lesson in the new class at Walter Reed

Volunteers focused on strategies for teaching multi-level ESL classes during a professional development session held in February at Walter Reed Community Center.

The session, which was developed based on feedback from REEP volunteers, addressed the question of how best to serve learners who have a wide range of education backgrounds and English skill levels. While multi-level classes are a fact of life in all ESL settings, they are especially prevalent in the drop-in Outreach program.

Volunteer teachers and teaching assistants participated in hands-on lesson planning activities and were introduced to five new

Volunteer Program

Volunteers play a vital role in all components of the REEP Program – as teachers' aides in the Intensive and Non-intensive Programs, as literacy teachers in the Extended Literacy Program, and as Outreach ESL teachers.

classroom activities they could take back to their classes. The topic of grouping students based on skill level was also discussed.

For many volunteers, it was their first visit to Walter Reed Community Center, and the workshop provided them an opportunity to become acquainted with REEP's latest Outreach Center site (see Program Highlight). The center's spacious facilities can accommodate classes of up to 40 students.

In other 3rd Quarter news, 90 volunteers served with REEP during the three months ending March 31, with 16 being first-time volunteers. Thirty-three volunteers served as teaching assistants, 42 served as Outreach teachers, and five as job coaches.

The Outreach Center teachers provided instruction to 149 students and the teaching assistants supported 17 classes.

Program Highlight: New Outreach classes at Walter Reed

REEP's free Outreach Center classes expanded to a new location in February, with the launch of sessions at Walter Reed Community Center.

The new offering is part of REEP's drive to hold classes in locations where they are needed most. The location at Walter Reed directly responds to requests from seniors at the center who were eager to improve their English language skills.

The Walter Reed launch coincides with an 89% increase in overall Outreach Center attendance during the 3rd Quarter, compared with attendance during the same quarter a year ago. According to data collected at all three Outreach locations, 149 students attended classes during the period.

Most Walter Reed patrons receive a free or reduced-price lunch at the center and attend classes ranging from painting to pickleball as part of the program's 55+ Classes. They receive transportation to the center from nearby senior living residences.

REEP's new classes are held on Monday and Wednesday mornings, 10 to 11 a.m., and are open to adults of all ages. The Wednesday morning class regularly has as many as 20 students.

Volunteer teachers Libby Costello and Mary Holtan are leading the classes, assisted by volunteer Quetzal Norton on Monday mornings.

In March, the Walter Reed Outreach class received distinguished visitors from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. HHS Deputy Secretary Eric Hargan and others visited the class as part of a tour of the community center.

"A big problem that we see is that older Americans often become socially isolated from each other," Hargan said during the visit. "So a center like this, where people come for the food but they stay for the company, is really important."

Staff News

REEP staff participated in a national conference and local workshops during the 3rd Quarter. In January new teachers and volunteers attended a pair of writing workshops, part of the REEP Foundations series. The first workshop, facilitated by coordinator Phil Cackley, focused on using the REEP Writing Rubric to assess writing. The second workshop, led by coordinator Paul McCabe, explored how to structure process writing instruction in an adult ESL context.

Several teachers attended the WATESOL Spring Mini-conference in Washington D.C. in February. Participants attended workshops on contextualizing grammar, teaching cultural competence and building effective written communication skills.

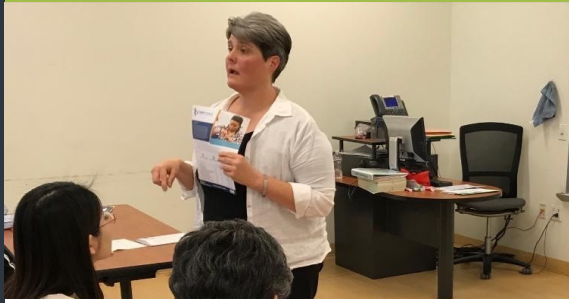
In March, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services hosted a full-day training in Arlington on citizenship education. Two REEP teachers, Micayla Burrows and Lyle Ring, attended. They noted that the reading and writing components of the citizenship test are now administered by tablet computer, so it's important for applicants to be familiar with a touchscreen device.

REEP teacher Angie Felix attended the annual TESOL convention held in mid-March in Atlanta. She said one highlight was ESL textbook author Bill Bliss's presentation describing strategies for integrating career, academic, civics and technology skills into instruction.

REEP Supervisor Emily Beckett attended a two-day data training in March in Richmond, hosted by the Virginia Department of Education. The event focused on policies, guidelines and practices for data collection.

Editorial staff: Emily Beckett, Phil Cackley Contributors: Emily Beckett, Natalia Benefiel, Michele Cona Amanda Rayborn and Ruth Sysak.

Arlington Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy or marital status.



NVCC's Karen Vlaskamp spoke to an Arlington Mill class.

Community Links & Success Story

Community Links: Clinic, NVCC staff give information

Staffers from the Arlington Free Clinic visited REEP classes and a workforce development specialist was a guest speaker in an intermediate class at Arlington Mill as part of community engagement efforts during the 3rd Quarter.

Students received information about Arlington public library services at an information table at Syphax Education Center in January. The following month, Syphax students learned about the Arlington Free Clinic's procedures, in advance of new opportunities to register in February and March. Staff members from the clinic went over eligibility guidelines (including Arlington residency and income limits) and services available.

In March, a representative from LaCocina VA – a culinary training program – gave information about opportunities to take classes with the non-profit group in north Arlington.

Also in March, workforce development specialist Karen Vlaskamp visited the Noon intermediate class at Arlington Mill to talk about Northern Virginia Community College offerings. She talked about classes in both ESL and other areas such as IT certification. Vlaskamp emphasized that many of the certifications NOVA offers would be crucial in getting employment with Amazon, as the national company moves to open its HQ2 in Crystal City in the next few years.

Several classes visited the Arlington Public Library during the 3rd Quarter to take part in book discussion groups or to learn more about doing research. In addition, the 450-500 Morning class visited the National Museum of American History as part of a unit of study on U.S. history.

Success Story ~ Phany Yorn

Phany Yorn sees REEP as more than merely a school where adults can learn English. She says it's also a great place to build networks that help you succeed in a new country. And she has done just that.

Yorn arrived in Arlington in the winter of 2013 from Cambodia knowing only her husband, who had lived in the U.S. for more than a decade. She worked in her country for 10 years as a finance professional, with major companies, including a multi-national corporation. But without job experience here, it was hard to find an equivalent job.

"If I wanted to have a skilled job, I needed to have experience in the U.S.," said Yorn, who had a background in accounting and microfinance.

Having studied English in university in Cambodia, she could communicate. But she came to REEP to improve her English, starting in the intermediate level. And she made connections.

"We get a lot of benefits from REEP," she said. "I improved a lot with speaking. ... (but) the most important thing is building networks."

Through a connection she made in class, she was able to get a job as a cashier at Merrifield Garden Center. With that U.S. experience on her resume, she continued the job hunting she'd been doing for more than a year. Finally, she got hired as a finance officer with the Aga Khan Foundation U.S.A. in their Washington D.C. office. She's been there for nearly four years.

"I am very happy. I enjoy doing what I'm doing," Yorn said. Although the D.C. office is small, with only about 30 staff members, the private foundation has offices around the world with thousands of workers doing work in development and sustainability. Yorn has continued her education and hopes to become a certified public accountant in the near future. The mother of two has an eye on moving up within her workplace.

"I want to be a CFO. That's my goal," she said.

