

# WHAT’S UP IN ADULT EDUCATION

GUILFORD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## Argentine Students Visit GTCC

Argentina is the eighth largest country in the world, and is known for its delicious beef, the tango, and Barcelona FC soccer star, Lionel Messi, to name a few. Six students from Universidad Nacional de Villa Maríain Córdoba, located in the town of Villa Maria, Cordoba province, Argentina, visited Davidson County CC, Guilford Technical CC and Forsyth Technical CC, from February 26 to March 1. The students did home stays with local families in the Winston-Salem area and took part in some social events.

The six students are pictured above with ESOL Plus instructor Mohammad Essack and his class, ESOL Coordinator Ruth Hopp and Administrative Assistant Mit Sunnassee. “From the outset, we wanted the Argentine delegation to interact with foreign born U.S. students in a unique classroom setting, beyond the regular cultural activities and excursions,” Essack said. “Our ESOL Plus class offers the perfect gateway for students coming into our program. They represent over 15 different nationalities and each holds an advanced degree from their home country,” he continued. This distinctive feature adds particular exhilaration to the learning process in this ESOL Plus classroom, which in part is intended to bridge foreign credentialed ESOL speakers with their preferred areas of study in the United States, as well as preparation for the TOEFL exam.

The Argentine students were also able to visit the High Point Campus library and Entertainment Technology classrooms. They toured GTCC’s AV 1-3 buildings, were treated to a special lecture on volcanoes in Argentina, heard an astronomy lecture, and visited the International Civil Rights museum as part of their visit.

At Koury in Jamestown, the students had lunch with Dr. Randy Parker, President, Dr. Beth Pitonzo, Senior Vice President of Instruction, and Shelia May, Associate Vice President of Instruction. They also saw the kitchens and visited the bakery kitchen to enjoy chocolates.

## In the Spotlight

### Assessments are changing for ABE, ASE, and POWER students!

Beginning July 1, 2019, with the new program year, all students enrolled in our ABE and ASE classes will need to be tested on TABE 11 & 12, and all POWER students will transition to the CASAS Reading Goals test series. Classroom materials and online resources aligned to the new assessments will be coming soon as we move in to the New Year.

### You can now practice English at home!

Our ESOL department started a new online class in January using the *Burlington English* program. Full time teachers Lisa Rogers and Selina Jaber are co-teaching the class which is serving about 100 ESOL students. There are three levels: Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. Students spend six hours a week in the class. The *Burlington English* online class combines English Language and workforce readiness skills.

### Are Students in “Critical Condition?”

Actually, our ABE/GED students are being “conditioned to think critically.” Critical thinking is the key component cited throughout Adult Education’s *ABE and ASE North Carolina Content Standards*. The content standards emphasize helping the student to observe, analyze, interpret, evaluate, conclude, and apply information to a learned or new concept.

Teachers and staff members recently implemented several interactive student events to enhance reading concepts that promote critical thinking. In February during Black History Month, Diane Robinson’s and Linda Greenwood’s ABE I and II evening reading classes made creative poster boards and captivating Power Point presentations. Participating students broadened their research and public speaking skills as they explained and presented their historical and current figures, and their contributions, to a parade of students and teachers.

March events featured a roundtable discussion on civil rights and unlocking “Escape Rooms.” Instructors James Armstrong, Crystal McCombs, Gail Stroud, and Gaynessa Allen participated in the roundtable discussion representing “The Voices of Civil Rights.” Each shared real life personal experiences using examples representing factual events that helped spur the Civil Rights Movement. Staff member Tony Browley performed a live character oration of a local Greensboro legend, Civil Rights activist Dr. George Simkins. Students were given an opportunity to ask questions promoting a greater understanding of local and national cultural diversity and racial tolerance. Math instructor, Christy Cox, who initially created a math Escape Room for her own class, inspired other teachers and staff members to create three “Escape Rooms,” one for science, reading and math. Each room created an atmosphere of mystery and drama to promote healthy competition, team work, effective communication, and critical thinking. Classes decoded pictures, puzzles, and riddles designed to stimulate logical conclusions, leading students to clues that ultimately helped them to unlock each room. Students were rewarded with a pizza party and a “You-Made-It-Out” certificate.

A Spring Egg Hunt in April had students searching for our greatest treasure – knowledge. POWER students designed and colored extraordinarily beautiful paper eggs that were hidden throughout the AEC building. Students had to find the eggs, then answer math, science and social studies questions. The student who answered all of the questions correctly, won a \$25 Wal-Mart gift card.

Special appreciation to Ms. Bowie, Ms. Cox, Ms. Easterling, Ms. Allen, Mrs. Hairston, and Tony Browley for their thoughtful and creative contributions to the success of these events.

## “Book About Me”

Imagine sitting in a classroom unable to speak English and being asked to create a book about yourself.

This was the challenge presented recently to the ESOL students in Creusa Gaines’ Beginning Literacy class. Beginning Literacy is for students who have very limited English skills. Some have never held a pencil or attended any formal schooling before coming to GTCC.

Nonetheless, these students answered the challenge. They wrote about their language, home country, family, friends, and favorite things, and even added pictures to illustrate their personality. While enjoying this learning activity, the students also learned that organization, collaboration, following instructions and punctuation are important.

To celebrate, students also created invitations inviting all ESOL classes to attend a publishing party. Some prepared food and attended the party wearing their native dress.

*“The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential...these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.”*

*- Confucius*

The activity helped to build community in the classroom and with other ESOL classes.

The quality of instruction Ms. Gaines demonstrates in the classroom helps our ESOL students improve their confidence and skills in English speaking, reading and writing, skills that are vitally important for student success in navigating housing, education, employment, health care, and other systems in this country.

Leeann Anderson, Director of ESOL, and Claire Ricci, Dean of Adult Education, attended the party and joined others in reading the personalized books. Dean Ricci said, “I really enjoyed getting to meet Ms. Gaines’ students and hear about their lives and their home countries. We have such an amazing diversity of students in our program. I am so proud of the work our teachers are doing every day to help our ESOL students acclimate to life in the U.S.”