



“Thanks to this program I have learned to speak, read, and write in English. Now I don't need an interpreter to communicate at school with my children's teachers.”  
Yolanda

## Why I Am Learning English

When I arrived in the US, I didn't know anything about the language. I only knew the most important things which were my name address and my telephone number. But at that time, learning English wasn't important to me because in my house I had people who spoke English. When I went out to the shops, I didn't care because I had someone who spoke for me and when I started working all my coworkers spoke Spanish. That's why I didn't worry about learning English.

When my children began school, they brought home their homework. My older son asked me if I could help him because he didn't understand how to do it. I tried to help him but it was impossible because I did not understand anything. I told him he needed to pay attention in school. He knew I didn't speak English and I couldn't help him with his homework. I felt disappointed in myself because I couldn't help with his homework. In that moment, I decided to learn English for my children and myself. I believe that I am now much better because thanks to this program I have learned to speak, read, and write in English. Now I don't need an interpreter to communicate at school with my children's teachers. Previously I always had to bring an interpreter because sometimes they don't provide one at school.

Now I urge all of us not to give up because little by little someday we'll all be able to speak perfect English.



Karen and her tutor, Monica.

I came to the U.S. to do a research project in thyroid and colon cancer. I've been here since May of this year. . . . It was only after I came here, that I realized it is important to speak English, a universal language to communicate with people from other nationalities and learn something about their. Thanks to God, in this short period of time, I have met kind people who have given me their support and friendship. I just want to say Thank you to Lori, Peter, Beth, Wendy and all tutors for giving me your time, patience and this great opportunity to learn English!!



**“Now I know that to fulfill your dreams, you have to fight with all your might and never lose hope.”  
Roselia**

## **My Life and my Dreams**

Before anything, I would like to thank all my tutors!

Like everybody else, since I was little I have had many dreams. I can even remember wanting, with all my heart, a doll with blonde hair and blue eyes. My parents never had the money to buy me one, so I let go of my dream.

In time I grew up and finished elementary school and I was very eager to start secondary school, but my father said that studying was a waste of time. Even so he gave me a few months to spend in the city and even though he was against it, I enrolled in secondary school and fulfilled that dream of mine. After I finished school, I realized that you cannot fulfill all of your dreams, and even though I wanted to continue studying I couldn't because of a lack of time and money. I had to work fulltime to provide for myself, so my dream was forgotten.

A dream that I never had was coming to the United States because I never imagined I could do it. Now I know that to fulfill your dreams, you have to fight with all your might and never lose hope.



**“I continue to learn and  
that's important for me.”  
Gabriela**

Good evening everyone. Thank you for listening and tutors for the help.

Today I am going to speak to you about my experience when I arrived for the first time to the United States.

The truth was that I imagined everything would be different, that it would be easier than Mexico.

Now I'm here I know that it isn't the case. At first I knew that it would be difficult to adapt to my new life. Everything was new and different for me. I felt lost. At first I didn't know the language here. I didn't know even a single word. I didn't know the city where I was and that frustrated me. I felt like I could not go anywhere and that bothered me a lot.

Moreover, I felt sad because my family wasn't with me. That was the most difficult to overcome for me.

When I was in Mexico, I felt free because I knew where I was. It wasn't as hard to get lost and I understood what people said to me.

Now I feel much better although I don't understand everything. I continue to learn and that's important for me. Also, my husband supports me and helps me a lot in this difficult stage of my life.

Above all, I am happy, and if I had to repeat everything again, I wouldn't change anything because all these experiences have helped me become a better person.



“Maybe this year I will graduate. I don't know what career I want, but I want to die with my diploma in my hands. But in the meantime, let's go downstairs and eat some delicious food!” Balbina

## The Story of the Cows and Ants

When I came to Milwaukee from Los Angeles, I got into the airplane and sat next to the window. I looked out my window, and what did I see? I turned to the woman next to me. I told her to look down. I said, “Those cows look like ants.” The lady looked down, then she said, “They *are* ants. We haven't taken off yet!”

Now that I am here, I would like to go to the moon-maybe I could see better from there. But I think I would rather go downstairs where there is scrumptious food.

Maybe this year I will graduate. I don't know what career I want, but I want to die with my diploma in my hands. But in the meantime, let's go downstairs and eat some delicious food!



“I knew that the U.S. would offer many new opportunities and would help me build a better life, but what I didn't know was the U.S. would change not only my life, but also my thinking.”  
Alessandra

Everyone has their dreams and goals for the future, and just like everybody, I have set many goals for my future. FUTURE! It seems like it is going to take forever until we get there, but sometimes the idea that this future awaits us is scarier than the real appearance of it.

I am an optimistic person who thinks that everything in life can be reached if you try your best and if you never give up. I think that life is lived only once, so why not try to make the best of it.

As a young woman, I had many dreams. I knew that the U.S. would offer many new opportunities and would help me build a better life, but what I didn't know was the U.S. would change not only my life, but also my thinking.

When I first came here, I was "lost," and I didn't understand much English, but now I am working on becoming a better English speaker. I think my life is taking a turn, and my work is going to make my dreams come true.

For example, a few days ago I was organizing my basement and I opened a box and I saw my first English books of literature. I was so surprised because I used to underline the words that I didn't know and look in the dictionary and now many words are so simple for me.

I am so happy because I graduated from MATC as a dental assistant, and I will come back the next semester for dental hygiene. Someday I will study dentistry at the University. I have my citizenship test soon. I am so excited for my many goals are coming into reality. But first I thank God for good health and that He gave me a good husband who always has helped me, and I have not only learned English here, but I have met wonderful people. I want to thank Lori, Isaac and all the tutors for your patience and for your daily interest in our learning. God bless everyone!



“These classes have helped me feel much more secure and less afraid to express myself.”  
Ruth

It is very important to speak English in order to be able to communicate with people, whether in emergency calls, doctor appointments or dealing with the police. Above all these, it is important to be able to communicate with my daughter's teachers.

Very often we have been victims of racial abuse. We have been insulted and refused service, all because we cannot speak or understand English.

To not be able to express oneself in English fills a person with fears and insecurities. At times we cannot even understand our children, though we want to be able to help them in their homework.

Also I believe that it is very important that if at some point we decide to go back to our country, we will have better opportunities.

I have been in these classes for about five months. These classes have helped me feel much more secure and less afraid to express myself. For that I wish to thank the teachers and the volunteers for offering us their time. I also wish to thank the girls that take care of our children so that we can learn. I think that if they had not taken care of our children, many of us would not be able to be here.



“ELPW has been instrumental in focusing my career goals on a life of service.”  
Jonathan Fricke

Many people asked me while in Guatemala, working at Ciudad Anini orphanage, "Where did you learn Spanish?" I told them that I had learned the basics in high school, but that my best teachers were really the students at ELPW! It was a great chance for me to learn about another culture and improve my pronunciation in Spanish (in addition to teaching people English).

Jonathan's last Visitors Evening:

Buenas noches, mi nombre es Jonathan. Quiero decir gracias a todos. Ustedes me han enseñado mucho. Yo aprendo tanto como ustedes aprenden de mí. Hoy es mi última noche aquí. Voy a ir a empezar a estudiar medicina a la Universidad de Wisconsin en Madison. Espero ser doctor para los hispanos, asistiendo con mis manos, a los estudiantes, padres, y abuelos como ustedes. Guardaré mis recuerdos de sus historias en mi corazón. Gracias, y que Dios los acompañe siempre.





**“Someday I want to translate Spanish to English for my friends and family.” Abel**

I have lived in the United States for 10 years in order to work and make a home for my family....

We have three children, two boys and a girl. I want them to focus on studying so that they may serve their country, become a doctor or a Marine or a dentist; anything they want to become.

I also want to be fluent in English. Someday I want to translate Spanish to English for my friends and family.



“Tonight I would like to comment on something that causes me stress: not knowing English.”  
Elizabeth

Tonight I would like to comment on something that causes me stress: not knowing English, not knowing how to make myself understood with other people and wanting to say something without knowing how.

I wish to thank my tutors, Lori, and Isaac for giving me the strength and having patience with me while teaching me English. I feel that I am not learning, but the truth is that I am. I don't know how to have an entire conversation, but every time I learn more words and how to say more things, that makes me happy.

Thank you for helping me grow as a person by means of English and getting rid of the frustration of not knowing it.



“The real value of the program is found in the interactions between the volunteer tutors and students, and I know that my donation helps to facilitate that.”

Annie

I wanted to be a financial supporter of ELPW because I have volunteered as a tutor with the program and seen what a difference it makes in people's lives. What impressed me most was how dedicated and hardworking the students are.

The lesson topics vary, such as learning phrases they might use at a bank or supermarket. I can't imagine the challenges the students encounter when trying to do things that we take for granted. The things they learn in class have real life application right away in their lives.

Even though I already knew that learning English was a big challenge for them, I really understood it when we changed places in the Spanish for Tutors class. Even though I had taken several semesters of Spanish, and felt like I had a decent handle of written Spanish, the conversational focus of the class was a huge challenge for me. That really helped me understand how hard the students are working to speak English, and I learned better ways to tutor by being tutored. One of the ladies which I had previously tutored in English, tutored me in Spanish during class. She was proud to be able to share her knowledge with me and the other students learning Spanish.

I've also been impressed with how organized and fiscally responsible ELPW is. I've received personal notes letting me know that gifts I've sent are appreciated. Donations to ELPW are not only going to a deserving cause, but are also frugally and responsibly spent. The real value of the program is found in the interactions between the volunteer tutors and students, and I know that my donation helps to facilitate that.



“Tutoring here gives me the satisfaction of helping to surround myself with global diversity.”  
Danielle

I am a co-chair on my company's Corporate Services Diversity Strategy Team and find this volunteer opportunity dovetails perfectly with my other works, goals and personal growth efforts . I am slowly learning my native Ojibwa tongue.

Tutoring here gives me the satisfaction of helping to surround myself with global diversity. It is an opportunity to socialize in a safe, open environment and the chance to expand my own personal horizons. The open structure of the volunteer scheduling is invaluable to allowing me to “get in where I fit in.” I've learned that simply balancing family, friends, work, play, and community service is what makes me happy.