



PETALLs

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Preparing Excellent Teachers for All Language Learners

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I Learn America

A Documentary film by Jean-Michel Dissard & Gitte Peng

On Tuesday February 16th and Wednesday February 17th, the *I Learn America* film documentary and follow up workshop took place at the UMass Lowell Inn and Conference center.

These events were sponsored by Lawrence Public Schools and the PETALLs project.

The Film

One High School, One School Year, Five New Americans

The children of immigration, here to stay, are the new Americans. How we fare in welcoming them will determine the nature of this country in the 21st century and beyond.

In *I Learn America*, five resilient immigrant teenagers come together over a year at the International High School at Lafayette and struggle to learn about and get comfortable with their new land.

The International High School at Lafayette is a New York City public school dedicated to serving recently arrived immigrant teenagers, with more than 300 students speaking 24 languages from more than 50 countries. The students strive to master English, adapt to families they haven't seen in years, confront the universal trials of adolescence, and search for a future they can claim as their own.

Through these five vibrant young people, their stories and struggles, and their willingness to open their lives and share them with others, participants learn about life in America as an immigrant student. (Source: This description was taken from the *I Learn America* Viewers Guide.)

This Viewers Guide, which is intended for educators and students from early grades through University and for community members, was made available to all registered attendees.

The Screening

Allison Balter, the Director of ENLACE (Engaging Newcomers in Language and Content Education) at Lawrence High School introduced Jean-Michelle Dissard, the film director. Jean-Michelle presented the film, explaining that he would take questions following the screening. Audience members were clearly moved at the resilience of the five youth featured in the film. Audience members were delighted when at the end of the film, Sing and Brandon, two of the youth, joined Jean-Michelle to share their experiences as new immigrant students in America.



From L-R: Sing, Brandon (students featured in the documentary) and Jean-Michel, film director.

The Workshop

The following day, Jean-Michel and Sing conducted a hands-on workshop in which educators explored how to create welcoming environments for immigrant students. For more information on *I Learn America* visit the website: <http://ilearnamerica.com/>



I Learn America Film Screening
UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center



Jean-Michel discusses the film with workshop participants.

Eighty-seven participants from the Lawrence Public Schools, UMass Lowell, Middlesex Community College and the Merrimack Valley community attended the screening and participated in the workshop.



Preparing Excellent Teachers for All Language Learners

ESL Certificate Updates

Congratulations to 18 teachers who received a graduate certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language from UMass Lowell in Spring 2016. This cohort includes teachers from Lawrence, Woburn, UMass Lowell, and the Lawrence Family Development Charter School. Lawrence Public School teachers represent the following schools:

- Frost Middle School
- Parthum Middle School
- Oliver Partnership School
- Wetherbee School
- Hennessey School
- Bruce School
- Lawrence High School

The certificate includes 12 credits of coursework designed to give the content knowledge and practical experience needed for work in classrooms. Candidates who successfully complete the Teaching English as a Second Language Certificate will apply for ESL licensure.

ESL MTELL Support

PETALLs will offer MATSOL Academy to help teachers, who have completed coursework, prepare for the ESL MTELL. Please contact Cynthia_Bent@uml.edu for additional information. Dates for Summer Academy: 7/19, 7/21, 7/26, and 7/28. If there is sufficient interest, a Fall Academy may be offered.

SEI Professional Development Workshops

Four SEI Professional Development (PD) workshop series (each awarding 15 PDPs towards re-licensure) were offered during the 2015-16 school year. These PD offerings extended the skills and knowledge that teachers gained in RETELL SEI course. The PD was developed by Lawrence Public School faculty who had completed ESL certificates in collaboration with the LPS ESL Director and Facilitator and with faculty from UMass Lowell. Each PD offering was vetted by experts in the field.

Science for English Learners

Linda Gormley-Bonanno and Nicole Finneran facilitated *Teaching Science to English Language Learners within an Inclusion Model* at the Frost Middle School. Ten LPS teachers completed this professional development, which enhanced their knowledge and skills for teaching science to English learners.

Math for English Learners

Kristin Ando and Christine Hill facilitated *Teaching English Language Learners in the Elementary Mathematics Classroom*. This PD was so popular that two 15 hour sessions were offered. The workshops took place at the Oliver Partnership School. Fifty-two teachers completed this PD.

Teacher/Paraprofessional Collaboration

Nicole Finneran and Linda Bonanno, teachers at the Frost School, facilitated *Collaborating to Improve Instruction for English Learners*, a PD workshop series (**ParaTELL 3.0**) for fellow teachers and paraprofessionals. Ten teachers and eight paraprofessionals completed this workshop series. The teams will work together to ensure the success of students in their classrooms.

MATSOL Conference Presentations

PETALLs and the Lawrence Public Schools were well-represented at the annual MATSOL Conference in Framingham, MA (May 4-6). Faculty from University of Massachusetts Lowell and faculty and administrators from the Lawrence Public Schools presented *Systemic Change: Lessons from a National EL Professional Development Grant*.



Panelists (left to right): Laurie Hartwick, Michael Fiato, Paul Neal, Kinnon Foley, Jodie George, Michaela Colombo

Other Lawrence presentations included: *SLIFE Unlimited: Making Academic Writing Possible* (Nicoleta Filimon), *3-2-1 Nearpod! Ignite Lessons and Engaging Using this Versatile App!* (Amy Sidaoui), *Engaging Newcomers in Language and Content Education in Lawrence Mass* (Sarah Ottow, Allison Balter, Lindsey Mayer), *Supporting the Content: Concurrent ELD through Biology and the Biology Content Classroom* (Courtney Aseltine, Harshita Grover) and *Speak Up: Engaging SLIFE in Rigorous Academic Conversation* (Nicoleta Filimon, Althalia Gonzalez, Christi Cartwright-Lacerda, Doug Haubert).



Christi Cartwright-Lacerda, Nicoleta Filimon, and Althalia Gonzalez.

Updates

- ESL Certificate
- SEI Workshop Series
- Teacher/Paraprofessional Workshop Series
- MATSOL Presentation

INFORMATION

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