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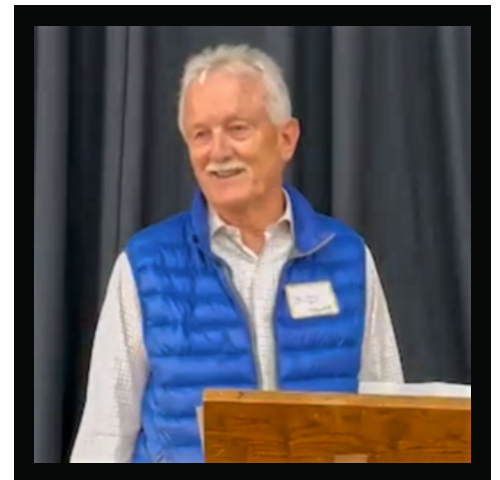
## A Grateful Finish to 2024



The English Learning Center wrapped up another fantastic year, filled with outstanding students, superhuman volunteers, and invaluable donors. From our May and October celebrations to the scores of courageous and curious new arrivals who graced our classrooms each week, we couldn't be happier with joy and learning that has become the hallmark of our community. Thank you to everyone who helped make our school an ongoing reality!

## Celebrating Bud Demko

After 9 incredible years as our school's board president, founder Bud Demko stepped away from his leadership position. It was an emotional afternoon on October 25th, when we gathered to celebrate the innumerable contributions Bud has made to the school and his continued inspiration for our students. Bud and his wife, Sue Warren, regaled attendees with stories of Bud's adventures and passion for connecting with the world while several students shared cuisine from their native countries. As all good parties should, this one ended with dancing, laughter, and love.



## 2025 School Update

The new year started with a wave of eager new students and volunteers. Initial enrollment in the winter/spring semester reached 96 students from 33 different countries. Class sizes in levels 2 through 5 have reached all-time highs! Executive Director Julie Feeny and Coordinator Kari Campbell have done an impressive job of managing the influx of new volunteers, too. We are so blessed to have such amazing individuals who want to fuel our mission!





# Student Spotlight: Katri G.

My name is Katri, and I'm from Brazil. I moved to Denver in August 2024 with my husband, who got a job here. Although I had never been to an English-speaking country before, I've always had a strong desire to improve my English.

I'm a food engineer with a master's in food quality and safety, and I've worked with international food safety certifications in the food industry. In my career, speaking English is crucial for interacting with auditors and visitors from around the world. However, my lack of fluency in English has always made communication difficult, causing me to miss opportunities.

Since arriving in Denver, I've been dedicated to improving my English at the English Learning Center. This has been a transformative experience—my listening and speaking skills have improved significantly, and I'm now much more confident in conversations. I've also had the chance to interact with students from diverse cultures, which has broadened my perspective and enriched my learning.

Learning English has truly been life-changing personally, and I believe it will be valuable professionally, possibly even for doing a PhD. Additionally, it has opened up new possibilities for me to travel and explore different cultures without the fear of language barriers. I'm grateful for the passionate professors and helpful assistants at the Center, whose advice and encouragement have been invaluable. Knowing English feels like freedom.



**ORDER**  
**MARCH**  
**6-12**



**RECEIVE**  
**MARCH**  
**13**



## Dine & Donate!

We've discovered a delicious new way to raise awareness and funding for our school, support a locally owned/operated Latina business, and treat ourselves to some incredible Mexican food! Our friends at Dos Amigas will donate 20% of the proceeds from the meals ordered by our community between March 6th and March 12th, for delivery on March 13th!

### How to Order

1. Place your order from 3/6 to 3/12.
2. Go to [www.dosamigas.com](http://www.dosamigas.com)
3. Click **Order Now** under *Frozen and Ready to Heat*
4. Choose from over 20 entrees, appetizers, and desserts
5. Enter Code "CENTER" in the discount field on the checkout page
6. Receive your delicious food on Thursday, March 13!

**DOS amigas**

locally owned, Denver company  
**DINE IN WITH DOS AMIGAS**  
Enjoy delicious and authentic frozen Mexican meals, delivered to your door. Convenient, perfect at home meals for any day of the week.  
Order at [dosamigas.com](http://dosamigas.com)

**20% OF PROFITS GO BACK TO English Learning Center**

Order window: 3/6- 3/12  
For delivery by 3/13  
Use code\* **CENTER**  
\*Enter code in the "Discount Code" field on the checkout page



# News from the Board

Our board of directors has also seen significant change over the past year. As Bud Demko stepped away as board president, Carol Balkcom, a long-time teacher/volunteer and tireless advocate, accepted the role. Carol continues to steward The English Learning Center with the same compassion and innovation as her predecessor.

In addition, three new board members have joined. Helen Resnick, who has completely transformed our school's approach to fundraising, Helen Hedrick, one of our most passionate teachers, and Ron Lamberson, a level 3 teacher, round out the new board.

This team has established grant, marketing, and development committees to strengthen the school's financial position and community involvement.



## Adjusting to New Norms

Many, many moving parts go into operating and strengthening our school. Today, on top of enrollment, testing, marketing, fundraising, coordinating, supplies, and a million other priorities, we face an unprecedented threat to our institution.

Despite anyone's political leanings, our new reality is one that creates new, intense pressure for all immigrants. Our students demonstrate incredible courage to show up to school each day. The incredible minister who oversees St. Thomas Episcopal Church—our home—has gone above and beyond to accommodate the needs of our students and staff.

Terri, in conjunction with Julie, has implemented several new safety policies and precautions to ensure we operate safely. In addition, Julie and Kari have provided students with information from local partners who may offer valuable support to them and their families.

We hope for peace, empathy, and generosity throughout these challenging times.



## A Special Thanks to Our Corporate Partners

We wanted to take a moment and call out two of our incredible Corporate Partners: Reiser Dental and Little Man Ice Cream! Thank you for your invaluable support!

Interested in becoming a Corporate Partner? Please contact Julie at [julie@englishlearningcenterdenver.org](mailto:julie@englishlearningcenterdenver.org).



[www.littlemanicecream.com/scoop-for-scoop](http://www.littlemanicecream.com/scoop-for-scoop)



# SAVE THE DATE!

## Sunday, April 13th

Please plan to join us offsite on Sunday, April 13th from 1 PM to 5 PM to celebrate our super amazing volunteers and everything related to the English Learning Center! The food and beverage vendors from this food hall will be donating a portion of their proceeds to the English Learning Center. It's a tremendous opportunity to make new friends, meet our students, and cheer on our volunteers! Bring the whole family! Look out for more details soon!

It's always a good time to support the English Learning Center! Looking to DONATE?  
Visit our website at [www.theenglishlearningcenterdenver.org](http://www.theenglishlearningcenterdenver.org).