Once again, another school year has come to a close. And with its end, comes an opportunity to mark significant milestones.

The biggest and most obvious one is graduation. On June 19, 110 graduates were celebrated. Among them were 33 adult high school diploma recipients and 77 HiSET completers.

One essay contest winner summed up her experience this way, “Education can truly transform a person’s life, and before coming to DALC, I never thought I’d say I would be continuing my education and that I would be attending college. When I presented my goals to my counselor, she didn’t laugh at me like I expected but took me seriously and gave me every possible option to succeed.” Well done and well said, Amanda!

Several DALC staff people also marked significant transitions.

Debbie Liskow, Adult Tutorial Coordinator since 2000, retired in June (see page 3 for more). Her patient and compassionate service will be missed, but how can we help but delight in her chance to spend time with her grandchildren and doing her favorite activities.

Bill Badgley, beloved ESL, Civics and Citizenship teacher will also retire at the end of summer to have time to visit his son and winter in a warmer climate. Pam Shaw, Counselor and Student Services Coordinator, marked her 20 year anniversary at DALC. She provides the welcoming environment, steadfast support and unending encouragement that our students rely on for their own growth.

It is the passion and commitment of dedicated educators like these that make sure that every DALC student is given “every possible option to succeed.”
I Guess You Can Never Care by Lutheuron Bonheur

I guess you can never care for a person’s pain until you feel it yourself. You’ll never learn to love until you know what love looks like. You grow up hearing that life isn’t fair. That’s about the surest truth.

When life is going well, it can be a façade. Well paid for your job. Praised because of social status. Have a happy home. But when life is fading, fatal secrets hidden, rope is getting thin. Everyone is walking over you. Either with avoidance or pity. Yet pity with no help, no mercy. The world is filled with more fear than happiness.

We paint the fear, build the machines that trap us. You fear the man who’s on the ground and it’s hard to see yourself through the dying, the sick, the addict, the dealer. Does help come around? No. They say it’s there but is it really? You come to work but do you really? You want to help but do you really?

In Our Own Words... is a collection of original writings. In poetry, personal reflection and artwork, students reveal their diversity, as well as their commonality as learners.
Center Stars - Our ESL Students

Top: Students in Bill Badgley’s Level 4 ESL class contributed to the annual publication of student writing, “In Our Own Words.”

Their native countries are India, China, Morocco, Romania, and Japan.

They wrote about the Taj Mahal, Ramadan, a wonderful husband, a family business, a favorite teacher, passionate hobbies, a flea market, and a woman with strong will power.

Right: Students in Ginny Stuart’s Level 4 ESL class also contributed to “In Our Own Words.”

Among their topics were a couple who exchanged more than 300 love letters, a father who insisted on raising his own kids, a mother who embraced a son-in-law of a different religion, a moment when despair turned to hope, a disastrous first date, and the best reason for trading in a Mercedes.

The countries represented here are Turkey, Mexico, Iran, Japan, Brazil, Indonesia, and Israel.

Staff in focus: Debbie Liskow retires

Adult Tutorial Coordinator Debbie Liskow retired at the end of this school year. For nearly 25 years, Debbie has been making a difference in our students’ lives and for the past two decades, as coordinator, she has recruited, trained, motivated and inspired hundreds of volunteers.

She didn’t want a big fuss made, so at the end-of-year gathering for DALC staff, Executive Director Deanna Strand congratulated Debbie and presented her with gifts and big hug.

Her tutors also surprised her by turning the tables. At the usual end-of year Tutor Appreciation Night, the volunteers showed Debbie how much they appreciated her, with gifts, stories and fond memories.

In her final newsletter to tutors, Debbie had the chance to share just a few of the fond memories of the dedication, persistence and caring shown by her volunteers.

The following is a story from one of the tutors, Ann Drysdale.

“I have been Bernice’s (not her real name) tutor for over a year. She is 50 years old, with developmental disabilities and hearing impairment. She was referred to me for enrichment. We have met approximately every week. Due to several factors, Bernice was not able to participate much in school. We started out with 3rd grade reading workbooks and progressed over the year to 5th and 6th grade material. I gave her weekly homework assignments, and when I realized she had missed most of the traditional school reading classics (e.g. “To Kill a Mockingbird”) I assigned her books to read and book reports. When an assigned book was also a movie, she watched the movie (she loves movies!) and invariably liked the book better than the movie. She said, “The movies miss a lot of the good parts!”

When I found that she had never read a poem, I found her a book of poems by Emily Dickinson. She surprised all her friends by reading a Dickinson poem at a friend’s memorial service. Bernice could not have done this a year ago. She also told me a few days ago that she got rid of all her James Patterson books (she used to skim those) because she was enjoying the classics that I was assigning and was too busy to read Mr. Patterson!
Located in the McConnell Community Center, Dover Adult Learning Center of Strafford County helps adults in the Strafford County area enhance their life skills and improve their lives through basic education, job training, high school completion, and enrichment classes. We help our students become more effective lifelong learners, family members, workers, and citizens.