



# Adult Learning Center News

Winter 2015

Volume XII, Issue 1



## Director's Message

*Deanna Strand*

Looking out my window at snow drifts as tall as a full grown adult, walking through howling winds and on slippery sidewalks and counting the growing number of school delays and cancellations, it's hard for me to imagine that we will be walking and running on clear ground in just a few weeks, but it's true. Reds Race will be run for the 34th year in a row on Sunday, April 12, rain, snow or shine.

Reds Race is one of the first of the road races in the Dover Race Series, and as such, kicks off the spring road race season. Yes, spring. It will be here, sooner than we realize

and with it will come all of the excitement and satisfaction of another school year drawing to a close and our culminating event, high school graduation will cap off the year.

For now, dedicated students and teachers brave the winds and snow to be here, day after day, dedicated to the work of teaching and learning. Just as the landscape will be transformed in the near future, so will the lives of our students as they complete life-long educational goals and many enter employment, college or training programs.

In an exciting partnership with Great Bay Community College (GBCC), this winter, 14 adult students are taking an adult education course with Kim Hanson, Dover Adult Learning Center math teacher, on the campus of GBCC. The course is aimed at improving their scores on the college placement test, the Accuplacer. This partnership was mentioned recently by Governor Maggie Hassan in her budget presentation as an important part of the state's plan for education. She said: "In the past year, we have begun a pilot program through the Bureau of Adult Education to help adults get any remedial education they need before

they get to the community college system. This helps adult students save their Pell Grant allotment and helps us make sure that we are using our higher education dollars as effectively as possible. We are expanding that pilot program to all of our community colleges by the end of the biennium."

Earlier this winter, DALC students participated in a civic education project in which they wrote letters to the Governor describing their work at DALC and their goals for the future. Many of them received letters back from the Governor's office. The Governor's budget includes a small increase for adult education. What a powerful message to adult students! Their work and their words matter and they have an impact!

### Be a part of our success:

- ◆ Serve on a committee
- ◆ Become a volunteer tutor
- ◆ Join our Board of Directors
- ◆ Take an enrichment class
- ◆ Teach an enrichment class
- ◆ Become a Friend of the Center by making a donation
- ◆ Include us in your estate planning
- ◆ Become a corporate or event sponsor

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**Our Board Members**  
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**Patricia Sorensen**  
**Ellen Westbrook**

## In Their Own Words...

The Story of my Life.....by Trang Vu

When I was in Viet Nam, I had a lot of friends. My favorite thing was to walk around the town with my friends. I miss a lot of things in Viet Nam. I can't go to my favorite places. When I had free time I liked to go to the book-store, out-door café, roadside restaurant, and shops with my brother, cousin, and my friends. We were very happy.

Sometimes we raised money for charitable organizations. I helped an orphanage and gave them money to buy food. But I didn't like to go to the orphanage because when I saw the children in there I cried. It made me feel sad.

I never thought about moving to the US, but you never know what can happen. On May 31, 2011, I moved to the US. I left everything in Viet Nam. I left my parents, brother, and friends. I had changed my life.

Everything had changed. English was very hard for me. Because I didn't think I would come to the US, I didn't study hard in Viet Nam. Here I learned how to drive and how to buy gas. I had to learn how to use the bank to get money, to get food, and to take the bus to school.

I worked in my family business, but it was very difficult. Customers didn't like me. They said I was hard to talk to because they couldn't understand me. Sometimes I cried when they said that. I decided to go to school to learn English. I want to get my GED and I want to go to college. I have come a long way and I hope I can do it.

*In Our Own Words...* is a collection of original writings. In poetry, personal reflection and artwork, they reveal their diversity, as well as their commonality as learners.

## 2015 Friends of the Center

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### Donations Received

#### In Honor Of:

Glenn Breton  
 Cameron Dupere  
 ESOL Program  
 Donna McAdam Scholarship

## Center Stars - Cathy

Despite having her left eye removed due to a cancerous tumor and a subsequent diagnosis of third stage lung cancer and undergoing chemo and radiation, Cathy rarely misses her evening ABE classes with Kim Hanson. "I am trying to make something of myself," she said with determination. And she is unfailingly upbeat.

Not asking for sympathy but enjoying any humor she can inject, Cathy just states her situation simply. She was one of nine children in a struggling family. If she asked her mother for something, her mother would respond that Cathy could not have it. To be fair, all her sisters and brothers would also need it -- and there was not enough to go around. So at age 15, she began part-time work in a shoe shop to earn money. She found she liked the work, as well as the money. So, no surprise, Cathy gave up school to continue earning wages. "I could kick myself in the butt," she said, for that decision.

Last year Cathy began coming to evening academic classes with Kim.



"She is really a good teacher, a good woman," Cathy said of Kim.

Cathy's favorite subjects are math and reading. Since coming to class, she feels she has learned quite a bit. She finds herself reading more. In addition, she enjoys the other students and considers herself the class clown.

Last fall her life changed with the diagnosis of a tumor in her eye. Her eye had to be removed. Cathy says her younger sister Charlene, who also comes to class in the evening, "has been with me every step of the way." Then to top that challenge, Cathy was diagnosed with 3rd stage lung cancer. As breathing is difficult, she had to give up her job. Not dwelling on the illness, Cathy goes on to speak highly of the Cancer Center at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital where she undergoes chemo and radiation treatment. "I like to make them laugh," she said of the people at the Center.

Despite her throat feeling as if it were on fire and being so tired it is hard to get out of bed, Cathy drags herself to class every Tuesday and Thursday. She might have missed a class or two, she is not sure.

She hopes to eventually pass her high school equivalency. But, she still insists with a ready smile that she is "trying to make something of myself." Someone needs to tell her that she already has.

## Staff focus... Kristie Boucher Pepper



Kristie began working at Dover Adult Learning Center as an academic skills and HiSET (high school equivalency test) prep teacher in Rochester in the fall of 2014. She had been working as a substitute teacher since 2011 and as a tutor since 2008.

Kristie has a Bachelor's Degree from Endicott College, and she is currently attending Southern New Hampshire University and working on her Master's Degree in Education.

Her hobbies (when she is not working) include studying business, painting, reading, and spending time with her husband and 2-year-old son.



Dover

## ADULT LEARNING CENTER

**Strafford County**

61 Locust Street, Dover, NH 03820  
[www.doveradultlearning.org](http://www.doveradultlearning.org)  
603-742-1030

### What's happening at DALC?

Keep in touch between our print newsletters by signing up for our emails at

[www.doveradultlearning.org](http://www.doveradultlearning.org)

You can also check out our Facebook page:  
[facebook.com/DALCNH](https://facebook.com/DALCNH)



## Register now for Reds Run for a Better Community

# Reds Run for Better Community Sunday, April 12, 2015

Registration is now open!

Part of the Dover Race Series

[www.reds-race.com](http://www.reds-race.com)



*Located in the McConnell Community Center, Dover Adult Learning Center of Strafford County helps adults in the Strafford County area enhance their life-coping 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.*