

Learn About...

English as a Second Language (ESL) Program

What is the Program?

English as a Second Language classes are part of the Education Department and help foreign-born adults learn about fitting into the American culture as they improve their language and communication skills.

Who Does the Program Serve?

Non-native English speakers from all over the world come to Goodwill to take English classes where they will improve listening, speaking, reading and writing while learning about the American culture. In addition to simple language classes, classes are offered in basic computer, driver's permit prep and American Citizenship and Naturalization. In order to help these students successfully assimilate into the American workforce, several job training classes have also been designed to help foreign born gain the necessary skills to become employed in the United States.

How Does the Program Benefit Participants and the Community?

The individuals participating in these classes are able to become more comfortable and to function in their new country. Parents are able to participate in school activities with their children, attend doctor's appointments and become proficient in basic job skills and are prepared to become valued employees. Many adults come to study for their American Citizenship and Naturalization interview and test.



A Personal Story:

Xiomara arrived in Pittsburgh from Venezuela and came to Goodwill for help in studying for her Citizenship and Naturalization test. On May 29, 2008, Xio, along with 249 others, was part of the Pittsburgh 250 Ceremony held at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall where 250 new American citizens were sworn in. It was a very proud moment for Xio and her family.

Still Xio's desire to learn was not satisfied and shortly after becoming an American citizen, she enrolled in the Workforce Solutions job training class and successfully completed the 9 week class, improving her English, her computer skills and preparing her resume. Today Xio is employed and leads a very active life in the local community.

Special Program Accomplishments

The Workforce Solutions (banking and financial industry) class is beginning its 21st class. The class boasts a 76% employment rate after completion with a starting salary of \$10.26/hr.