NAAM Monthly Updates - October 2020

Our office at 330 Lynnway might be physically closed, but NAAM is very much still open. We have been working diligently from home to ensure that our refugee and immigrant clients continue to receive the services they need and deserve. Here are some things we have been up to this month:

Announcements:

We continue conducting our services and programs as before. This month we added a new class, Literacy Class taught by experienced Instructor, Elizabeth Price. It is a small but wonderful group of people who are challenged to learn the language along with literacy skills in the online classroom. We had a very productive meeting with head of the Language Department in Lynn Public Schools, Rania Caldwell, to determine how we can better assist our students and School teachers.

On October 14th we had our first Immigration Clinic on Zoom. Neesha Suarez, Director of Constituent Services at the Office of Congressman Seth Moulton, was instrumental in helping us to organize the clinic. Two Immigration Lawyers worked pro-bono for two hours meeting with people and offering legal advice and consultation to 12 people in need of immigration information.

We continue providing food to people. It looks like the need for food delivery is growing. Our dedicated staff and volunteers are working diligently to bring food from My Brother's Table to Clifton Lutheran Church, purchase produce, bake sweets, pack boxes, and deliver them to people. There are always long, tiresome, but rewarding, days for them on Thursdays. We now deliver food to about 60 families.

Our main current concern is COVID-19 surge in Lynn and surrounding areas. In all our classes and one-on-one consultations we constantly offer people information on local resources, cities website, education and assistance. Most of the staff members continue working from home, meeting individual clients on appointments in the office. At this moment we are talking with our constituents about the upcoming Holiday Season and possible ways to celebrate it without potential exposure to the virus.

If you need assistance, interested to learn about our programs or have a question please email us and will do our best to help.

Case Management & Employment:

- **Employment Services** – As the fall starts, different industries have been revamping their activities and services in larger scales. Our clients have been able to find employment in the production, food and
hospitality fields. As has been the case since phase one of the re-opening, the local big box stores and supermarkets continue to post positions, and there are restaurants and other product delivery services that are looking for delivery drivers. In addition, the local staffing agencies are advertising more new positions in production and sanitation, as some of the local production companies that have traditionally employed our clients are now heading into their busy seasons.

- **NAAM** has also been offering English classes and employment coaching services remotely via ZOOM. We offered different class levels, as well as volunteer one-on-one with participants. We believe that English language acquisition is vital for reaching quality employment.
  - Our organization also sponsors in-person work training and driving lessons for our clients. Our clients have been able to get their driving licenses and also training certificates such as the Certified Nursing Assistant Training. In addition to monitoring the evolving employment landscape and helping clients with job applications and interviews, we continue to assist clients with managing their unemployment claims and making the weekly benefit requests. As always, please reach out to Will, Lynne, Natasha or Venette if you need help with an unemployment claim or submitting a job application, help getting an appointment with the RMV for any reason, would like to join one of NAC’s classes, or need another type of assistance.

**Citizenship Services:**

- **NAAM’s Citizenship Program**
  - Keeps working hard for our clients and families. We have helped students become citizens through application help and citizenship classes. If anyone is interested in applying for naturalization, feel free to call Will Peña at 781-593-0100 ext. 14, or email him at wpena@naamaas.org
  - Will received accreditation from the Board of Immigration Appeals

- **Citizenship Classes:**
  - Seven students were naturalized during this quarter, including Maria Kirova, who joined the class in February 2020!
  - Michelle Guzman presented her civics program on October 15. Michelle talked about the power of the voting booth and connecting with city officials as immigrants and refugees and as citizens.
  - A new session of classes will begin on November 30th.
Lowell Office:

- The Lowell office is open three days a week. Since childcare is opening up, people are starting to be able to go back to work.
  - “This month, I reached out to all of my clients in order to connect them with zoom classes run from the Lynn office in ESOL and citizenship, and help applying for green cards and citizenship.” - Amanda

Youth Program:

- We continue to run after school every day from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Students have been working hard on their homework, but we also find time to have fun too! Group games like Among Us, Kahoot, and Roblox have been very popular this month. Other weekly activities include: girls' group with Darlene, art with Tiffany, singing with MaryBeth, and science with Rouaa and Reem. One highlight was a fall-themed painting activity. We have also been watching movies every Friday, including several Halloween-themed movies like Hocus Pocus and the Goosebumps movies. With rising cases of COVID-19 and the upcoming holidays, Lynn Public Schools has decided to continue with online learning until at least February 5th. NAC Youth Program will follow their guidance and continue to support our students remotely as well.

Refugee Youth Mentoring Program Updates:

- Our mentoring program supports youth in attaining self-sufficiency, economic stability, and ultimately the ability to thrive in this country. We implement that by matching our youth with trusted adults that guide them through reaching their individual goals. We are currently in the process of matching more of our volunteer mentors with our youth to help them achieve their goals. Currently, all programming activities are virtual.
CRES English Classes:

- Dan’s class:
  - We continue with grammar - present, past, future tenses. Working with the Voice of America program.
  - Class continues with Voice of America’s “Let’s Learn English.” Students are now on Level 2 of the Beginner program. Students are learning idioms, News Words such as “misinformation and disinformation” as well as “swing states.” Current events are discussed, such as the election. Our newest students, Arely and Kathye are from El Salvador and have been in the U.S. for several weeks.

- Gina’s class:
  - The month of October began with exploring the history and significance of Columbus/Indigenous People’s Day and Halloween. As there are a number of students from DRC, we studied language maps of Congo and pre-1600 North America to try to understand the controversy around the man who “discovered America”. The last week was devoted to the imminent election, watching videos from usa.gov and Voice of America to understand how America elects a president and the electoral college. The language focus was largely on election and news vocabulary and the grammar of expressing opinions. Anecdotally, there was solid agreement on whom the next president should be!

- Khara’s class:
  - Students are learning English through VOA lessons. In October the following topics were practiced: Present Tense, Present Continuous Tense of the common verbs. They also practiced vocabulary, watched videos and answered quizzes.

LPS English Classes:

- Dulany’s class:
  - Our class sessions always start with some talk about us. Often the teacher asks a question (What’s your favorite season? or What’s something we know that we might mention when introducing an “old” classmate to a “new” one? or What might we read about in an article entitled LYNN TOWN HALL TALKS COVID?, and each student has to talk on that topic for 2 minutes. In preparation, we brainstorm questions that the speaker can answer and that the listener can listen for. After each student speaks, we go back to our list of questions and see which ones were answered, and what unasked questions were answered. This has been a fun
way to practice our questioning skills, including yes/no questions, information questions, embedded questions, and tag questions.

- **Bobby’s class:**
  - Things have been going well in my ESL class. It has been really encouraging to see progress being made, especially among the students that are attending both English and Citizenship classes. Practicing 4X/week helps tremendously! Attendance has been fairly consistent - usually between 7-9 students per class.

- **Suzie’s class:**
  - We have completed another chapter of our book, and it was particularly relevant as it was about illness and prescriptions. Those who do homework are beginning to be more creative with their paragraphs. I am really proud of their progress.

- **Elizabeth Class:**
  - At the end of September I began teaching a new ESL literacy class with a small group of Spanish speaking women. Without having had the opportunity to learn to read in their first language, these dedicated students are learning basic conversational English and initial literacy skills in English at the same time. During these twice a week evening classes, we are developing vocabulary centered on personal information and practicing letter sounds and sight words. Teaching and learning over Zoom is a challenge for all of us, but we’re making great progress!

**ELT-I:**
- **Art:**
  - We learned about JJ Audubon’s, born Rabin, sketched beautiful realistic depictions of live birds in their natural positions and habitat. Using them as his models rather than museum specimens.
  - During this month’s lesson, we treated to 8 beautiful paintings depicting an exquisite array of fall colors. We learned the colors are caused because of a chemical process- Chlorophyll (Green), Xanthophylls (Yellows), Carotenoids (Oranges), Anthocyanin (Reds). We learned about leaves turning beautiful colors this time of year and why they change colors.
• **Music:**
  - This month we enjoyed the song, Turn Turn Turn, written by Pete Seeger, an influential American folk singer and activist in 1961. Makayambi was able to hear us and participate thanks to the help Uwezo was able to provide him. We were also happy to have Afzal join us during the session though he is still recouping.
  - We studied Indigenous Peoples’ Day. Which celebrates and honors Native American history and culture. It began as a counter-celebration held on the same day as the U.S. federal holiday of Columbus Day.
  - We learned about Bob Dylan Biography. He is thought to be one of the most productive people in popular music of the 20th and 21st centuries. We sang and read the lyrics to his song. “The Times They Are A-Changin’” is a thought provoking song with deep meaning which all the students really enjoyed. The session was enriched by, “The song of Freedom” written for a TV movie made in 2000 depicting the civil rights movement in Mississippi during the 1960’s. We welcomed Kener H to the ELT-I program.

• **Wellness:**
  - We worked on financial wellness – managing money wisely, living within our means, save for emergencies, setting financial investments and decisions. We focused on Eight Dimensions of Wellness in the session: Physical Wellness, Emotional Wellness, Spiritual Wellness, Social Wellness, Vocational Wellness, Financial Wellness, Intellectual Wellness, & Environmental Wellness.
  - We had a special guest visitor and we worked on sentences. We used pictures of vegetables and fruits to work on pronunciation. We learned sleep, exercise, drinking water, and eating good food is important.

• **Phone Technology:**
  - During our session we learned about locations where we can find Hotspots. We learned our devices will tell us if there is presence of Wifi hotspot and how to agree to use it. As well, how to take precautions when using public Hotspots. We visited the Boston Public Library website and learned Borrowing a Hotspot is possible if we, “Reserve a Wifi Hotspot.” We encourage students to visit the NAAM site and check how to look at the updates and how to reach out to the staff via email or filling the box information, also a lesson for the new students as well.
In the session, we started with a review of the prior lesson, then proceeded to expand to the general. Emergency Alerts: Public Safety was sent out on phone devices from MAGovt Alert COVID19. The students asked questions and discussed the reason for the alert. They learned it was a directive given for the public’s safety. They were able to browse Gov and Mass.gov sites to learn about COVID-19 updated information, necessary precautions, and how to get free COVID-19 test.

Contact Us:
Phone – 781.593.0100 x 18
Email – info@naamass.org
Social Media – Facebook and Instagram

We hope that everyone is staying safe and healthy in these difficult times. We look forward to the day that we can once again greet you all in person at the New American Center.