



**Friendship**  
**Community Project**  
English Classes since 2015

# Summer 2024 Newsletter



[www.fcp-iowa.org](http://www.fcp-iowa.org)

# About Friendship Community Project

Friendship Community Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, founded in 2015, dedicated to teaching English language and life skills to Iowa City area immigrants and refugees and to promoting a sense of community belonging and practical assistance in accessing local resources, learning about our community, and dealing with day-to-day life challenges through structured English classes, informal conversation groups, Friendship Pal pairings with community members, a help desk, and tutoring in special situations. We are grateful for the support of our volunteers and donors, allowing us to fulfill this mission.

## A Note From the Director

Dear friends,

This year, we were happy to see our student numbers at pre-pandemic levels, and as always are grateful for our volunteers. We experimented with some changes: We are noticing larger numbers of beginning students and smaller numbers of advanced students than in the past, so we divided our beginning class into low and high beginning, and those classes both stayed large all year.

Our intermediate class was stable, and our advanced class was small, so in the spring, when the volunteers teaching the morning advanced class left us, we experimented with offering informal conversation practice in small groups or one-on-one with volunteers to advanced students rather than a formal class. This strategy allowed us to concentrate our efforts on the students with the greatest need, those just beginning to learn English and get on their feet in their new country. We did offer an advanced class two evenings a week at the Iowa City Public Library, which went online in spring term, at student request. Our plan for fall is to continue this way.



Some exciting news is that two of our beginning teachers and one classroom assistant offered to continue teaching their current students over the summer, so we have partnered with the Broadway Neighborhood Center to use their classroom space for these two (upper and lower beginning) groups. We hope this helps move more of last year's beginners up to the intermediate level in time for fall term.

Posters will be going out in August to invite students to come register in-person on the first day of class, September 9th. In the meantime, we hope our students and staff enjoy their summer!

Sincerely,  
Susan Prepejchal



# Highlights

This year, we have served 119 students from 34 countries, including:

Angola, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Mali, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Poland, Spain, Sudan, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

Our students speak at least 21 languages among them: Affan, Amharic, Arabic, Bambara, Farsi, French, Foula, Hakka, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Kazakh, Korean, Lingala, Oromo, Pulaar, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Thai, Turkish, and Ukrainian.

This year, our beginning level classes were bursting at the seams, so the class levels were adjusted downward a bit to accommodate everyone. In the fall term we offered beginning, high beginning, intermediate, and advanced classes on Monday/Wednesday mornings 10am-11:30am and an Advanced evening class on Mondays and Thursdays that initially met at the Iowa City Public Library but later went online. In the spring term, our advanced daytime class was dissolved, and students instead participated in small, informal conversation groups led by volunteers during class time. During both terms, we had one online advanced conversation group that met on Wednesday evenings.



One of our students, from Ukraine, worked with a tutor, and two of our beginning students, from Sudan, worked with supplemental tutors. 15 of our students also practiced informal conversation outside of class with volunteer Friendship Pals.

This summer one instructor and two volunteers are continuing to work with our current beginning and upper beginning students one morning a week at the Broadway Neighborhood Center.

We had some special situations this year: At three different times, three 18-year-olds (from Guinea and Ethiopia) arrived to take our classes, and two of us assisted them in getting registered at West High to complete their high school education instead. We also had a number of students arrive from Africa unprepared for winter weather. We took one of them shopping at local resale shops for winter socks, shoes, jacket, gloves and hat, and then we solicited donations of lightly used shoes and winter clothing from our friends and supporters for other students who arrived in January barefoot in flip-flops without jackets.



# Our Instructors

Our classroom instructors this year were:

- Angela Hayes-Beginning (assistants Susan Jacques, Gail Ross fall term, Marissa Good spring term)
- Esther Smith and Celeste Miller-High Beginning (assistant Stephanie Sharf)
- Nancy Keith-Intermediate
- Grey Hempsmire and Ciara Tapanes-Advanced (daytime, first term)
- John Loomis-Advanced (evening)

Conversation Leaders on Monday/Wednesday mornings were Bev Marple, Katie Mathew, and Mica Rios. George Sauerberg led our Wednesday evening online conversation group.

Tutors this year were Sue Ward, Ella Wareham, and Jim Conger.



# Our Volunteers

Friendship Pal conversation partners were:

Marcia Bollinger (1), Cecilia Bradley (1), John Erickson (2), Adam Grimm (3), Missy Harrison (1), Josie Lester (1), Bev Marple (1), Susan Prepejchal (3), Gail Ross (1), Esther Smith (1), Dalila Solis (1), Noah Thomas (1), Aditi Tripathy (2).

Our other volunteers included:

- Fall outreach translations: Livia Centeno (Spanish), Ramatoulaye Diallo (French), Sara Haroun (Arabic)
- Bookkeeping: Thomas Dean
- Tech and Newsletter: Alexander Goloshchapov
- Director: Susan Prepejchal

# Our Donors

Our donors this year:

- Hills Bank
- Green State Foundation
- Hudson's Southside Tap
- David Prepejchal
- Pratiksa Desai
- Ikumi Kato
- Alexander and Fati Goloshchapov

Can donations: Sarah Andrews, Sharon Bec, Chinlan Luo, Livia Centeno, Marthe Dimonekene, Susan Jacques, Franco Pesce, George Sauerberg, Ryszard Szcepanski, University of Iowa Office of the President

Winter clothing donations for students: Thomas Dean and Susan Prepejchal, Forrest Meyer, Steve Pradarelli, Isabella Santoro, Jenny Schuchert Hall and Mike Hall, Lorraine Williams



# English Class Calendar for 2024-2025

- First Class: Monday, September 9th
- Thanksgiving Break: Week of Nov 25th – No Class
- Winter Break: December 11 is last fall class, and February 5th is the first spring class
- First Spring Class: February 5th
- Spring Break: Week of March 17th – No Class
- Summer Vacation: May 7th is the last class

You can email Susan at [info@fcp-iowa.org](mailto:info@fcp-iowa.org) if you have any questions.

