



What is REEP?

Our Vision:

Our learners will be able to access and use information from a variety of sources, voice their ideas and concerns, act independently and continue learning in an ever-changing world.

Our Mission:

To provide for the education and employment related needs of limited English proficient adults who live and work in Arlington.

Our Goals:

Consistent with their aptitudes, interests and educational needs, Limited English Speakers in Arlington will:

- develop communication and literacy skills needed to function in the workplace, home, and community;
- apply social and civic knowledge and critical thinking skills in order to become an empowered citizenry;
- acquire skills to become independent lifelong learners; and
- gain skills to use technology in their lives and learning.



A student in the beginning Outreach Center class at Arlington Mill, with her 14-month-old son.

REEP Quarterly

The First Word: Helping Students Help Their Children

Immigrants come to REEP for a variety of reasons. From learning basic lifeskills English to developing workplace readiness skills to boost their job prospects, every single student has a purpose for working hard to improve their English.

Many of our adult students are here to learn the English they need in their roles as parents or caregivers. Currently, 39% of REEP students live in a home with at least one child under 18 years old. Last year, 36% of students had children attending Arlington Public Schools. To address this need, REEP teachers create lessons directly related to school matters, such as helping parents prepare for parent-teacher conferences and navigating the K-12 system.

Investing in the education of adults has positive outcomes for both adults and their children. Research has shown that parents play a critical role in providing basic school readiness skills. This is something our students intuitively understand. They tell us that they enroll in our classes to set an example for their children. According to veteran REEP teacher Stacy Clark, "Several moms and dads have told me that they want to attend classes, improve their English, and show their children that do-

ing well in school is a family priority."

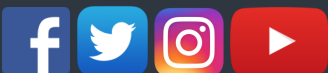
Beyond modeling behaviors that lead to academic success, parents and caregivers cite health and safety reasons for attending English class. REEP helps students develop the communication skills necessary to protect their families and help them thrive. Examples of those skills include caring and advocating for a child with a chronic illness and dealing with law enforcement officials and public safety services during an emergency.

All of these skills — early academic development, school readiness, health and safety — are also important elements of high quality childcare. In a survey administered during the 1st Quarter of this year, 14% of REEP students reported working as a paid child care provider in Arlington. Arlington County prioritizes high quality child care and is working to improve the quality of child care programs through its Child Care Initiative Action Plan. REEP plays an important role in this effort by increasing the opportunity for provider ESOL training, as well as supporting providers in earning credentials that will help them become qualified teachers of young children.

— Emily Beckett, REEP supervisor



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Statistical Report

Table 1. Goals and Year-To-Date Progress

Progress toward our goals by June 30, 2019	
Annual Goal	Year to date
Provide 3,385 ESL class slots	803 slots provided
Provide 820 intensive scholarships	201 slots provided
Intensive ESL class slots	385 slots provided
Non-intensive ESL, workplace literacy, family literacy, detention ESL, Specialty classes, and/or Outreach classes	217 slots provided
70% of Intensive, Non-Intensive, and Specialty ESL students complete 12-week session	88% completed
75% of Intensive, Non-Intensive, and Specialty ESL students who complete 12 weeks achieve course competencies	74% attained
55% of all Intensive, Non-Intensive, and Specialty ESL students progress to next level	74% progressed
50% of all Workplace Literacy and Family Literacy enrolled will complete the competencies necessary for their course.	94% attained

REEP operates ESL classes at Syphax Education Center (SEC), Arlington Mill Community Center (AMCC), Wakefield High School (WHS), Arlington County Detention Facility (ACDF), and Gates of Ballston.

4th Quarter Enrollment

During the 4th Quarter, 803 ESL enrollments were provided, 586 (73%) in intensive classes and 217 (27%) in Non-intensive, Specialty, Workplace, and Outreach classes. Of the 586 intensive enrollments, 66% were tuition slots (385 slots) and 34% were scholarship/voucher slots (201 slots).

Performance Goals

Intensive and non-intensive students completed their courses this quarter at a rate of 88%. REEP completions continue to well exceed the goal of 70% and demonstrate a high level of student satisfaction. Of the students who completed their courses, 74% attained the course competencies needed to move to the next instructional level this quarter. Of all students enrolled (completers and non-completers), 74% attained the course competencies needed to advance to the next instructional level this quarter.

Table 2. Breakdown by English proficiency level

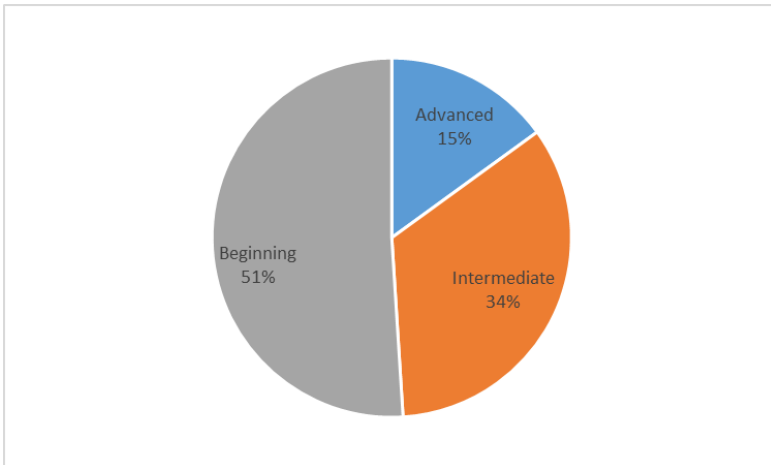


Table 3. Demographic Information

Ethnicity:	77% Hispanic	10% African
	6% Pacific Asian	7% Other
Age:	1% 17-18	10% 19-24
	58% 25-44	19% 45-54
	12% 55 and older	
Gender:	35% Male	65% Female
Educational Background:	15% Less than 7 years of education	
	52% 7-12 years of education	
	33% 13 or more years	
	67% High School Diploma	
Employment Status*:	50% Employed full-time	
	22% Employed part-time	
	72% Employed	

* Employment information is collected from new students upon initial REEP registration and does not reflect changes in employment status during a student's continued enrollment in the program.

Workplace and ESL Contract Classes:

During the 1st Quarter, REEP provided intensive instruction to six students with workplace vouchers. These students were referred by Arlington Public Schools. In addition, the following businesses/agencies sponsored students this quarter: Arlington Employment Center, Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing, ORS Interactive, East Coast Iron, Maravilla Construction and Catholic Charities.

★ SPONSOR A STUDENT ★

Are you interested in sponsoring a REEP student's studies? Companies, organizations or individuals can make tax deductible donations. Contact Natalia Benefiel at natalia.benefiel@apsva.us or call (703) 228-8024

TOEFL Class

Students at REEP started a class devoted to preparation for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) during the 1st Quarter. It was the first time in two decades that the program has offered this type of test prep class for advanced students.

Over the years, REEP's highest level students often asked for a more advanced class or for TOEFL prep as they seek entrance into U.S. universities. This recurring demand was the impetus for the Advanced English and TOEFL Preparation Class, which kicked off this past July.

The class met for 11 Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and was taught by REEP instructor, Lyle Ring. He designed the course to focus on the key skill areas targeted on the TOEFL iBT (internet based test) and included a robust on-line component using Google Classroom to deliver homework assignments and offer additional study options.

"The group was definitely up to learning advanced English," Lyle said. They "spent a good amount of time on conversation, trickier grammar points, and academic based English." The two largest challenges: producing English under pressure in a timed test and working with materials on a range of unfamiliar topics – topics not typically dealt with in intensive classes. Lyle was impressed by the students' abilities to rise to the challenge of such a demanding course and felt that there was substantial progress in speaking and listening, with an emphasis on listening actively and note-taking.

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Outreach students play a conversation board game..

Volunteers play a vital role in all components of the REEP Program— as teachers' aides in the Intensive and Non-intensive Programs, as literacy teachers in the Extended Literacy Program, and as Outreach ESL teachers.

Volunteer Program

Volunteer teachers and students at REEP's free, drop-in Outreach Center classes joined a nationwide movement in September by hosting a Welcoming Week event to celebrate the contributions of immigrants and refugees in our communities.

More than 60 students participated in the gathering at Arlington Mill on Sept. 20, where students, volunteers and guests played a conversation board game that asked questions such as what smell reminds you most of home. Many students brought food from their cultures to a potluck. In addition to enjoying the various dishes, students voted for the three best student chefs in the program.

Welcoming Week is an effort by an Atlanta-based organization, Welcoming America, to increase understanding between native-born and immigrant populations. The group was

founded by David Lubell in 2009 to create a more welcoming environment for immigrants and to highlight the vital role they play in our communities.

"These types of moments are when our values are most tested as a country," Lubell said recently in an interview with the Chronicle of Philanthropy. "Our job is to remind people of what our values are. We are a welcoming country."

In other 1st Quarter news, 69 volunteers served with REEP during the three months ending Sept. 30, with nine being first-time volunteers. 27 volunteers served as teaching assistants, 35 served as outreach teachers, and three as job coaches.

The Outreach Center teachers provided instruction to approximately 129 students and the teaching assistants supported 15 classes.

Program Highlight: BEST Plus Study Partners with CAL

Continuing a long-time connection with a D.C. research organization, REEP collaborated this summer with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in a field test of its new oral skills test.

More than 100 students at Arlington Mill, Wakefield and Syphax took part in the research carried out by staff members from CAL. Students answered questions in a new version of the BEST Plus oral interview, which measures English language proficiency of adult learners and is used for high-stakes testing by adult ESL programs across the U.S.

Students in intensive classes volunteered to take two different forms of the new BEST Plus, administered by CAL researchers. For most students, it was another form of conversation practice – the test uses an interview format where learners answer questions provided by computer-adaptive software and also react to photo prompts. REEP learners at all levels, from low beginners to advanced, took part in the project, which stretched over several weeks in July and August.

The research is being done so that CAL can have a new version of BEST Plus certified for use by federally-funded programs.

"I want to say a huge thank you," said Dr. Meg Montee, a senior researcher at CAL and one of the project leaders. "Our whole team loved working with REEP."

REEP has participated in previous field tests of earlier versions of BEST Plus and REEP staff were involved 15 years ago, when the first version was created, helping to write test questions and serving on standards-setting panels.

Staff News

REEP staff presented at a state-wide conference held in Williamsburg during the 1st Quarter.

Staff participated in the Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Conference, held in mid-July, which was run by the state Department of Education. Veteran REEP teacher Sharon McKay, who among other assignments teaches in the Arlington County Detention Facility, presented on how to create a curriculum for learners in a corrections setting. In addition, REEP Supervisor Emily Beckett and program coordinator Ruth Sysak gave a session about using teacher study circles to integrate new English Language Proficiency Standards into an established curriculum.

The three-day meeting included workshops on standards-based instruction, technology integration and workforce development, among other topics. REEP's instructional technology coordinator Michele Cona was on the planning committee for the conference.

Also during the 1st Quarter, AMCC coordinator Phil Cackley took part in a 3-day meeting in August at the Center for Applied Linguistics, where experts from around the country worked on a standards-setting panel for a new version of the BEST Plus oral interview (see p. 3 for a story about REEP students' participation in research related to BEST Plus.)

Editorial staff: Emily Beckett, Phil Cackley. Contributors: Natalia Benefiel, Paul McCabe, and Amanda Rayborn.

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Success Story & Community Links

Success Story — Alberto Ramos

Alberto Ramos is good at problem-solving. He asks questions. He evaluates information. And he's willing to seek advice from unlikely sources – like the bus driver in Miami.

Two weeks after arriving in Miami and with no job prospects, Ramos asked a driver on a bus where the best place was to find work in the U.S. The man told him, New Jersey. So Ramos moved to Elizabeth, N.J., and quickly found a job in a factory.

Later, after relocating to Arlington (a friend lived here), he picked up work in construction but didn't really like it. His wife and four children had joined him in the U.S. and there were bills to pay. One day, while on a construction site, he saw two technicians and asked them where they worked. They sent him to Dwyer Plumbing, in Alexandria. He went there, talked to the owner and got hired.

"This changed my life," Ramos said. "Thanks to Dwyer Plumbing, I am where I am today."

As a result, 18 years after leaving his native Bolivia in search of a better life, Ramos works for Arlington Public Schools, doing HVAC maintenance.

Ramos grew up in La Paz, Bolivia, went to college there and worked for 20 years in the private sector as a certified public accountant. But Bolivia's economy hit a downturn, inflation was out of control and political turmoil prompted Ramos to move to the U.S. He tried a series of jobs. Employment as a CPA in the U.S. wasn't a possibility, due to his low level of English and lack of professional credentials here.

But he kept a positive attitude – "I don't give up!" – and after starting work at Dwyer Plumbing, things started to change. He took ESL classes at REEP in Clarendon for two years, going from low beginning to the high intermediate level.

With help from the owner of Dwyer Plumbing, he also took trade classes in a variety of programs and eventually earned a license as a master HVAC technician. A year and a half ago, he switched to APS after 12 years at Dwyer.

"The key in America is education," Ramos said. He passed on the same lesson to his children, three of whom have graduated from college. His youngest son is currently studying computer science at University of Virginia. Ramos plans to continue studying himself, learning more business practices.

Community Links — Welcoming Week Guests Visit Class

The high-intermediate morning class at Syphax invited special guests to their class during Welcoming Week, students volunteered at the Arlington County Fair, and four former REEP learners graduated from a culinary training program during the 1st Quarter.

REEP participated in Welcoming Week by inviting guests to spend time in the morning 450-500 class. Attending the event were David Remick, executive director of the Arlington-Alexandria Regional Workforce Council; Howard Feldstein, Arlington Employment Center director; Ela Bledowski, AEC staff member; and Dulce Carrillo, a coordinator in Arlington Public Schools' Office of School and Community Relations. Welcoming Week is a national campaign to increase awareness of immigrants' contributions to local communities. Students in Amante Fajardo's class asked the visitors questions and practiced conversation with them.

Four students worked as volunteers to help staff the REEP information table during the Arlington County Fair in August. Alessandra Rego, Ruben Villalta, Rosy Garza and Lianett Perez all helped give informational flyers and talked to fair-goers over the weekend.

LaCocinaVA, a culinary arts training program, graduated four former REEP students on Aug. 16, at the end of a 17-week intensive training program.