



crossroads
international

the newsletter of the international institute of metropolitan st. louis

December, 1982
Vol. I, No. 2



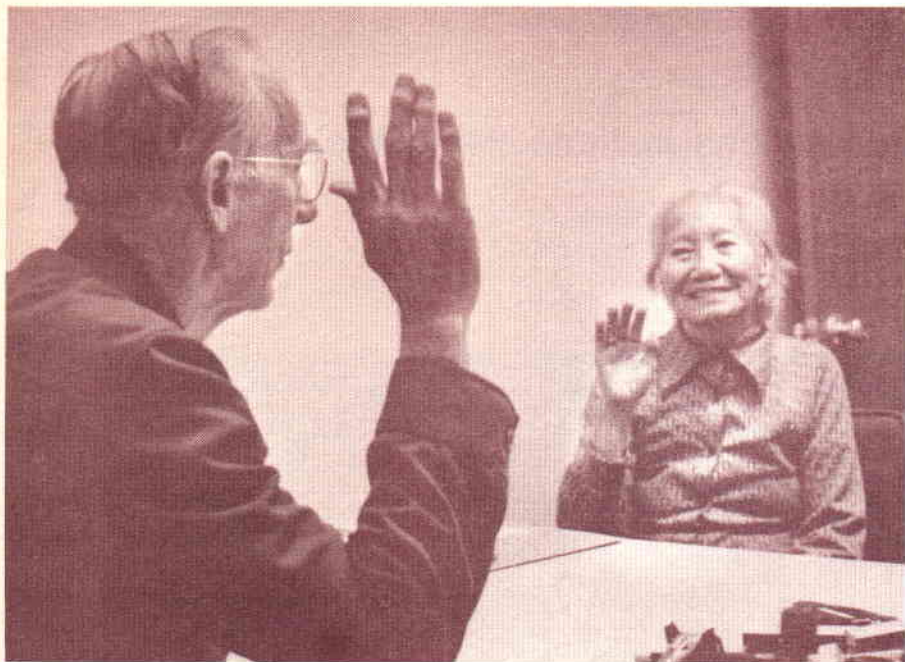
John White, Institute President (left), Margie W. May, and Richard T. Stith, U.N.A. President, exhibit the 1982 Human Rights Award certificate at its December presentation.

INSTITUTE RECEIVES 1982 UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

The St. Louis chapter of the United Nations Association presented the International Institute with its 1982 Human Rights Award in ceremonies at the United Nations Association on December 9. The annual award is given to the individual or organization which best supports in the community basic freedoms for all people of the world and advances the causes of human dignity and peaceful communication.

When accepting the award for the Institute, its president, John White, noted the agency's essential services provided to area Indochinese refugees since 1975 as "most impressive and crucial to their successful adjustment."

3800 park avenue • saint louis, missouri 63110 • 314-773-9090



IMMIGRATION COUNSELING SERVICES

The following services are now being offered at the Institute. A nominal fee is charged in some cases. Call Mr. Hung Nguyen at 773-9090 to inquire about fees and to make appointments.

- basic immigration counseling
- family reunification and Orderly Departure Program (ODP) filing assistance
- most application preparation along with related documents
- fingerprinting
- permanent resident and citizenship I.D. photos
- translation of documents
- notarization

Mrs. Siriphayvanh Sy, an ethnic Chinese Laotian, applies for permanent residence with an immigration officer at an Institute group adjustment of status session.

permanent residence applicants at the agency this Fall: Alberta Thompson, Phyllis Kessler, Wayne Kristop, Ida Krem, Doug Macrae, Jerry Taylor, Billy Ow, Betty Cummings, Allen Beckman, Donald Gibson, Abdul Salam Shayek, and Glynda Tossing.

Our thanks also to Ronald Sanders, officer-in-charge, at the local Immigration office and his staff, who came to the agency and assisted our clients in this adjustment process.

Our thanks to the following volunteers who contributed a total of 70 hours of service to the agency by helping to process 163

MRS. RENNER PASSES AWAY

Mrs. Katherin Renner, Institute caretaker for over 30 years, passed away September 28 after a long illness. Mrs. Renner retired from the agency in September, 1981.

Mrs. Renner was born in Yugoslavia and fled with her husband, Jakob, and family to Germany in 1944. They spent five years there until they were allowed admission to the U.S. in 1949. In February, 1950, Mr. and Mrs. Renner joined the Institute staff as caretakers at the agency building at 4576 West Pine. When the agency relocated to 4484 West Pine in 1956, the couple moved into the facility carriage house. Jakob Renner passed away in 1958.

She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Renner of south St. Louis, 2 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Renner is sadly missed by staff, volunteers, and former students of the Institute. Her bright smile and willingness to help anyone in need will be remembered fondly for years to come. A suitable memorial for Mrs. Renner within the new facility is currently being considered.

PASSPORT PICTURES TAKEN

A new service has been added to the agency's immigration counseling program. Passport photos are now available to the public at the Institute, 3800 Park Ave., weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m.

The service costs \$6.50 for two pictures and \$9 for four pictures. The pictures are color and are processed while you wait (about 5 minutes).

See Mrs. Hoa Nguyen at the Institute for photos. While an appointment is not necessary, call her at 773-9090 to schedule one if you desire. This will ensure rapid service if you have time constraints.

REFUGEE LEADERSHIP TRAINING SEMINARS

The International Institute has received a small grant from the Office of Refugee Resettlement, Dept. of Health and Human Services, Kansas City, to provide 25 local refugees with leadership training.

The goal of the seminars is to train these leaders to better assist their constituencies by learning and practicing problem-solving, community networking, and public relations techniques.

Members of the Vietnamese, Lao, Ethiopian, Afghani, Polish, and Soviet communities in the area will attend 5 Saturday sessions from December to February. Seminar topics will include "The Power of Positive Action", by speaker William Symes, Ph.D, President of the Monsanto Fund, "Power in the Great Plains" by George Wendel, Ph.D, Director of the Center for Urban Programs at St. Louis University, "Public Speaking", by Stanley Spector, Ph.D, Director of International Studies at Washington University, and "Solving Problems Effectively" by Jeff Tallent, Director of Governmental Relations for United Way of Greater St. Louis.

Pre- and post-testing evaluative techniques will be employed to ascertain the value of the seminar information and the participant's retention level.

GROUP JOB PLACEMENT FOR ETHIOPIANS

During late summer and fall, employment of all refugee groups remained good.

One extremely notable group placement was made in October with the greatly appreciated assistance of Mr. Girmay Berhie. Mr. Berhie, along with agency job placement staff, Eric Wernecke, Art Koenig, and Glynda Tossing, secured 33 unskilled positions in a single factory.

As a result of delicate planning and follow-up, 17 Institute-sponsored Ethiopians are now on the job and are, at the end of one month, 100% successful. Another 16 Ethiopians were placed in positions at the factory from other voluntary agencies in the community.

Here's to cooperation!

INSTITUTE SPONSORS POLISH FAMILY

The Institute recently sponsored its first Polish family. Zenon, his wife, and two sons arrived from Frankfurt, Germany, on October 20.

Zenon was active in Solidarity, the independent trade union, and was interned for his activities in the union. He was given the choice of either leaving the country or remaining in prison.

His resettlement to the U.S. was facilitated by a special U.S. State Department program for Solidarity internees. Prior to his imprisonment, Zenon worked as a coal miner.

The family was greeted at the airport by Institute staff and by Felicia Wurtz, a Polish social service worker in the community. Both sons are attending Hamilton School, and Zenon and his wife are studying English at the Institute.

The Institute had another Polish family arrive on December 3. Three more families are expected in the near future.

If you speak Polish (or German) and would like to volunteer to provide orientation and transportation to these new families, please call Jay Brandt at 773-9090. Also, donations of household furnishings and supplies are needed. Pick-ups for large furnishing items can be arranged by calling the agency.

JOB READINESS PROGRAM INTRODUCED

On November 1, the Language Department, in collaboration with the Job Placement Program, began a Job Readiness Training Program.

Tippy Dean, after considerable research of similar programs for Native Americans and VESL (Vocational English as a Second Language) programs throughout the country, has written and field-tested her own material for international students.

The program will run for three weeks each month and will culminate with the students completing a resume, an oral interview, and telephone job application.

CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT FUNDED

The St. Louis Institute has been funded to participate in a case management project with two other American Council for Nationalities Service (ACNS) affiliates: Travelers and Immigrants Aid of Chicago and the International Institute of Lawrence, Mass. The funding source is the Office of Refugee Resettlement, Dept. of Health and Human Services.

The one-year project, which began Oct. 1, seeks locally to improve the Institute's current systems for helping refugees reach economic and social self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. An analysis and revision of interagency information systems and enhancement of external agency resources are the methods that will be used to attain the project's goals.

Project preparation took place in Chicago at the end of October, where Anna Peterson, Jay Brandt, Priscilla Schulz, and Laurie Holland met with representatives of the two other agencies, Office of Refugee Resettlement officials, and state coordinators of the three states involved in the project.

In addressing the conference participants, Derek Schoen, Region V Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement Commented that the project would be invaluable in helping ORR set new case management regulations over the next several years. He added that ACNS and its network of International Institutes have been "pacesetters in many ways" in the field of refugee resettlement.

Many case management concepts will be tested out in the three sites over the next year to check their validity when working with refugee populations.

NEW HISPANIC SERVICES

New therapeutic services have been started by Juan Alvarez, M.S.W., for single Cuban clients who, in anticipation of the cold winter, have been settled in groups in neighborhood apartments. Family counseling techniques are used in problem solving. Most Cuban clients have now been cut off refugee assistance funds and cooperative living arrangements and support systems are essential to their survival.

Driver training for Hispanics without English is offered 5 days a week at 12:20pm by Juan Alvarez.

In September, the Hispanic Services staff underwent special training at Malcolm Bliss Mental Health Center in dealing with behavior disorders, crisis intervention, and accessing mental health services for Hispanics. Our thanks to the State Mental Health Department for this creative response to some of our problems.

Volunteers are badly needed to accompany clients to clinics and social service agencies and to help supervise and encourage clients in the work training and driver education programs. Call Juan Alvarez or Julia Geerling for further information or to offer assistance at 773-9090.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT SOUGHT

Able and willing men are available for long and short-term jobs. They speak little English, but a counselor would be on hand to explain to them exactly what is needed. Masons, carpenters, painters, and plumbers are in training. Yardwork is a specialty and snowshoveling can be arranged. Call Pedro Soibel at 773-9090 to discuss your needs.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

The Cuban work training center is now taking orders for Christmas gift items. Besides the beautiful ethnic wall hangings which make generous and unusual gifts, they will make patchwork skirts, tote bags, cushions, and other similar items to the customer's specifications. Come and look. It is highly distinctive work and the workmanship is excellent.



Kathy Burkey, coordinator, works with a pre-schooler on his understanding the ABCs.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Presently, between 13 and 15 children from Laos, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Italy attend the agency's preschool program weekday mornings. Its coordinator, Kathy Burkey, has a B.Sc. degree in elementary education and comes to us as a fulltime volunteer for two years through the Mennonite Fellowship Program. She is assisted by several other volunteers including Christina Spanos, a graduate student in social work at Washington University, and Edith Day, an old friend returning to the program.

A typical day in the preschool begins about 8:45 a.m. when the first child arrives. Then, children spend the morning learning English, playing with others, singing, and learning shapes, colors, numbers, and letters.

After playtime, a snack, and singing and games, the children are divided into two groups according to age. In these groups, the children work on colors, shapes, numbers and letters. English is the main emphasis of learning, but other kindergarten preparation is also done.

The Preschool Program not only enables two to five year old children to prepare for the American school system, but allows their mothers to attend English classes without worrying about babysitting expenses.

ADVANCED AFTERNOON ENGLISH CLASSES AVAILABLE

An afternoon program on continued education at the Institute for advanced ESL students has been inaugurated. The program is available through the cooperative efforts of Mrs. Del Doss of the Adult Basic Education Department of the City of St. Louis Board of Education and the Institute.

Barbara Hartman, who also teaches in the morning ESL program, teaches and coordinates the afternoon program.

For further information about the program and enrollment procedures, call Ms. Hartman at 773-9090. There is no charge for this afternoon program.

NEW STAFF

Julia Geerling volunteered at the agency for several months before being hired as a Hispanic caseworker on Sept. 1. Her B.A. in Spanish is from U.M.S.L.

Julia is working with the agency's Cuban clients. She provides a wide variety of social services for them including emergency shelter and food aid and medical assistance.

Julie Hoffsten replaced Elvia Vera as the agency receptionist and secretary to the Hispanic Program on Oct. 1.

Julie, who has done graduate work in Romance Languages at the U. of Arizona, is a fluent Spanish and Portuguese speaker. She has also graduated from Miss Vanderschmidt's Secretarial School.

Laurie Holland joined the staff on Oct. 15. She will serve as Community Liaison Specialist on a special grant the agency has received (see related article on p. 4).

Laurie will seek to strengthen the existing refugee referral network and develop new service resources in the community.

She has a B.S.W. from St. Louis U., where she minored in Hispanic language and culture. While at St. Louis U., she studied for more than a year in Madrid, Spain, while she taught English at its El Colegio Poveda.

Daisy Ichtertz replaced Sr. Jacqueline Toben in the Language Program on Sept. 27. Sr. Jackie received funding to begin a women's program at the City Workhouse.

Daisy received her degrees from the U. of Philippines and has taken over the Intake and Literacy Programs at the agency. In addition, she is helping to develop a new team concept of teaching. She comes to the agency with extensive bilingual teaching experience gained in the California Public School system.

Art Koenig joined the staff on Oct 1 as a job placement officer. He, along with Eric Wernecke, will locate jobs for refugees in local businesses.

Art received his M.A. (Ger. Lit.) from Washington U. He speaks German and Russian and is currently improving his Chinese and Polish. His previous employment was with the St. Louis County Division of Family Services, where he had program responsibility for the Refugee Assistance Program. Art has also worked as Russian translator and teacher of English-as-a-Second Language at Berlitz.

A hearty welcome and best wishes to the new staff!

WINTER DONATIONS NEEDED

Winter clothing, particularly items such as coats, hats, mittens, and neck scarves are needed for newly arriving refugees. In addition, blankets, and other household items would be gratefully accepted.

Bring all donations to 3800 Park Ave., between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Fridays.

Special pickup arrangements for household furnishings can be arranged. Regularly scheduled pickups occur several times each month. Call Allen Schwartz or Jay Brandt at 773-9090 for further information.

Charitable contribution letters will be given for donations.

DONATIONS RECEIVED

Over the past month, the Institute has received large donations from the World Children's Fund and from the United Church of Christ, both of O'Fallon, MO.

Included in the donations were a number of winter coats, which will really be useful as the cold weather continues. The organizations have also contributed many toys to the Preschool. And, the United Church of Christ has donated four child-size tables and 20 child-size chairs to it.

These donations are greatly appreciated by the refugees and staff at the Institute. Our thanks to the World Children's Fund and the United Church of Christ for thinking about newly arriving refugees and being concerned enough to help.

ISLAMIC FESTIVAL HELD

On Sunday, Oct. 17, the Institute sponsored an Islamic festival for the local Ethiopian and Afghani communities. A pot-luck dinner was served. Then, everyone had the opportunity to view slides of an Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca. Our thanks to Mohammad Kakar for narrating the program and making the slides available.

BOCKLER MEMORIAL ESTABLISHED

When Etta Bockler, a long time volunteer in the Language Program, was tragically killed in a car crash in June, 1981, many of her friends donated money to the Institute to set up a memorial for her.

The next time you visit the agency, you'll be able to see the memorial which has allowed us to establish an International Boutique in the main entrance hall. With the memorial fund, we've purchased two elegant display cabinets that contain craft items made by our international community.

Our students have many and varied arts and crafts talents and the display cabinets will allow them the opportunity to show their handiwork to agency visitors.

Miss Bockler, who felt great affection for all our international clients, would certainly have enjoyed the Boutique.

ESL TESTING SERVICES REACH MICHIGAN

On Oct. 9 at a testing conference arranged by the Michigan State TESOL affiliate in Flint, Elisabeth Price and Margaret Silver were invited to present two of the special tests they have developed at the Institute.

The I.I. Intake Test and the Test of Communicative Competence involve newly arrived immigrants in short one-to-one interviews using interesting, non-culturally biased concrete materials, such as little wooden figures and common plastic fruits.

The tests are based on recently developed theories of behavior, theories of communication, and discourse analysis. They are designed to eliminate as far as possible the fears that most people experience on taking tests and to overcome some of the barriers of natural shyness.

Agency staff have had considerable success with these tests in their own program and were proud to share them with a distinguished group like MITESOL.

The tests are currently being used by refugee programs in Southeast Asia as well as in other parts of the U.S., having been disseminated by TESOL International at previous conferences.

LANGUAGE PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

The rich and varied backgrounds of Language Program volunteers is exciting. These volunteers make a glorious and dedicated team who bring a richness of spirit and effort to our program which is beyond price.

In exchange, on-the-job training in field-tested up-to-the-minute ESL techniques together with weekly seminars in ESL methodology is offered.

It takes considerable time to train an effective ESL teacher and it calls for a great commitment of time and effort from both sides. Volunteers do not give their time lightly. This is appreciated and understood by program coordinators.

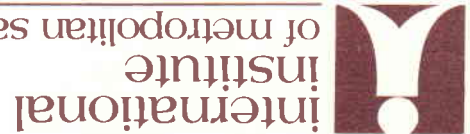
The following new teachers are welcomed: Sheri Steininger, a Washington U. graduate student in English; Gwen Collett, a specialist in remedial reading; Betty Olson, who has an M.A. in history and another in Social Sciences and has teaching experience with teenagers and adults; Ruth Ludwig, who taught ESL to the 1958 Hungarian refugees at the Institute; Sr. Marie Therese Townsend, who has an MS in medical technology and is local director for 10 sisters; and Catherine Cosentino, who has a B.A. and is retired. In addition, we are pleased to welcome two young men, recent alumni of Parks College: Xuan Ta and Hoang Quan Ha. They understand the problems of refugees firsthand since they were refugees themselves in 1975. Finally, Suzanne O'Brien has joined the evening program paid staff. She has a B.A. from U.M.S.L. and a lifetime teacher's certificate.

It is rewarding to see how many alumnae of the Institute teacher training program are active in ESL: Sr. Marjorie Janssen is teaching the ABE-funded program at Long School. Carole Watson and Betty Dew are teaching in University City, Maria Sudekum is teaching the ABE-funded program in Webster Groves, and Sara Dunn is teaching at Webster College. Linda Schmandt is a teaching assistant at the University of Pittsburgh, and Grace Washington is teaching ESL literacy in Kingston, Jamaica.

Our volunteers continue to be truly wonderful and dedicated.

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST. LOUIS, MO.
PERMIT NO. 2812

3800 park avenue • saint louis, missouri 63110



International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis

Winter Schedule

Friday, December 24
All Day

Agency closed for Christmas holiday

Monday, December 27
to Thursday, December 30

No English classes (English Dept. closed); social services, job placement, and administrative offices remain open.

Friday, December 31
All Day

Agency closed for New Year holiday

Monday, January 3

Classes resume; all services available

Friday, January 21
6:30 p.m.

International Institute Annual Membership Meeting and Dinner; Missouri Athletic Club (details will be mailed in early January)

Further activities are in planning stages and announcements will be mailed at a later date.