

## ESL Volunteers at Grade 8 Night

On December 5, 2018, GCI's staff and students participated in Grade 8 Night. This event is designed to prepare grade 8 students for high school by inviting them and their parents to our school and teaching them about our programs. ESL Grade 8 students and their parents had the opportunity to talk with our current ESL/ELD students and teachers.

GCI recruited many student volunteers for this event beforehand and the ESL program was one of the programs with most volunteers! They helped the guests by escorting them around the school and making them feel comfortable. With Ms. Vuong's support, a few of our ESL volunteers demonstrated science experiments to grade 8 students. Grade 8 night was an opportunity for ESL students to show their potential in leadership.

Tareq, an ESL volunteer said, "I was there with my friends, helping the teachers prepare the class for the new students and their parents. We made juice and brought chocolates. Other students played music all over the school. As an ESL student myself, I think the principal, Ms. Wood, and our teachers are doing a great job in bringing new students to our school."

-Mark Jayson Prame and Tareq Awwad

## ESL/ELD Students in Mainstream Classes

At GCI, ESL/ELD students can take mainstream classes. For example, there is a computer technology class that teaches students how to design interactive Websites using HTML and JavaScript, which is for programming languages. A programming language is a coding language that is used to give specific instructions to a computer. It is created by humans to communicate with the computer. Also, students can learn how to make Phone Apps and learn to design them by using JAVA.

For English, don't worry, because the programming language is not in English. The programming language is easy to learn and use. I am an ESL student and I take the computer tech class. In this class, I learned how to make a website and apps. I also learned how the computer works, what is inside the computer and many other interesting things.

-Ahmad Abdul Majid Hajj Kaddour

## Pen Pal Project in Literacy Class

GCI's ESL program provides great education for English language learners through various collaborative projects, such as the Pen Pal project.

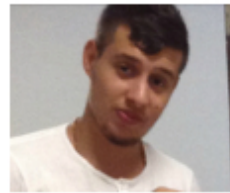
This project is meant to help the ESL students in Literacy Class improve their English. It involves writing and exchanging letters between ESL students and students in the ACE class at our school. This is a magnificent way to learn English and improve students' vocabulary. The Pen Pal project also helped ESL students develop their communication skills.

At the end of the semester, the two classes met in person and spent time together. They played games and had lunch together.

From my experience as an ESL student, I found this project to be a wonderful way to learn English. Another classmate who also enjoyed doing this project, Mark Jayson, said, "I liked this project because it is a different way to communicate with people instead of using our phones."

- Dunya Shamoan and Minh Anh Nguyen (Mab)

## Where Are Our Former ESL Students Now?



The ESL/ELD program at GCI helps many students achieve their goals by helping them get into College or University.

Mohammed Hassan, a former ELD student from Syria, is now studying Business Computer studies at Conestoga College. He shared some of his experiences at GCI with us.

He started high school at GCI when he was 18 years old. At the beginning, he faced some challenges at school. For example, he was not able to speak English well enough because he was new to Canada. Also, he faced another problem: being older than other students felt like a barrier between him and the others.

However, the ESL teachers did not leave him behind. They helped him a lot while he was at this school. Mohammed said, "The ESL teachers did their best to help me understand the English language."

Finally, after two and a half years, he graduated from GCI and now he is studying at Conestoga College, in Kitchener. Mohammed Hassan's story is just one of many examples of ESL/ELD success stories. This shows that the ESL program at our school is very helpful for newcomers.

- Mohammed Awwad