



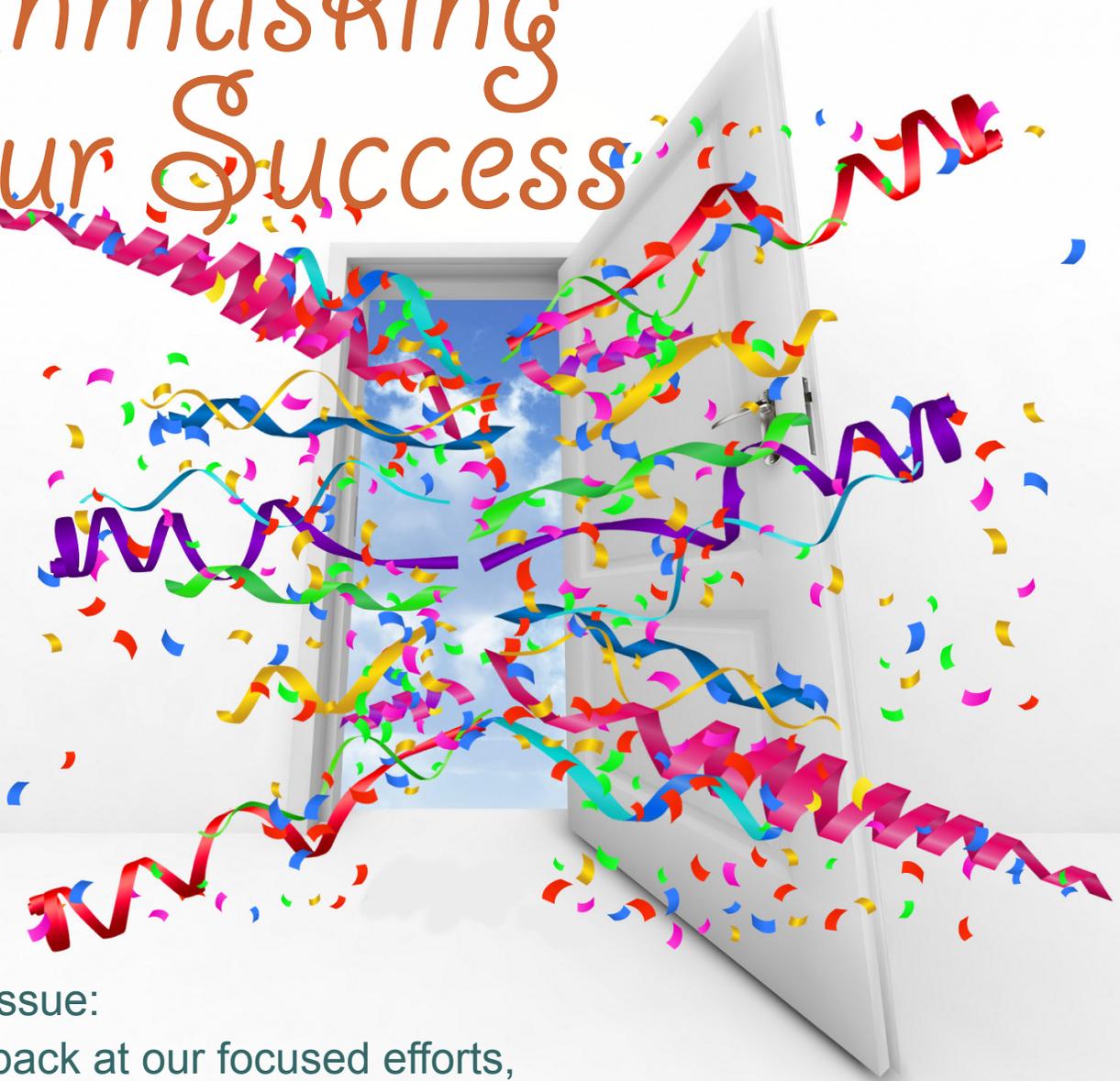
THE RI-TELLER

The Newsletter for Rhode Island Teachers of
English Language Learners & ELL Professionals

www.ritell.org

Issue 20: Spring 2022

Unmasking Our Success



In this issue:

A look back at our focused efforts,
student bright spots,

and some amazing RITELL teachers.

You continue to inspire and motivate us...

Here's to brighter days ahead!

- 3 News & Notes**
- 4 Addressing the Socioemotional Well-being of Bilingual & Immigrant Students: Educators Rising to the Coronovirus Call**
Dr. Tatyana Kleyn
- 6 Response to Intervention: Implications for Spanish-Speaking English Language Learners**
Dr. Elsa Cárdenas Hagan, Ed.D., University of Houston
- 8 Honoring Teaching Excellence!**
- 9 Sylvia Lima: 2021 MLL Teacher of the Year**
- 10 Carolina Bisio 2021 Adult Education Practitioner of the Year**
- 11 Angie Hartley 2021 Nancy Carnevale Award Winner**
- 12 MLL Bright Spots**
Tricia Kelly
- 14 Gallery Walk 2021**
- 15 Introducing: 2022-2025 RITELL Coordinating Council**



DR. ELSA CÁRDENAS-HAGAN is a bilingual speech and language pathologist, a certified teacher, dyslexia therapist, certified academic language therapist and a qualified instructor. Dr. Cárdenas-Hagan is the President of the Valley

Speech Language and Learning Center in Brownsville, Texas and a research associate at the University of Houston. Elsa has spent the last 23 years working in national research related to the development of language and literacy skills among Spanish-speaking English learners. She has worked with teams of researchers designing assessments and interventions for English learners who struggle with reading. Elsa's book entitled: [Literacy Foundations for English learners: A Comprehensive Guide to Evidence-Based Instruction](#) was recently released.



DR. TATYANA KLEYN is Associate Professor and Director of the Bilingual Education and TESOL Programs at The City College of New York where she is Principal Investigator

for the City University of New York -- Initiative on Immigration and Education (CUNY -- IIE). She served as president of the New York State Association for Bilingual Education and was a Fulbright scholar in Oaxaca, Mexico. Tatyana has authored books and articles on immigration, translanguaging, and bilingual education. Her latest book is titled [Living, Learning and Linguaging Across Borders: Students Between the US and Mexico](#). Tatyana's work in film as a producer and director includes the *Living Undocumented Series, Una Vida, Dos Paises: Children and Youth (Back) in Mexico* and the *Supporting Immigrants in Schools* video series. Tatyana was an elementary school teacher in San Pedro Sula, Honduras and Atlanta, Georgia.

EDITORS



JAY BUSSE is an instructor at Rhode Island College, where he has been since 2002. He has taught ESL, job skills and writing classes at the Outreach Program. He has also been teaching

ESL and TOEFL classes with the continuing education department since 2014. In addition, he has taught ESL and TOEFL classes at the Intensive English Language Institute Program at Worcester State University since 2015. He received his MAT in TESOL from RIC in 2001. Between 2011 and 2015 he taught a variety of classes and worked in the writing center at Kaplan University, online. He has conducted professional development seminars in Cali, Colombia and facilitated webinars here in RI.



TRICIA KELLY is an adjunct lecturer in the MAT in Urban Education program at Brown University where she supports secondary teacher candidates in adapting instructional techniques to support

Multilingual Learners across disciplines. She also serves as an MLL consultant with Providence based charter schools. Tricia has over 20 years of experience working in language education and especially loves collaborating with teachers to focus on the joys of working with multilingual students and families.



LAURA FARIA-TANCINCO is a member of the RITELL Coordinating Council and has taught Adult Ed ESL in universities & institutions all over RI. She has been in the ESL field for 10+ years. She began

her ESL journey in 2006, after a degree and professional attempt in Graphic Design left her wanting more. After a few years living in Quito, Ecuador, she returned to RI and she began adjuncting at colleges and universities around RI. She completed her M. Ed in TESL from RIC in 2015 and is currently the Coordinator of the ESL Intensive Program and Project ExCEL at RIC. She always says, the best people in the world arrive in her classroom. She enjoys all the challenges & rewards that come with the profession.



KIM O'CONNOR has been teaching in the Pawtucket School Department for 27 years. For the last 16 years, she has been an MLL specialist, providing classroom support and instruction to MLL students in K-5. Additionally, she

is responsible for school-wide administration of the ACCESS test. She mentors and evaluates teachers who are taking courses to become MLL certified. As a RITELL Council Member, Kim has served on Teacher of the Year and Gallery Walk subcommittees and has supported Webinars by preparing lists of information for attendees, taking photos and facilitating post-webinar correspondence.

NEWS & NOTES

Update

Identity Text Gallery Walk

For the last several years the MLL Advisory and RITELL have hosted an Identity Text **Gallery Walk** for Multilingual Learners in Rhode Island. Multilingual Learners create artifacts to showcase their journeys and to reflect their identities in positive ways.

The 2021 Identity Text Gallery Walk was hosted virtually [through this Padlet](#) where students submitted various artifacts that were visual, musical, slides, and much more. [See page 14 of this issue for highlights!](#)

The Identity Text Gallery Walk continuously supports an assets-based approach where all of our Multilingual Learners bring their cultural backgrounds and past educational experiences to light in our community. Be on the lookout for information on the 2022 Gallery Walk later this spring!

RIDE Update



RIDE recently hired **Christopher Bourret** as Adult Education Programs Specialist. With over 20 years of experience in Adult Education in Rhode Island, Chris is well respected as a supportive peer, a valued collaborator, and a leader in the field.

Before joining RIDE, Chris was an instructor, Program Coordinator, and Education Director with Providence Public Library's Rhode Island Family Literacy program (RIFLI). Chris has been a key partner on a wide range of Adult Education initiatives over the years and he has worked to promote professional expertise for ESOL instructors across the state. His understanding of national and state systems, his familiarity with the realities of local Adult Education program implementation, and his vision of future possibilities will be an asset to not only the RIDE team, but also to programs, practitioners, and learners statewide.

Save the Date!

RITELL 2022 Spring Webinar Series

The RITELL Spring Webinar Series will take place on Wednesday April 13th and Thursday May 5th. Dr. Laura Ascenzi-Moreno from Brooklyn College will lead two virtual sessions for teachers of emergent bilinguals focused on adopting a strengths-based, multilingual approach to assessment. Please click [HERE](#) for details and registration.

Language Connections



The **Coalition for a Multilingual RI** was recently awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. With this funding, they hired Adriana Neira as interim Coalition Coordinator and Alicia Pratt as Social Media Coordinator. Adriana and Alicia will continue to work with Coalition Members to advocate for a culturally sustaining educational environment where all Rhode Island students learn in multiple languages from Pre-K to college. For more information and to get involved, see their website [HERE](#).

ELL Advocacy



Do you have students eligible to receive the **Seal of Biliteracy**? First implemented in California in 2011, Rhode Island officially rolled out statewide guidelines in 2021. Rhode Island's Foreign Language Association (RIFLA) has been leading this important work in our state. We encourage RITELL members to find out how to support MLL high school students to earn this recognition at graduation. [See RIFLA'S Website](#) for more information.

Addressing the Socioemotional Well-being of Bilingual & Immigrant Students: Educators Rising to the Coronavirus Call

Dr. Tatyana Kleyn, The City College of New York



Dr. Tatyana Kleyn

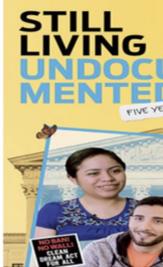
Bilingual & Culturally Connected Picture Books...
For Elementary and Secondary Students!



The Living Undocumented Series: Short Films, L



Available at LivingUndocumented.com



The COVID-19 pandemic has turned our world inside out, or perhaps outside in (as many of us are forced to stay indoors). Our students have had to deal with trauma, stressors and uncertainty in new and unpredictable ways. Furthermore, Black and Latinx communities have been disproportionately impacted by this virus due to structural breakdowns, and Asian Americans are experiencing increased discrimination and racist attacks as they are wrongfully being blamed for the start of this virus. This means that it is our bilingual students and immigrant families who are bearing a larger burden of the suffering, all while keeping our country running in their roles as essential workers. For educators, this reality requires a focus on the socioemotional well-being of students and families. But it cannot present itself in what Dena Simmons refers to as “white supremacy with a hug” where socioemotional learning stays at surface level to simply make students feel better without addressing the inequitable realities that minoritized communities experience under the dual pandemics of COVID and a racist sys-

To get a sense of how educators are supporting their students' well-being and healing, I sought to learn about the practices of teachers across the nation.

tem and nation (Simmons, 2019).

To get a sense of how educators are supporting their students' well-being and healing, I sought to learn about the practices of teachers across the nation. I created and circulated a questionnaire in April 2020, about a month after many school districts moved to online instruction. The short questionnaire was shared via my personal social me-

dia and then re-shared by colleagues and organization. I received 26 responses from educators who decided whether they wanted their name and/or school to be identified or remain anonymous. Educators who responded shared one way they are supporting their students virtually. I coded their approaches and organized them into seven categories:

Taking a Stance of Compassion and Understanding

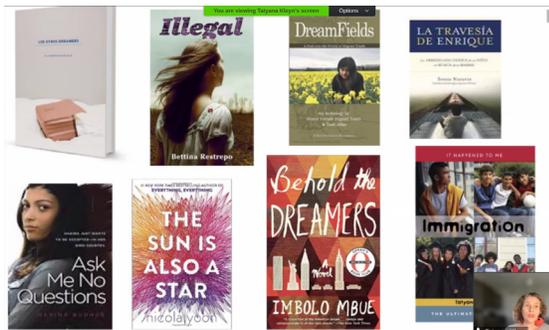
Teachers across the country are learning, through a lens of compassion, about the new realities our students and their families are living

through. María V. Díaz, an educator from the NYS Statewide Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) at NYU explains what taking such a stance looks like in practice:

In working with teachers, one point that I stress is to be compassionate with their students cer

bilingual teacher at PS 139 in New York City also mails postcards to students who do not have access to technology and/or wifi. These communications can serve as a way to learn more about what each family is dealing with, checking in on their well-being, and discussing how learning will take place in order to ease anxiety about virtual learning. Sometimes these communications are

ong Impact



[CUNY: Supporting Immigrants in Schools](#)

[For My Immigrants by Alexis Torres Machado](#)

tainly, but also with their families and with themselves. Remote teaching and learning is a new frontier for all of us. Couple that with managing the logistics (inequitable technology, artificial curriculum, lack of scaffolding for our most vulnerable populations), then add families living in tight quarters, financial burdens primarily due to not being able to work, the daily count of deaths that loop the newsreels result in everyone needing socioemotional learning (SEL). So I proclaim being compassionate with everyone. Teachers, it is ok to have activities that take the students away from their screens, parents it is ok not to know how to help your child with 4th grade arithmetic, students it is ok to be sad over missing your school friends.

It is ok! Give yourselves permission to be compassionate and let that compassion reign when we return to the new "normal." (April 21, 2020)

Consistent and Varied Communication

In the absence of in-person contact, teachers are finding myriad ways to maintain communication with their students and families. Whatsapp, Google Meets, Google Forms, WeChat, Remind, WebEx, phone calls, video calls, text messages, and email are some of the ways they have stayed in contact. Martina Meijer, a 4th grade

to individual students. Ashley Busone Rodríguez, a bilingual teacher checks in on her students to ensure they have eaten, especially if they are home alone. Sometimes teachers reach out to small groups of students to build a sense of community and reconnection with their peers. Colleen, a teacher in Buffalo, New York calls families to check on their needs from food to technology and emphasizes "I want to know that families and students are okay...we can worry about the work later on!" Jessica Sinchi, a special education teacher of English language arts and social studies at IS 73Q in Queens, New York says, "We usually designate a time every day and just catch up with one another, ranging from schoolwork to how they're adjusting because of COVID and so much more."

To read the remainder of Dr. Kleyn's article, please [click here](#).

...

Visit the [RITELL Conference Resources website](#) for access to resources and materials from Dr. Tatyana Kleyn's webinar series.

For additional SEL resources, courtesy of Maria Dinobile, Central Falls School Psychologist, please [click here](#).

Response to Intervention: Implications for Spanish-Speaking English Language Learners

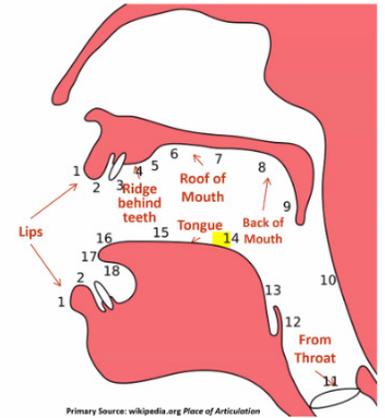
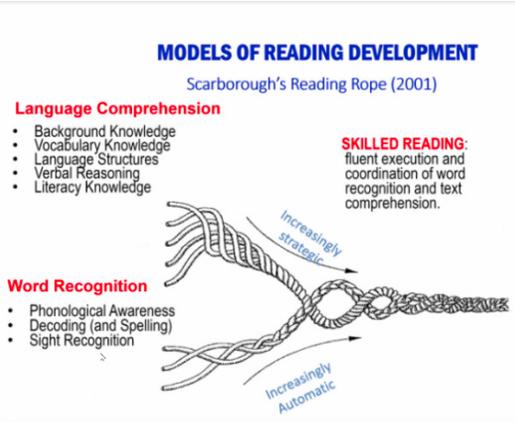
Dr. Elsa Cárdenas Hagan, Ed.D., University of Houston



Dr. Elsa Cárdenas Hagan

The Census Bureau estimates that approximately 5.5 million students in the United States are English language learners (2000). They speak over 400 different languages but 80% of them speak Spanish in the home (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The Hispanic population is projected to grow 166%, or 28 million persons, from 2005 to 2050 (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). They will represent every 1 out of 5 students in our public schools, and yet how much do we know about them? Who are our English language learners?

A simple definition of English language learners is students for whom English is a second language. However, there are specific classifications of English language learners based upon their oral language proficiency skills. That is, they may



be classified as initially fluent English proficient, limited English proficient, or reclassified English proficient. Students who are reclassified English proficient are ready for mainstream English instruction classrooms (Rivera, Lessaux, & Francis, 2009). These classifications help us to better serve these students whose academic achievements have been below their monolingual English-speaking peers.

Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress conducted in 2005 describes 73% of our English language learners as scoring below basic level in reading when compared to

non-Hispanic whites (NAEP, 2005). In 2009, there was a 25-point score gap between white and Hispanic fourth-grade students' reading achievement that was not significantly different from the gaps in 2007, 2005, or 1992 (NAEP, 2009). To adequately address this longstanding

In 2009, there was a 25-point score gap between white and Hispanic fourth-grade students' reading achievement that was not significantly different from the gaps in 2007, 2005, or 1992 (NAEP, 2009). To adequately address this longstanding gap, educators must be knowledgeable in best practices to help English language learners achieve their academic goals.

Reading Instruction Strategies

3PV

- * Purpose
- * Prepare a Connection
- * Prediction
- * Vocabulary L1-L2

3RQ

- * Read
- * Review
- * Retell
- * Question



gap, educators must be knowledgeable in best practices to help English language learners achieve their academic goals.

Response-to-Intervention Model for English Language Learners

The Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model is a pledge to address individual student needs and improve the outcomes of students who struggle with learning to read, especially language minority students. In fact, there is growing evidence that RTI can provide effective interventions for English language learners who struggle with reading (Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Prater, & Cirino, 2006; Vaughn, Cirino, Linan-Thompson, et al., 2006; Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, Mathes, et al., 2006). General classroom instruction is analyzed and modified to address student needs before they are moved to the next level of a three-tiered model (Vaughn & Fuchs, 2003).

Historically, Hispanic students have been over-represented in special education programs (Artiles, Trent, & Palmer, 2004). The RTI model may help to avoid over-and under-identification of language-minority students in special education programs (Bedore & Peña, 2008) because RTI recommends universal screening and high quality instruction for all students within the general education setting. In an RTI model, a special education referral is recommended only after the student has been provided with differentiated classroom instruction and intensive reading interventions.

Monitoring Progress

The RTI model requires ongoing progress monitoring tools to determine if a student is making adequate progress. If he or she is not, then

supplemental, explicit interventions are provided within a small group setting, which is referred to as the second tier of instruction. The student's response to the intervention is measured to determine whether adequate progress has been made or if further intervention is necessary. It may also be determined that more intensive interventions are needed (Gersten et al., 2007).

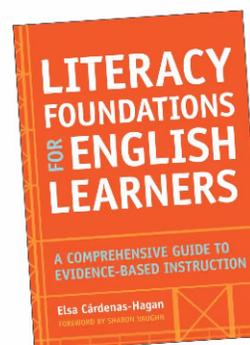
For language minority students, progress monitoring helps to ensure that they have received adequate and appropriate educational opportunities for learning to read. The results of progress monitoring tools can be used to guide and design instruction for English language learners. However, it is important to keep in mind that English language learners should not be penalized for slight differences in their responses which might include their accents or a certain dialect. These are some modifications that are necessary when determining an English language learner's progress. It is clear that the language and literacy skills of English language learners are not static and require adjustments and enhancements. A response-to intervention model requires a careful match between the student's weakness and the intervention instruction.

To read the remainder of Dr. Cárdenas Hagan's article, [please click here.](#)

...

Visit the [RITELL Conference Resources website](#) for access to resources and materials from Dr. Elsa Cárdenas Hagan's webinar series.

Resources



- Literacy Foundations for English Learners: A Comprehensive Guide to Evidence-Based Instruction
- www.mtss4els.org
- www.dyslexiaida.org
- www.colorincolorado.org

Honoring Teaching Excellence!



Sylvia Lima
2021 MLL Teacher of the Year

Sylvia was named Rhode Island's Multilingual Learner Teacher of the Year in 2021. She is currently the Dual Language Coordinator at the International Charter School (ICS) in Pawtucket. Interview by Tricia Kelly

How long have you been teaching and what motivates you to stay in the field?

I have always loved learning languages since I was in high school, where I learned English and French. I got a Bachelor's in teaching languages in Brazil and started teaching right after I graduated. I was an EFL teacher in Fortaleza, Brazil until 2002, when I decided to come to Rhode Island. Coincidentally, one of my professors from Brazil was doing her PhD in RI and she connected me with the International Charter School. In 2004 I was hired

[See the rest of Sylvia's interview on page 9](#)



Angie Hartley
2021 Nancy Carnevale Award Winner

Angie was the 2021 winner of the Nancy Carnevale 'Teaching from the Heart' Grant. She is currently a 4th grade MLL Teacher at the Gladstone Street School in Cranston. Interviewed by Tricia Kelly

[See the rest of Angie's interview on page 11](#)



Carolina Bisio
2021 Adult Education Practitioner of the Year

Carolina was named RITELL's 2021 Adult Educator of the Year. She is an ENL (English as a New Language) Teacher with The Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center. Interview by Tricia Kelly

How did you become a teacher?

I started teaching at age twenty in my native Argentina. I had studied to be a teacher of English as a second/foreign language and taught all levels - K through high school and adults - for five years. Then, in 2006, I was offered an opportunity to come to the US to work for one year. During that year, I met my husband. After a bit of back and forth, I decided to settle here in 2007. I taught Spanish for two years until I found out about a Master's Program at RIC.

[See the rest of Carolina's interview on page 10](#)

5 Questions with:

2021 MLL Teacher of the Year Award Winner:

Sylvia Lima



con't from page 8

by ICS to be a bilingual Portuguese/English teacher. I think being part of the ICS community helped me to stay in the field and to love what I do. My pathway as a language teacher was not easy. I've had challenging times in my profession, now especially with COVID, but I have continued to educate myself in the field and to serve the language learners the best that I possibly can.

What do you love about dual language instruction?

Teaching in a dual language program can be difficult and gratifying at the same time. For example, it is so rewarding to see a language learner using his/her native language to make sense of his/her second language. Just recently, we had a newcomer from Brazil who came to ICS. On his first day of school his mom sent us a voice text expressing how happy her son felt to be able to communicate in his native language and to be understood by others. I also love when my former students come to visit us and demonstrate their appreciation for being at ICS. It is wonderful to see the benefits that dual language education brings to their future. Finally, I love to be able to create and adapt curriculum and materials.

What have been some highlights of your teaching career?

It is always an honor to be recognized in my profession, but my best recognition is to see my students in action! I love to develop or create projects and to be able to share these projects with other language educators in conferences. I particularly liked the photo project we had at ICS for about a decade. Our 3rd graders used to take a camera home to document their own culture through pictures. Then they used to write their stories about the pictures. I always felt emotional when I was editing their stories with them and talking about those moments. I would relate to my own culture. Unfortunately during COVID it was hard to keep it going. Another important highlight of my career was to be able to travel with our students to the Azores on a field trip. It was so rewarding to see them interacting with native speakers in a real setting. Finally, this school year I was promoted to be the dual language coordinator at ICS. It has been challenging, but I have been learning new ways to continue to grow as a dual language educator.

What are some of your passions as an educator?

I'm passionate about creating, using technology, sharing resources, and collaborating with other professionals in the area. I've created a few blogs over the years where I collect resources to share with my students and their families. In 2019, I created a blog to gather SEL resources, as part of a RIDE project for language learners. Again, I think collaboration is the key to succeed in this profession! I believe that different minds and perspectives really will help all of us to continue to grow in education. In this field we are lifelong learners.

What advice do you have for new teachers working with multilingual learners?

I would say just jump right in and start working, learning, and practicing one day at a time. If you love what you do, it will be worth it.

5 Questions with:

2021 Adult Education Practitioner Award Winner:

Carolina Bisio



con't from page 8

There I met Nancy Cloud (a wonderful professor and advisor) who told me about the great need for ESL teachers. I started teaching one class in 2013 when my children were born and now that my kids are in school, I teach as many classes as I can.

How would you describe your philosophy of teaching?

I believe in a student-centered teaching approach! Our ENL students are amazing and come with incredible backgrounds and interests. I think it is important to have a great core curriculum and always be prepared to supplement with other resources to better meet our students' specific needs. I love to partner with community organizations, like the local farm or museum, so our students can practice English in real life situations. I really like ENL as the professional acronym because for so many of our students, English really is their latest NEW language as they already speak two or three!

What are some of your biggest challenges?

I think it's always a challenge for students to stick with the program until they achieve their learning goals because they face financial and other barriers that deter them from attending regularly. So I strive to keep them engaged, to make the lessons relevant to their needs, and to communicate regularly with them to let them know I'm here to help and want to see them succeed. A lot of their challenges are around

organizing time and adjusting to new experiences away from home.

Can you share a highlight from your work?

I have so many wonderful stories, but I will share one that is dear to my heart. During my first year of teaching, a student from Colombia was having a really hard time adjusting to her new life in the US. She had earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Management back home, but here she felt like she was 'no-one.' She was cleaning hotel rooms while she took English classes. She was very diligent and stayed with us for four years and now she has a job in administration and management here in the U.S. There are so many students like her, who come here with high level professional skills and need to start over. We also have many students who have fled violence and students who did not have an opportunity to go to school back in their home countries. We have so much to learn from our students.

What advice would you give to a new adult educator?

- > Learn as much as you can about your learners. Adult ELLs have different purposes for literacy learning and widely differing experiences with literacy in their L1. By considering our learners' funds of knowledge, we can help our students become active, motivated, and successful learners.
- > We can always study and learn about best teaching practices. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. There are so many wonderful resources out there. If we study, participate in conferences, attend workshops, and work collaboratively with other teachers in the field, we can offer the quality of education that our students deserve.
- > Always hold high expectations for all your students. Remember that the main purpose of learning a language is for communication. We need students to participate in decision-making to make their learning meaningful. Promote lots of interaction in your class.
- > Have fun teaching and working with your students. This is a very rewarding job - enjoy learning from your learners!

5 Questions with: 2021 Nancy Carnevale Award Winner: Angie Hartley



con't from page 8

How long have you been teaching and how did you decide to focus on working with MLLs?

I got my teaching degree in 2010 in New Hampshire and I decided to teach for two years in Korea as a Guest Teacher in public schools. My boyfriend (now husband) and I were the only native English speakers in our schools. Through work and living there, I got to understand a lot more about myself as a white woman in the world. It changed my whole perspective and I brought that back with me to Rhode Island. I knew I wanted to work with language learning or newcomer populations and I started working with exchange students in Providence. I was able to get certification reciprocity so I came to Cranston and worked toward my Masters in TESOL at URI.

What has teaching through the pandemic taught you about yourself or your students?

I have a much deeper appreciation for families. I have always had respect for families - and I don't have children of my own - so I always felt a little excluded from that perspective. But after sitting online with nine-year-olds and looking inside their homes, I saw that it really takes a village. Often, my students would be with a parent, a big brother or sister, or an aunt or uncle. Once I even had a neighbor sit with a student. It was really incredible.

What was your proposal for the Nancy Carnevale grant?

The idea started from a book group where we read *Stamped (For Kids)* by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds. I just knew I had to start doing more work like this in the schools. Every year when it comes time to teach about Thanksgiving or Martin Luther King, for example, I always feel like I'm doing it wrong. So I asked myself: What is one thing I can do to be an antiracist educator? There was another version of the book coming out with illustrations for younger kids, written by Reynolds and Sonja Cherry-Paul, so I proposed using the grant to get a class set of the books. My plan is to use the books this spring in Project Based Learning. The students will start by identifying racism as a challenge in their community and then generate questions about it. We will use the book as one way to gather information.

What are some of your passions that you bring into the classroom?

I'm really passionate about digital literacy. I've been involved in URI's Summer Institute in Digital Literacy where I get to meet people from all over the world. This past summer I was able to present a workshop on anti-racism, so it's a great way to combine my interests. I also practice yoga and I'm a yoga instructor. We do some meditation every day after recess. I really connect to Zaretta Hammond's work on the brain and trauma. I love learning and soaking it all in and I'm always looking to see how it all connects to a nine-year old.

What advice do you have for new teachers working with multilingual learners?

I always say to colleagues in my building or teacher friends that every student is an English learner. So if someone is wondering whether to go for a certification, I believe you will absolutely be a better teacher for understanding ESL strategies.

MLL Bright Spots

Tricia Kelly

We again asked you to share some of the ways in which your students and families have shown resilience in the face of countless adversities this past year. You responded loud and clear - Rhode Island's multilingual students and families are incredible! Here are some of their stories:

Bridget Giuliano, from *West Warwick High School*, shares about Keren, a newly arrived student from the Dominican Republic:

"She lights up our class every day with her "can do" attitude, her charisma, her humanity, and her determination to succeed. She is self motivated and driven to learn English. She is outgoing, kind, helpful, and mature. She is the student who welcomes newly arrived MLLs and gives them a tour of the school. Students like Keren remind me every day why I went into this profession and why after all these years I still love it!"

Julie Motta, MLL and SLIFE Teacher at *Gilbert Stuart Middle School* in Providence, shares about Ritha, a refugee from Mozambique who arrived with wide gaps in her schooling:

"She came speaking Portuguese and Swahili. In the short time she has been here, she has learned to read in English and this year, especially, her writing has blossomed. I have watched her become confident in speaking English (as well as some Spanish from her peers.) While she has many responsibilities at home caring for younger siblings, she has managed to do well in all of her classes. She diligently completes her assignments and meets her practice goals in language acquisition each week. She goes above and beyond to become a success. She has

been accepted into a Nursing CTE program in our district and she says that this will just be the beginning. She wants to become a doctor!"

Isabelle Jaffe, MLL Specialist at *Village Green Charter School*, shares about Erismeyli, a student from the Dominican Republic:

"She loves to learn and never shies away from hard work, no matter how challenging. She is supremely

technologically-literate, and she often reaches out to her teachers via formal email when she needs help. She is also a fantastic independent learner, and her teachers are well accustomed to seeing her with her headphones in, focused on her online curriculum, taking copious notes, and reviewing material on her own. Her teachers often encounter her joking around in both English and Spanish, teaching other students

He is in third grade and for the first time since kindergarten, he has been placed in the 'low risk' category for reading achievement based on performance in the three monthly assessments at our school. I am so proud of his hard work!

Leela Sami, MLL Teacher at *Sowams School in Barrington*, shares about *Shaun*, whose parents migrated from China.

how to dance, and sharing her favorite music during break times. She is a wonderful addition to our school community!"

Lindsay Paiva, shares about students in her Integrated ESL class at *Webster Avenue Elementary School* in Providence:

For the Black Lives Matter Week of Action, we looked at voting legislation historically and today. My students grappled with the full complexity of the issues. One student provided an in-depth analysis linking sharecropping, segregated schools, literacy tests, and voter suppression. Students wrote persuasive pieces stating whether or not they supported the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the Freedom to Vote Act. They also had a spirited debate about whether kids should be able to vote and

backed up their stances with evidence. These moments brought me so much joy and hope in what has been such a challenging school year.

Jackie Cambio, Grade 2/3 teacher at *Gladstone Elementary School* in Cranston shares about Christopher, whose family is from El Salvador:

“He was very interested in learning about the Chinese New Year. He picked some cool books from the library to share with his class and informed students and teachers what their animal was from the Chinese Zodiac. He found out that we are both horses which made both of us smile.”

Brianna Cardillo, MLL Teacher at *Johnston High School* shares about Ferlandi, an 11th grade student, who arrived from Guatemala in grade 6.

“I taught him during his first summer in a ramp-up program. At the time he spoke only Spanish. When Ferlandi came to the high school a couple years later, I had the pleasure of being his teacher once again. Over the last two years I have watched Ferlandi strengthen all areas of his English proficiency, as well as grow socially and emotionally. This year he has chosen elective classes such as psychology and sociology. Ferlandi is always willing to lend a helping hand to his peers and will be the first to befriend new MLL students that arrive at the school. He once told me he understands how it feels to be new and wants to help other students feel comfortable. I am proud to be Ferlandi's teacher and he certainly makes any classroom he is a part of brighter!”

Over the last two years I have watched Ferlandi strengthen all areas of his English proficiency, as well as grow socially and emotionally. This year he has chosen elective classes such as psychology and sociology. Ferlandi is always willing to lend a helping hand to his peers and will be the first to befriend new MLL students that arrive at the school. He once told me he understands how it feels to be new and wants to help other students feel comfortable. I am proud to be Ferlandi's teacher and he certainly makes any classroom he is a part of brighter!”

Sherry Krupka, adult ESL Educator on Zoom and at the *Warwick Public Library*, shares snippets from her group of diverse learners:

“Tarus amassed a collection of books in Ukraine, but sadly had to leave them all behind. When he came to the Warwick library, he seemed enthralled with it. Both he and his wife, Tetiana, got library cards and are constantly checking out books to read with their grandson. Eun-jung, a Korean Pastor in Pawtucket, is using the library resources to research how to support single women in her church. Jessica, from China, has played piano and sung opera for us on Zoom and, after learning to knit this winter, knits blankets, scarves, hats and a sweater while participating in English class. Maria, from Cape Verde, spoke very little English when she first joined class. With the assistance of resources in the library system, she recently entered a training program to be a nursing assistant. Edwin, from El Salvador, has grown in confidence in our classes and wants to attend CCRI. He is using the library to locate testing practice and math resources in English. For my birthday, as a show of gratitude, Edwin stated that he wanted to donate to the library and made his pitch to the evening staff. They had never received such a heartfelt offer. I do not know the amount he donated, but I do know I had to leave so he wouldn't see me tearing up.”

The students in our classroom set SMART goals for either sight words, addition/subtraction or behavior. Each student either met their goal or demonstrated progress toward their goal for the month of January!

Nicole Lavallee from *Pothier-Citizens' Elementary School* in Woonsocket shares about the MLLs in her first grade class.

Mabel was a bit shy when she first came but has blossomed into a confident outgoing student. The skills she has mastered in social and academic language are exemplary. She displays an enthusiasm for learning every day and I am so honored to be her MLL teacher this year.

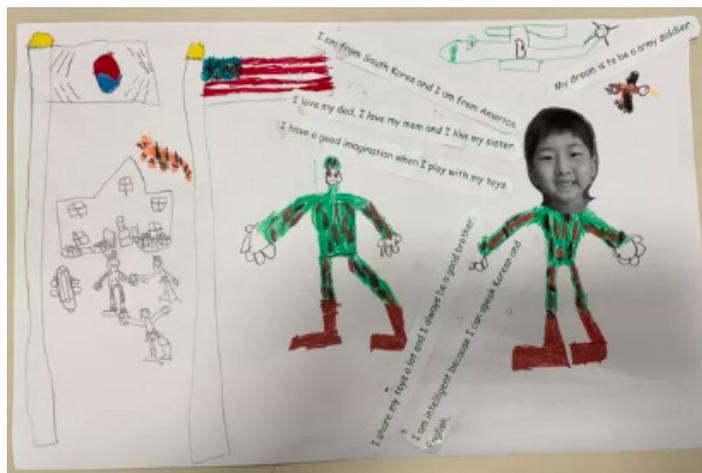
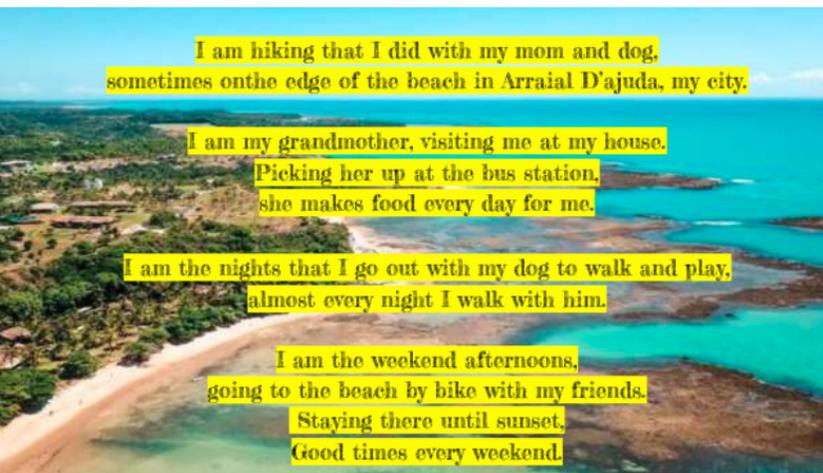
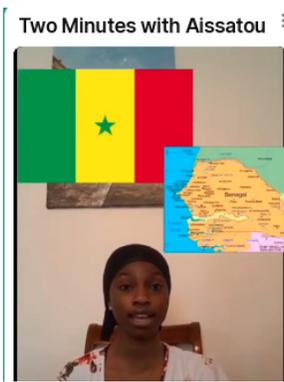
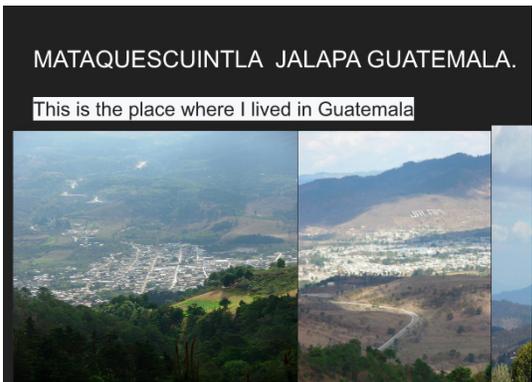
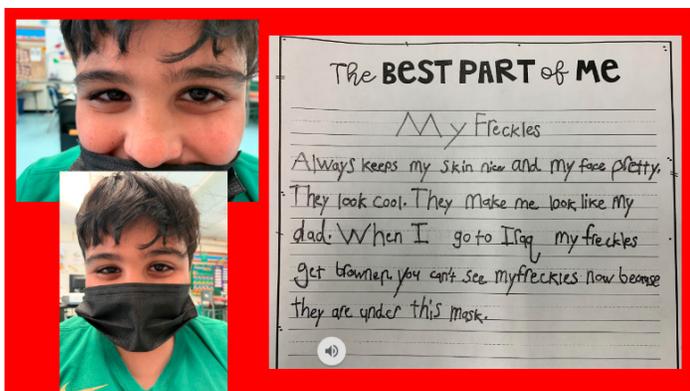
Terri Couto, a 3rd grade teacher from *Nayatt School* in Barrington, shares about her student from Thailand.

Edwin, from El Salvador, has grown in confidence in our classes and wants to attend CCRI. He is using the library to locate testing practice and math resources in English. For my birthday, as a show of gratitude, Edwin stated that he wanted to donate to the library and made his pitch to the evening staff. They had never received such a heartfelt offer. I do not know the amount he donated, but I do know I had to leave so he wouldn't see me tearing up.”

Gallery Walk 2021

Click here to view the [2021 Gallery Walk Padlet](#).

For the last several years the MLL Advisory and RITELL have hosted an Identity Text Gallery Walk for Multilingual learners in Rhode Island to showcase their journey. Multilingual learners create artifacts that reflect their identity in a positive way. The 2021 Identity Text Gallery Walk was hosted virtually through a Padlet. Students submitted various artifacts that were visual, musical, slides, and much more. The Identity Text Gallery Walk continuously supports the asset-based approach where all of our Multilingual learners bring their cultural background and past educational experience to light in our community.



Introducing: 2022-2025 RITELL Coordinating Council



*Returning Council Member:
Tricia Kelly
Adjunct Lecturer,
Brown University*

*My favorite teacher movie is
Mr. Holland's Opus.*



*Returning Council Member:
Jacqueline Nelson
MLL Teacher Leader
Gilbert Stuart Middle School*

*My favorite teacher movie is
Billy Madison.*



*Christina Antonelli
Literacy Coach
Esek Hopkins Middle School*

*My favorite teacher movie is
Freedom Writers.*



*Lena N. Craig
Spanish 1 and 2 teacher
St. Patrick Academy*

*My favorite teacher movie is
Lean on Me.*



*Michelle E. Johnson
3rd grade Emergent Bilingual Educa-
tor; Fogarty Elementary School,
Adjunct Professor, RIC*

*My favorite teacher movie is
Freedom Writers.*



*Amy Marshall
Kindergarten ESL Teacher
Pothier -Citizens' Campus*

*My favorite teacher movies are
Freedom Writers and
Coach Carter.*



*Melissa Moniz
Principal, Special Ed board*

*My favorite teacher movie is
Frozen.*



*Jenny Polanco MAT, AM
Literacy Coach
Nathan Bishop Middle School*



*Kiersten Prucha
ELL Specialist
Tiverton School District*

*My favorite teacher movie is
School of Rock.*



*Donna Rodriguez
Newcomer & SLIFE Teacher,
Fogarty Elementary School*

*My favorite teacher movie is
To Sir With Love.*



*Jenna M. Verdone
ESL teacher
Cranston High School East*

*My favorite education movie is
The Ron Clark Story.*