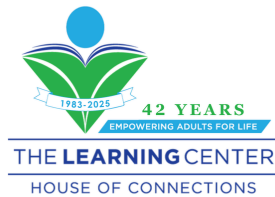


December 2025



Dear TLC Friend,

As 2025 comes to a close, we reflect on the inspiring accomplishments of our adult learners. Every day, we see how education transforms lives—not just through diplomas or certificates, but by helping individuals rediscover purpose, confidence, and hope.

This **Season of Giving**, we'd like to share Nicholas' story with you—a powerful reminder of why your support matters.

Nicholas is 46. For most of his life, he believed he didn't need a high school diploma. He had steady work, multiple jobs, and made a decent living. But over time, opportunities slipped away, and he began turning to alcohol to cope. When he applied for a full-time position two years ago, he was denied — not for lack of skill, but because he couldn't provide proof of high school graduation. That moment stayed with him.

It was then that Nicholas decided it was time to rebuild his life, turning years of challenges into new momentum for his future. He entered a rehabilitation program and enrolled in our High School Equivalency program. With support from his recovery program and the caring community at TLC, he has maintained eight months of sobriety and steadily regained his confidence and focus. Although returning to school for the first time in nearly three decades felt daunting, Nicholas stayed committed to a simple motto that guided his progress: *Just get there and do it.*

His commitment paid off. In October, Nicholas earned his High School Equivalency Diploma — a goal he once feared was out of reach. Now, he's stepping into the next chapter of his journey and plans to learn a trade that can open the door to a brighter, more stable future.

When asked what makes The Learning Center different, Nicholas didn't hesitate to say:

**“Here, people care. At other schools you can feel lost — but at The Learning Center, someone always checks in. They help you believe you can do this.”**

Nicholas' success is inspiring, and it is possible because of friends like you. That is why we have launched our **2025 Year-End Campaign to raise \$30,000 by December 31<sup>st</sup>**. Every dollar you give helps provide the support network that makes learning possible for adults who have faced barriers for most of their lives.

**Your gift will provide:**

- One-on-one tutoring and classroom instruction for adult learners
- Books, learning materials, and digital literacy resources
- Testing and credentialing fees for our High School Equivalency completion program
- Transportation and food assistance
- Warm, welcoming space where adults can focus on learning and personal growth

These essential supports help ensure all learners have what they need to succeed. **We can't do it without you!**

Thank you for believing in second chances — and in the power of education to change lives.

With gratitude,

*Angelica Saucedo*

Angelica Saucedo  
Executive Director



Our goal is to raise \$30,000 by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Will you consider a gift of \$50, \$250, \$500 or any amount to help us meet this goal?**

Use the return envelope to make your donation or give online at [www.tlcchicago.org/donate](http://www.tlcchicago.org/donate).

# CELEBRATING OUR 2025 GRADUATES

We are excited to highlight our 2025 High School Equivalency graduates. These students have demonstrated incredible determination, perseverance, and hard work to achieve this milestone.

Their success represents the power of education to transform lives, and we couldn't be prouder of their accomplishments. A heartfelt thank you to the tutors, instructors, and supporters who guided them along the way.

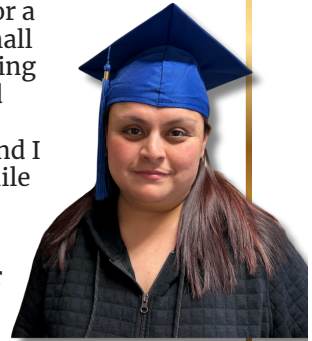


"I just want to thank The Learning Center and all of the teachers, tutors, and staff who have supported me and so many others on our journey to earn our GEDs. You don't just teach lessons — you help people rebuild confidence, discover purpose, and believe in themselves again. Thank you."

**Nicholas Corneils**  
Graduated in October

"I wanted to get my GED for a long time and wanted a small place to do it. At The Learning Center, the teachers and students made me feel welcomed and confident, and I never felt embarrassed while learning."

**Cristina Lozano**  
Graduated in November



"I officially passed all my HiSET exams, and I honestly don't think I could have done it without the support and encouragement I received at The Learning Center. Thank you for seeing something in me, for pushing me to take the tests, and for helping me realize I could do it. I'll never forget that."

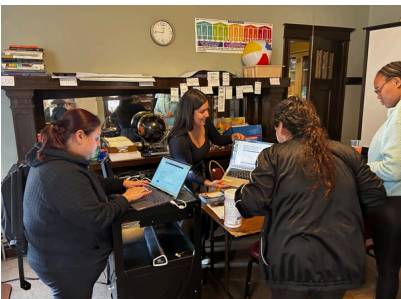
**Jocelyn Andrade**  
Graduated in July



"Everyone at The Learning Center believed in me, helped me reach my goal, and cheered me on every step of the way."

**Sanjuana Soto**  
Graduated in October

## DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP



We are excited to begin a new partnership with Dominican University's Chicago Campus. This collaboration strengthens our ongoing efforts to connect students with high-quality workforce training programs that open doors to stable careers, greater financial independence, and long-term growth.

As part of this new partnership, we welcomed a representative from Dominican University who met with current students and recent graduates to share information about two certified Workforce Development programs: Basic Nurse Assistant Training Program and Cybersecurity Program. Both are 8-week courses that lead to professional certification, giving students an accessible and realistic pathway into high-demand fields.

We look forward to continuing this partnership and bringing more opportunities like this to our students, ensuring they have the tools, guidance, and confidence to pursue careers that can truly transform their lives.

To learn more, visit:

[www.dom.edu/academics/workforce-development-certificates](http://www.dom.edu/academics/workforce-development-certificates).



**DOMINICAN  
UNIVERSITY**



# 2025 TLC HIGHLIGHTS



## EVENTS



### HEALTH LITERACY PROJECT

In the spring, we launched this year's *Health Literacy Project* to help students build skills in self-care, mental wellness, nutrition, and diabetes prevention, giving them tools to make healthier choices.



### BLACK HISTORY MONTH

In March, we hosted a special luncheon in celebration of *Black History Month*. Students also shared presentations on prominent African American figures.



### NIGHT OF 1,000 STARS

Hosted by scaleLIT, *Night of 1,000 Stars* celebrated adult learners across Chicago. Our Program Manager, Miriam Gonzalez, served as emcee, and Spanish Literacy student Maria Delgado shared her testimony.



### BACK-TO-SCHOOL PICNIC

In September, we held a picnic to kick-off the new school year and each student received a tote bag of school supplies to begin the term with confidence.



### NATIONAL AEFL WEEK

In September, we celebrated *Adult Education & Family Literacy Week* to raise awareness about the importance of adult education and family literacy.



### WINTER COAT DRIVE

In October, we collected over 200 winter coats and accessories for our *Annual Winter Coat Drive* - distributing them to our students and Catholic Charities.



### TURKEY SUNDAY

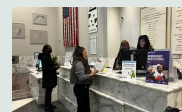
In November, we hosted our *Annual Turkey Sunday Giveaway*, distributing more than 65 frozen turkeys and food items to students and community neighbors.



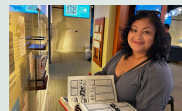
## FIELDTRIPS



In February, our students visited the *DuSable Museum of African American History*, where they attended a special performance about Ida B. Wells.



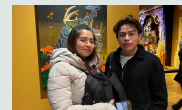
In March, we visited the *Harold Washington Library Center* in Chicago - 14 students applied for their very first library cards.



In July, students visited the *American Writers Museum*, exploring the power of words, storytelling, and the writers who shaped history.



In September, TLC students visited *Malcolm X College*, our Adult Education partner, to tour the campus and receive their official student IDs.



In November, our students visited the *National Museum of Mexican Art* to explore the Day of the Dead exhibit and learn about its traditions and culture.



## MISSION STATEMENT

The Learning Center, primarily serving the North Lawndale and Little Village communities of Chicago, supports adults in their pursuit of an educational path to more confident and effective living.



# MEET OUR NEW STAFF

## JAMES MAMUAD VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

**Aloha!** My name is James Mamuad, and I'm excited to be the new volunteer coordinator at The Learning Center. I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue my second year in service through the AmeriCorps program.

Over a year ago, I moved to Chicago from Hawaii. I have lived in the Pacific Northwest and studied abroad in South Korea for my undergraduate work. I have a Bachelor of Arts in Women's and Gender Studies with a focus in American Ethnic Studies and Philosophy.

If you are asking, yes—I have experienced the winter, but Chicago winter is on a whole different level!

Since moving to Chicago, I have spent some of my time volunteering at various Filipino American organizations and cultural events around the city and connecting with Hawaii-based groups. I have also started a youth volunteer group dedicated to supporting cultural and art initiatives.

In my free time, I enjoy playing Dungeons and Dragons, vintage shopping, learning philosophy, and re-learning Chinese and Japanese.

Once again, I'm excited for this new journey in my life with The Learning Center!



## ANN KANG LITERACY ASSOCIATE

**Hi!** My name is Ann Kang, and I am a Literacy Associate at TLC through Literacy Volunteers of Illinois. I have a Bachelor's in Psychology and Sociology and a Masters in Criminal Justice; and since graduating, I have worked abroad and also with nonprofits. I have volunteered as a citizenship and English tutor for over 5 years in the Chicagoland area and participated in many language exchanges across the globe!

One of the things that drew me to TLC is its mission to support adults in their pursuit of an educational path to more confident and effective living. Walking alongside learners as they grow is rewarding. I'm thrilled to work with TLC's students and join them on their path to achieve their goals.



## SHELIA HOLMES ADULT BASIC EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR

**Hello!** My name is Shelia Holmes, and I am pleased to join the esteemed staff at The Learning Center as a Mathematics instructor in the Adult Education Program.

With over three decades of experience in education, I have developed a deep expertise in mathematics instruction, having served in various roles such as math coach, department leader, and department chairperson. My passion lies in supporting students' academic progress while simultaneously fostering their development of essential life skills.

My extensive experience and knowledge in the field of mathematics will undoubtedly contribute to the growth and success of our students as they embark on their GED journey.



## CYNTHIA MAGALLANES RECEPTIONIST

**Hello!** My name is Cynthia Magallanes, and I am excited to be a part of the team at The Learning Center as the new Receptionist. I graduated from Tricoci University in Beauty Culture and became a licensed esthetician, later opening my own small business. I have several years of leadership and hospitality experience working in the restaurant industry and assisting in a salon. I have always been passionate about helping and serving others, and I'm excited to continue that commitment here at TLC while making a positive impact in my community. In my free time, I enjoy nature walks, spending time with my family, and exploring new restaurants and cozy cafes around Chicago.



## MAKE AN IMPACT! BECOME A VOLUNTEER TUTOR.

Our volunteer tutors are dedicated partners in our work and play a vital role in supporting student learning. Volunteers support students one-on-one in reading, writing, math, and English language skills—no prior tutoring experience required. All opportunities are in person and scheduled based on your availability.

To learn more about becoming a volunteer tutor, contact Angie Saucedo at [asaucedo@tlcchicago.org](mailto:asaucedo@tlcchicago.org).



## HOW TO MAKE A DONATION



2153 S. Millard Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60623  
Tel: 773-277-3111  
[www.tlcchicago.org](http://www.tlcchicago.org)

Use the return envelope  
to make your donation.

OR

Give online at:  
[www.tlcchicago.org/donate](http://www.tlcchicago.org/donate)

Thank you!