

Outside Employment Opportunities

Career Services Advisor

Columbia College
up to 40 hours per week
Closing date: will remain open until suitable candidate found.
See website for more details:
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CIWA: The ABCs of Breast Health Presentation

This free, one hour presentation is open to all women. Presented in plain language with images to illustrate, this session is ideal for immigrants learning to speak English. The presentation can also be delivered in Mandarin, Spanish and Punjabi. Interpreters can be arranged for other languages.

Topics include:

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Breast Cancer/Causes
- Risk Factors
- Preventive Measures
- Signs and Symptoms
- Self-examination
- Mammogram Guidelines
- Breast Cancer Contact Info

For more information contact **Shokoofeh Moussavi:**

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Phone: 403-263-4414 ext. 124



Madeline Johnson Receives Diamond Jubilee Medal

Cooperative ESL Ministries is delighted to announce that our founder, Madeline Johnson, was the recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal at a special ceremony at the Red & White Club on October 9, 2012. The medal was awarded in recognition of Madeline's outstanding work in the Christian community and in ESL Education, founding Cooperative ESL Ministries and Agapé Language Centre. Congratulations Madeline!



Madeline Johnson with Prime Minister Stephen Harper, receiving the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

I recently had the opportunity to ask Madeline a few questions about working with newcomers, her heavy commitment of time and the opportunities she has had to train Calgarians from a variety of Christian denominational backgrounds. She shared the following insights into her work and dedication to the newcomers of Calgary:

Madeline, you have dedicated a large part of your life to working with newcomers, especially through ESL. What sort of impact can this work have on immigrant families?

Imagine travelling to a different culture, leaving your good job, friends, and family behind. Imagine trying to communicate in the new language that you had studied, but it sounds so different here. So many things you don't understand. So many questions. Who do you ask? You were successful in your own country, but you feel like you're having to start all over again. Then imagine meeting someone who cares how you feel, who helps you feel welcomed and respected, and who will spend time with

you--listening, going places with you, inviting you into their home, and introducing you to their friends. Ahhh, there is hope! You can now see yourself becoming part of this new community. Would you not always have a special warmth in your heart, a sense of gratitude for the one who accepted you, who helped you in those critical times at the beginning?

Yes, I believe the personal connection with caring Canadians can sometimes be like a lifeline to the newcomers when adjustments can seem almost overwhelming. But it can also be a great blessing to the Canadian, the gatekeeper, so to speak. Our lives are enriched by being channels of God's unconditional love. We get to see the world through different lenses. We learn, too.

How does this type of work benefit our city?

A healthy society is founded on respectful relationships that contribute to "social cohesiveness." We can relish the different colours and textures in the flower garden. Every culture has something from God in it, as well as things that make us sad. Our risk-taking newcomers have chosen Canada, Calgary. They bring children here, because they think it will be better for them. They willingly sacrifice their short-term comfort for long-term potential. (Studies have shown that children who are able to defer gratification for promise of future reward turn out to be the achievers.) By helping our newcomers and their families integrate, and contribute at their potential, problems are worked through, and our society gets stronger. They come with hope. Let us not be afraid to share with them the foundational values, indicated by over a dozen Bible verses inscribed into the walls of our parliament buildings in Ottawa. To "love one's neighbour as oneself," the second great commandment, can only result in good.

Multiplying the number of trained volunteers through CESLM and "safe places for respectful conversations" through church-based ESL programs increases the number of connections between newcomers and ordinary and open-hearted Calgarians. Getting to know people as individuals breaks stereotypes, creates understanding, and weaves the web of connections that supports community.

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Your work with Cooperative ESL Ministries has involved training Calgarians from all Christian denominational backgrounds. Surely it would have been much easier to work within denominational organizations. Why do you think it is important to work across denominational lines?

Would it have been easier to work within denominational organizations? Perhaps. The institutional framework is already there, plus the willingness to give to "our" mission. If the denominational leadership owns the vision, fund-raising would likely not be the issue it is. I'd imagine more moral, logistic, and financial support.

Would it have been *better*? No. Two events made the call of God clear.

In discussion during an ESL Bible Study a student asked "How do you know what church to go to? It seems that they're all competing with each other." That stabbed deeply into my heart. I knew that the family of God is one, but that wasn't her truth. It hurt; and I was sure that God's heart would hurt too.

In a prayer meeting for internationals, I was reading out loud the last prayer of Jesus before he would be leaving his followers, John 17. Last words are so important. The strong passion of our Lord gripped me as I imagined that event. I came to verse 21 and 23 where Jesus prays that his family would be one. Tears came to my eyes and my voice got husky. It surprised me. I felt I was being "acted upon." The phrase "so that the world would believe" and again "so that the world would know" resonated, reverberated, and agitated within me. I thought of the student's question. Could it be that it is us—our "divisions"/denominations that have kept the world (some of them) from believing?

By this time Agape Language Centre had grown, by word of mouth, to about 80 students, with many different classes/activities during each week. Students loved coming, even if they had to pay a small tuition fee, and we loved them. The women of the church provided home-made cookies for coffee times (called "love-filled cookies" by the students). It was exciting, and the local church was joining in the excitement as connections were made, relationships built, and worlds were expanded. It was win/win—for the students and for the church community. More churches could/should do this, but we must do it in a way that the world can see that we really are one.

As I shared this vision, God put it in other people's hearts and a group of people from different denominations joined together to train volunteers so there could be conversational ESL programs in churches all across the city. Right from the beginning, church affiliation did not matter—only that we operated out of God's love for the "stranger" in our midst. **The unity is real.** It's a true "grass-roots" organism, with God bringing the right people at the right time to carry the mission forward. Though it's an Alberta Non-Profit Society and a Federal Charitable Organization, it really belongs to God. We are grateful that we can cooperate with Him in what He is doing. Thankful, too, that the vision has spread to Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton and now, just starting, in Winnipeg.

Your work has involved a heavy commitment of time, with countless hours spent in prayer, administrative work, fundraising, meetings,

and events. What motivated your commitment to community outreach work with newcomers?

God is good, and completely trustworthy. I am so grateful for His love, His faithfulness, His presence in my life through the Holy Spirit. I can never thank Jesus enough for sacrificing His life for me. When I became aware of His heart for the "stranger" and His passion for the unity of His body to be shown, I simply did "the next thing" that seemed right to do. When you love someone, you want to please them. It becomes a joy. "People will do for love what they won't do for money." Another phrase I recently heard that applies is "We protect what we fall in love with." I guess I wanted to protect the church's reputation, because it is Christ's body, and I love Him.

Why ESL? I grew up in a pastor's home, but my mother stuttered. I saw her struggle to express herself and I felt her frustration at not "having a voice." (In those days, the wife was expected to be as much a part of the pastoral team as her husband.) I was the only daughter and became quite good at guessing what my mother was trying to say. I would "lend her my voice." Incidentally, she went for healing once, but instead of her stuttering being healed, her eyes were healed. She accepted "God's will", not understanding the purpose in it. Like Mary "be it unto me according to Thy word"? I wonder now, if she understands how God used her "handicap" to sensitize me to the angst of not being able to "have a voice".

How do you keep a balance in your spiritual life, your family life, and your commitment to this amazing work? I can't say that I have always kept balance. I have gone through periods when I suffered for not taking the rest I needed, and I was exhausted much of the time. Seven years prior to starting Agapé Language Centre I had been diagnosed with fibromyalgia. However, when I kept my connection with God strong, He gave me the strength I needed. I really felt that He honoured my obedience. If/when I neglected the personal relationship with God through private reading and prayer, the work got very hard, and my health got worse, but my commitment didn't waver, because I knew God was in it. Through suffering, I was learning, experientially, "*without Me you can do nothing.*" This was a verse that had stood out to me before, along with the perspective that God asks us to join Him in His work (as opposed to asking Him to bless our work). God was good to "catch me when I was falling" and bring what/who I needed. I also thank Him for a husband and family who love me and love God and understood that this was something I felt called to do.

Madeline Johnson continues to be an inspiration to all who meet her, joyfully shining the light of God wherever she goes. While appreciative of the medal, she also reminds us that to God goes the honour and glory for this work, for ultimately it is His, being used for His purposes. We give thanks for Madeline and her tireless dedication to being God's hands and feet, helping newcomers feel welcomed in Calgary. **If you would like to join in this work, volunteers are often needed for our workshops. Please see our website <http://www.eslcooperative.ca> or phone 403-999-3641 for more information.** Financial contributions can be made through our website, [click here](#) to go to our donations page.

"I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing." John 15:5 KJV



“Nice to meet you, _____” Activities Using Your Students’ Names *by James Edel*

I’m bad at remembering names, but there are no excuses when it comes to your students’ names. Forgetting them should result in an automatic apology. Names are special. For example, students who use Chinese-based scripts to write their names have a bit of fun explaining their names because they may have a unique Chinese character for their name. Revealing it to someone is like telling them a secret, since the average person may not know how to write the character or which one it is, unless told. Also, don’t mispronounce names! Yes, foreign sounding words are horribly hard to remember but pretend you are a radio announcer, or principal reading the Gr.12 classes names during a graduation – we must be careful to get the pronunciation just right. Write them somewhere you can see and practice them; engraving them on the palm of your hands may go a bit far (see Isaiah 49:15-16).

Here is a list of classroom activities that piggy-back on students’ names:

- **Decorate Name cards:** Take a 8½X11 (LTR) paper and fold it a couple times until you have a rectangle that you can write their name on and it stands up on their desk (give them a few colors of markers to write with so they look beautiful). These folded papers double as a stack you can shuffle and pull one out to randomize the recipient of your next question or pull out two, randomly, from the pile to change-up partners.
- **What does your name mean?** Exploring the meaning of students’ names can be fun and it generates interesting discussion (especially if students have names in the various Abrahamic traditions). Try to learn the variations of common names; Abraham is Ibrahim in Arabic. Bilquis, Makeda, Balqis are name for Sheba (as in Queen of Sheba).
- **Please don’t mispronounce my name:** Practice saying the name with a Canadian accent and as secondly, as you say it in your language. How do they call these names at the doctor’s office? How do you say Xin Qin? You better figure it out because she will probably win gold at the next Olympics. I won’t even get into whether we should offer to provide an alternative name to Xin – pronounced /sheen/ in Mandarin.
- **Homemade Worksheets Taste Better:** To practice a grammar point such as question and answer, write a fill-in-the-blank worksheet using your students’ names. 1. What did Bilquis do yesterday? She _____ a movie at the theatre. Be local by changing a USA text into Calgarian by re-writing with local examples. 2. What did Mohamed do? He _____ at Marlborough Mall.
- **Peter, Paul, and Mary:** Ask student to tell us about 5 of the most popular names in their country. Collect their lists and make a worksheet where you randomly give the names and they have to write what country each name is from. Give a list of common Canadian names and have students identify which third person pronoun (he/she) would fit with each. E.g. I like Thomas; she is nice.
- **Snowball:** Students write their name on a piece of paper and one or two things about themselves. Students may write their favorite television show and how many people in their family. Once students have completed the paper they crumple the paper into a ball. When all students are finished, they create a circle. On the count of 3, students throw snowballs into the center. Students will then pick up a snowball and read about a fellow classmate. Next, students sit in a circle and introduce the person on the paper to the class (from <http://suite101.com/article/name-games-a27398#ixzz26Zkq8SIP>).
- **Two Truths and a Lie:** Students write two truths and a lie on a piece of paper. The lie should not be outlandish otherwise it will be easy to spot. However, the truths should be something nobody knows in the class. Students sit in a circle and read the card to the class. Teacher has the students vote on which is the lie. After the vote is tallied, the student reveals which is a lie to the class. People like me tell two truths quickly and when we get to the lie we start giggling and give ourselves away – best to write them down and practice a poker-face first.
- **Terminology:** Ask name-questions like: What is the teacher’s first, middle, and last name? Q: When would the teacher be called Mr. Smith? A: In grade-school, on letters, by Safeway clerk after reading his/her credit card. Q: When would the teacher’s first name be used? A: Most adult settings. Q: What are kid-names or pet names? A: William> Bob> Bobby; Susan> Susie; James> Jamie. Q: What are common mistakes made with Canadian names? A: Mr.+First Name; not being consistent with your name; having ID with the incorrect or different names, calling teacher “Teacher” instead of by name, etc.

Good luck!

(James Edel currently teaches ESL at Columbia College in Calgary and attends Foothills Alliance Church)

HELP NEEDED WELCOMING AN IMMIGRANT FAMILY TO CALGARY

Family of 6 from Romania arriving in Calgary end of November are seeking low rent housing in the SE of Calgary. Both parents are professionals but willing to work at lower paying jobs to make ends meet. Oldest daughter, 18, also has time between semesters to work in December and January and will be seeking a job. **If you can offer any assistance in helping this family get settled and welcomed to Calgary, please contact Dawn @ 403-253-8080 for a complete listing of needs.**

