

intercambio
UNITING COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY JOURNAL

Fall 2020

Intercambio students and volunteers at a Community Conversations Online event.

Shifting the **EQUITY** Narrative in Adult Education

Lee Shainis

Executive Director of Intercambio

Intercambio has a growing voice in the country's movement to shift power imbalances in adult education.

The current language around adult education typically focuses on English-language learners (ELLs) needing to adapt to the prevailing culture of the society, with minimal emphasis on us adapting to their cultures. This, by its nature sets a 'dominant culture' social dynamic in place between teacher and student. These well-meaning but disempowering one-directional messages focused on fixing the deficiencies of our adult ELLs perpetuate problems and systems of power.

To anchor adult education in a genuine spirit of equity, we have to start with a more equitable approach and practice in the way people teach and learn. This represents a fundamental shift from a "Savior Helper Mindset" to a "Mutual Learning Mindset," a beneficial learning experience for both teacher and student.

Adult English programs are uniquely positioned to make this shift in our society because of the doors they can open to profound, ongoing connections and conversations that cross barriers of race, class, ethnicity, language, religion, work status, and many others.

At Intercambio, we have found that when we shift the power dynamic, the mutual learner mindset inspires teachers to listen more and students to talk more.

Students share more about their lives and perspectives, which accelerates language acquisition, amplifies students'

voices, and opens doors for students to do the educating.

This deepens connections, reduces biases and assumptions, and increases a sense of belonging. All of these changes lead to a more equitable and cohesive society.

We are proud of the thousands of times over the last 20 years that we've heard our teachers say, "I'm getting more out of this relationship than my student is!" We are excited to spread this game-changing narrative and the accompanying tools to achieve it nationwide. Thank you for being part of the journey with us.



Read more of this story at intercambio.org/blog

Intercambio **BEHIND THE SCENES**

Hear from Lee and other Intercambio staff about Intercambio's innovations ignited by COVID-19.

**Wednesday,
Sept. 23**

12 p.m. - 12:30 p.m. MST
OR

6 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. MST
Location: Zoom

Register: intercambio.org/bts

CHANGE is the Only Constant

Community Conversations Offered Online

When Community Conversations shifted online, Intercambio's students, teachers and volunteers embraced the change and challenges with grace and positivity.

Community Conversations volunteer Julie Wolf says, "[The transition to online was] **awkward! But sometimes comical, which gave us something to laugh at. That said, being able to still reach out and connect is wonderful.**"



There's even more joy in the unexpected Zoom guests. Julie sometimes puts her very large dog on her lap to say hello to her conversation partners; and for her, it's fun to see people's kids "Zoom-bomb" momentarily.

We've all had to adapt to the changing world around us. Through it all, Julie is "**reminded that we are still a community together, and that we can still be there to support each other**" – even through a screen.

Sign up for the next Community Conversations event at intercambio.org/conversation

Leave a LEGACY

You can have a lasting impact on bringing communities together beyond your lifetime by giving through your will.

A bequest may fit for you if:

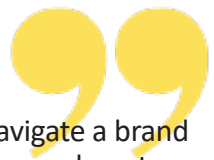
- You would like to **make a gift** to Intercambio.
- You want the **flexibility** to change your mind.
- You want **continued access** to your wealth, should you need it.
- You are concerned about **outliving your resources**.

We would be honored to have you select Intercambio as a beneficiary in your will or trust.

Email

jenny@intercambio.org
for more information.

Class Amidst the CHAOS: A Testimony from a Teacher



I was definitely nervous and anxious at the start of the first online class I co-led, after having taught in-person classes with Intercambio.

I was relieved that through the use of the Confidence and Connections curriculum, PowerPoints, listening tracks, and breakout rooms, the term ended on the same high note that an in-person class would have.

I felt no less connected to our five students, no less impressed by their hard work throughout the term, no less sad to see them go. There was so much admiration to be had—they were not just learning English, but also

learning how to navigate a brand new software program, how to participate in classes from home, and how to manage kids and dogs and dinner cooking in the background. The ability to multi-task and still go above and beyond in their acquisition of English was astounding.

Now I am co-teaching a level 5 class. **This has been such a life-changing experience for me** that I am starting classes to earn a Master's in Multilingual Education, focusing on Teaching English as a Second Language, a very Intercambio-inspired pursuit.

-BROOKE HUBBARD
Volunteer teacher at Intercambio

We have a limited number of spots for group teachers, but there is room for more students! Spread the word.



ONLINE LEARNING

- 180 students are learning English online with Intercambio.
- 90% have never taken an online class before.
- Countless hours of training students and volunteers for online classes.



A ripple effect of parents helping young children with online school.

Sharing the **KNOWLEDGE**

Helping Programs Around the Country Move to Online Classes

Intercambio's Partner Services department provides curriculum, training, guidance and support to **more than 600 community programs**, many of whom are engaging volunteers to teach English to adults around the U.S.

The past several months have proven the strength, resilience and connectedness of Intercambio's national network. In response to COVID-19, local classes moved online in April and Intercambio's Partner Services Team immediately got to work, contacting partner organizations around the country to check-in and offer support.

Since April, we have offered three Remote Learning Discussions with more than **150 attendees from 80+ organizations** participating. In these sessions, we invited Intercambio teachers and select national partners to share

their experiences teaching online.

We then opened the floor for

conversation and heard invaluable ideas and suggestions about successfully transitioning in-person classes to online platforms. Even as a virtual meeting, there was a tangible sense of community with empathy and support "in the room."

As we prepare to launch our new Partner Network model this fall, the experience of these discussions will continue to shape the opportunities we offer. We are excited to continue to build our national presence, and grow the connections between our local program our wider community of passionate partners.



Thank you to these event sponsors:



Celebrating 20 Years of **PARTNERSHIP**



In the early days of Intercambio, there were 75 teachers and 150 students. The goal was to grow and spread the vision of

teaching English and connecting people.

Intercambio had a plan to meet Boulder County immigrants' English needs, but needed more support and a "seal of approval" of a trusted community resource. That's where the Community Foundation Boulder County came in. The foundation believed in Intercambio's potential and became integral to our success early on.

In our first year, the Community Foundation Boulder County helped Intercambio with a grant from the Millennium Trust. That same year, we received the NOVA Award for Education, which gave us the chance to share our dream with a packed house at the Boulder Theater.

For nearly 20 years, the Community Foundation Boulder County has stuck with Intercambio as a proud financial supporter, community connector, and thought leader, but the ties run even deeper.

"In addition to annual financial support through the Community Trust, Community Foundation Boulder County has connected us with so many of our students, teachers, donors, board members, and staff," says Lee Shainis, Executive Director & Co-founder of Intercambio.

Tatiana Hernandez, Community Foundation Boulder County's CEO, says: "**Intercambio is a valuable resource in our community, providing opportunities for everyone to communicate, connect and engage.**" Thank you Community Foundation Boulder County we are looking forward to another 20 years of partnership!

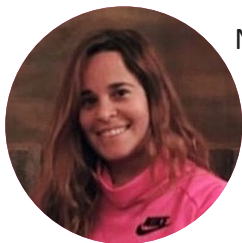
SPECIAL THANKS



Community Foundation Boulder County also played a big part in Intercambio's 2020 Census partnership.

Learn more at intercambio.org/blog

Outstanding STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Neydi Montañez never missed a class in her four terms with Intercambio, earning her one of Intercambio's perfect attendance scholarships. With the support of that scholarship, she enrolled in English tutoring on top of her Intercambio studies, taking her skills even deeper.


“The fear of being able to communicate is no longer in my mind, or my vocabulary.”

Coming to Colorado from Venezuela in 2018, Neydi started at Intercambio to learn English, but it quickly became a second home. Her newfound confidence and skills empower her to shine outside of the Intercambio classroom. **She has become a valuable volunteer for the Coal Creek Meals on Wheels program, is excelling at work, and has built meaningful relationships in the community.**

Intercambio's students are no strangers to commitment, hard work and determination. With the help of our incredible donors, Intercambio has awarded **300 scholarships** in the last year.


ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP CLUB

Your monthly contribution can support:

\$100/MO

12 students
(a whole class!)

\$50/MO

6 students

\$20/MO

2 students
(in honor of 20 years!)

Join the **Scholarship Club** at intercambio.org/donate

OTHER INTERCAMBIO ANNOUNCEMENTS

We're celebrating

20 YEARS
intercambio
UNITING COMMUNITIES

In the coming months, we will be honoring the many ways lives have been changed with Intercambio at the heart of it all.

“English for Confidence and Connections” program

We are creating an exciting new program where people **from anywhere in the country can take or teach an online 1-on-1 class using our curriculum.** We have 30 student/teacher pairs testing it and the demand is great. More updates to come!