

English Language classes improve settlement to NZ

Settling in a new country is not easy, especially when the language is unfamiliar. English Language Partners New Zealand offer language teaching, social support and a chance for new people to make a friend. Learning English enables people to participate more fully in New Zealand, and live independent lives.

Eyerusalem came to New Zealand from Ethiopia, where she had little opportunity to go to school. Eyerusalem says she loves the opportunities that are available in New Zealand to learn.

“I like English class and I need to learn more. I like talking to people and reading. Communicating is important. Some words are not easy. I like it when the teacher shows pictures to make it easy to learn the words.”

“The weather now is like winter in my country. People are very different here. I like New Zealand people because they are happy and helpful. In my country there are not many schools but here there are lots of classes to learn everything” says Eyerusalem.

Tere came to New Zealand from the Cook Islands, and brings her little girl to class with her. She finds the English language classes help her to settle into New Zealand society.

“I like learning more English because I feel my English is not good enough. The volunteer teacher is very helpful, she explains things very well and she is very nice. It is a bit different from my country because I come from a small island and New Zealand is very big. It is very good here but everything is new and different” says Tere.

English Language Partners offer one to one volunteering - trained volunteers go into learners' homes and help them with English in Hamilton and across the Waikato region. They also offer a wide range of classes with learners from pre-literate to advanced English who are looking for work or are already working. Classes include Basic English; English for Road Code; English Literacy for Police Recruits; English for Employees; English for job seeking; English conversation for daily life; and private English in businesses.

Jo de Lisle, Manager of English Language Partners says that becoming a volunteer is a great way to connect with people of other cultures.

“Our service is mainly for refugee or migrant families. This offers a great opportunity for people from Hamilton and Waikato communities to connect with people from other cultures and engage with new ideas and ways of doing things” says Jo.

English Language Partners always need more volunteers as there are many learners waiting for the one to one service. Training for volunteers will start again in early 2019.

Jo says there are also two 4 week blocks of summer classes, so they are expecting a very busy, diverse class and will really need volunteer help.

“This is a good opportunity for people who would like to train next year to find out more about volunteering for English Language Partners.”

“We have young university students, working people, and retired people. Often people who have English as a second language volunteer because they either want to get more practice using English or they want to give back to the NZ community who helped them. Migrants have a lot of settlement experience to offer. We also get retirees, who have a huge amount of life experience and great skills to share with a learner” says Jo.

Carrie, who originally came from the US, now lives in New Zealand, and is a volunteer at English Language Partners. Carrie finds that as a volunteer, she is learning just as much as the people who attend classes.

“I like helping people and I enjoy meeting people from different back grounds. I am learning lots, I think I am learning more than the learners even for me coming here from the US with English as my first language. I am finding that there are lots of things that are different, there are different terms for things and the way we do things here is very different. It must be so difficult for people from other language backgrounds. As a volunteer for ELP we can help make it easier for people to settle here,” says Carrie.

English Language Partners is based at the Settlement Centre Boundary Road, Claudelands, Hamilton. Phone 07 8532188, Email: jo.delisle@englishlanguage.org.nz



Caption: Clockwise from left they are Eyerusalem, Tere and Carrie (Volunteer).