

NEEDHAM COMMUNITY COUNCIL ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE [ESL] TUTORING

The Needham Community Council sponsors free ESL tutoring sessions for adults who work and/or live in Needham. Volunteer tutors are trained by an ESL specialist and paired with a student who is interested in improving their English. There have been many success stories resulting from this program; here is one....

Kum Suk Pak [Suki] moved to the United States in 1977 from Korea. She lived in Dallas, Texas and worked in a Korean clothing store, speaking only Korean. She met her husband in Texas and in 1987 they moved to Boston to help Suki's sister in her home. Suki's husband is a Taekwon-do master and currently runs the J. H. Kim Tae Kwon Institute in the Marshall's Plaza in Newton.

Suki stayed at home and raised their two sons, who both attended the Needham Public Schools. Suki's husband improved his English at work and it was her sons' primary language at school. In the home, however, they all spoke Korean, so Suki did not use English. Suki's youngest son is graduating from Needham High School this June.

Suki started to work for the Needham Public Schools in the food service department and wanted to improve her English, so she decided to apply to the Community Council ESL Program. She has been meeting weekly with Suzanne Donahue, a Council ESL tutor, since November, 2008.



Suzanne says "Suki is a great student; very engaged and works hard..., we walk, we cook, we read the newspaper, and we talk all the time..."

Suki has always loved to cook, and this winter Suki, with Suzanne's assistance, developed, prepared and presented a very successful Korean cooking class for Needham Community Education's Adult Education Program.



Eleven students attended Suki's first class and it was so popular that a second section was scheduled.

When asked "what was the hardest part of teaching this class?" Suki said that "creating recipes with exact measurements was difficult"; she is a natural cook and rarely measures anything. She was also quite nervous to stand up in front of a class, but after just a few minutes she felt more comfortable and became very confident;

she was well-prepared and loved teaching.

For more information about the Needham Community Council ESL Program visit our website at www.needhamcommunitycouncil.org or call us at 781-444-2415.