

HOORAY!



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

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Happy News from Adult Community Education!

In November 2020, the Adult Community Education newsletter update featured Teresa Ocampo who had just passed the social studies test in the GED exam. Well, this month there is more good news to share. Teresa passed the language arts test, the last exam in the suite of five GED tests, and now she has earned her GED certificate! Please join her tutors, Eva Torres, Leticia Luse and Alyson Stephens in congratulating her. Teresa has appreciated the congregation's support while she pursued her high school equivalency diploma. To send Teresa your congratulations, write to CommunityEd@centrallutheranaz.org.



Teresa pursued the GED to open pathways to better employment. She knew that earning a high school diploma could put her at an advantage with employers and set her up for the possibility of attending college. According to the Bureau of Labor statistics, those with a high school diploma earned about 25 percent more per week than those without a high school diploma. Also, the unemployment rate for high school graduates is 3.8 percent compared to 5.5 percent for those who have less than a high school degree. That's not to mention one of the main benefits of a high school diploma: it represents hard work and dedication that develop life and practical skills for succeeding in the workplace and at home.

“Seeing program participants succeed is one of the most satisfying aspects of the volunteer team’s efforts,” stated Alyson Stephens, a team volunteer. “After all the studying and hard work participants invest, it’s a very happy moment when they achieve their goals and can then move forward through newly open doors to opportunity.”

With this milestone achieved, Teresa plans to apply for U.S. citizenship. The Adult Community Education volunteer team is ready to support her in this next milestone.

If you would like to volunteer as a GED tutor or English language coach, [Click here](#). To make a donation that helps cover testing fees (\$200 per participant) and online curriculum subscription costs (\$750 per year), direct the donation to;

Central Lutheran Church Adult Community Education Ministry

P.O. Box 677

Arizona City AZ 85123

Questions? [Email - click](#)

Number of passed GED tests	Previous Progress	Current Progress
Math	13	13
Language Arts	12	13
Science	13	13
Social Studies	13	13
Civics tests	15	15
GEDs earned	12	13



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Where are they now?

Where Are They Now? (Part 1)

This year the Adult Community Education program will celebrate its seventh year of service to the community. The 25 volunteers who have dedicated their time through the years have served at least 50 participants to improve their English and over 30 adults who sought to get their GED certificate. This month we caught up with some of the GED graduates to find out where they are now after earning their diplomas. Here is what we learned....

Hector earned his GED in 2018. He was a mechanic and with his GED he was able to get full-time jobs at two major employers in the Casa Grande area. Hector still lives in Casa Grande and is raising his family of two girls (8 and 17 years) and one boy (11 years). He plans to attend college classes to broaden his career opportunities in the welding trade.



Claudia received her GED in 2019 and since then has pursued her dream to work in cosmetology. She recently graduated from beauty college where faculty selected her as Student of the Year. With her cosmetology license now in hand, Claudia plans to style and color hair at a local beauty salon and gain as much experience as she can so that she may one day run her own salon. As she pursues that goal, she is also applying for U.S. citizenship and studying for the related test.

Since her graduation in 2018, **Yazmin** has been busy caring for her family, including her elderly father-in-law. Now that her daughter is 16 and her son is 20, Yazmin is ready to step into the job market. Her career interests are in food service and caregiving. She is currently awaiting hiring decisions for related jobs at local Casa Grande employers to which she has applied.



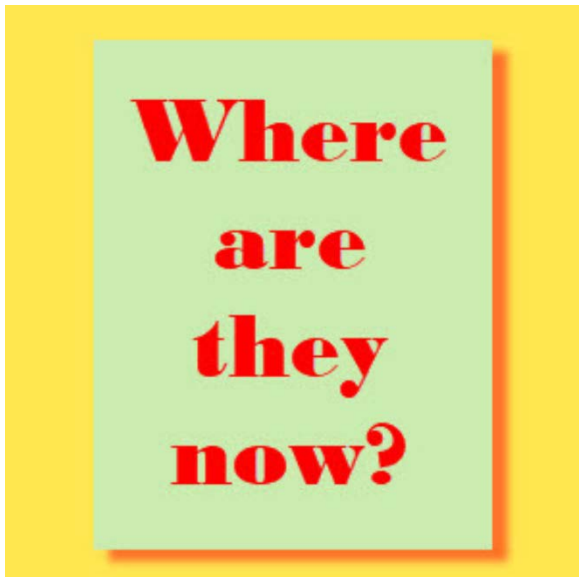
Sandra received her GED in 2019. She is a mother of two girls, ages 15 and 10 years. Following her graduation, she got a job as a behavioral health technician working in health clinics and group homes to serve the needs of the patients and residents. Her future plans include attending college to study either nursing or criminal justice.

Jaime and his wife have three children, ages 3, 9 and 16. While studying for the GED tests he shared his dream to be an auto mechanic with his own business. After earning his diploma in 2017, he worked at Pep Boys and then another mechanic shop, learning and doing what he loves. Laid off during the pandemic, he continues to work on friends' and family vehicles when he isn't working his full-time position at a cattle ranch as a feed technician.



Watch for Part 2 of "Where Are They Now? With more updates on Adult Community Education program graduates in next month's newsletter. If you would like to volunteer as a tutor, [click here](#). To make a donation that helps cover testing fees (\$200 per participant) and online curriculum subscription costs (\$750 per year), direct the donation to:

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As the Adult Community Education program continues to celebrate its seventh year of service to the community, this month's update presents Part 2 of the spotlight on our GED graduates to find out where they are now after earning their diplomas.



Kenia was 18 when she enrolled in the GED program. She had already passed some of the exams but was struggling to pass the social studies and language arts tests. With tutoring support, Kenia passed these tests on her next attempts to earn her GED in 2017. Currently, she is a mother of a three-year-old girl and works as a shipping and receiving clerk at a farm equipment distributor in Casa Grande.



Martin, who is in his 50s and grandfather to seven grandchildren, studied for his GED exams for a period of three and a half years. He came to the program as part of his Workman's Compensation retraining program. His GED certificate was a gateway to less physically demanding jobs and safer working conditions. However, Martin's test preparation progress was interrupted by yet another workplace injury for which he required hospitalization and physical therapy. With tutoring help, Martin earned his GED

in 2018 and now has a great job as a heavy equipment operator.

Felipe was forced to leave Mexico when corrupt officials threatened his life for reporting the illegal business practices of his employer. Blacklisted from his technical career field in Mexico and fearing for his safety, he entered the U.S. illegally. Due to his undocumented status and because of differing U.S. education and qualification requirements, Felipe could not find work in his career field. Determined to rebuild his life and career, Felipe applied for a green card and set out to earn his



GED which would open the doors to the specialized education he would need to address the deficits in his qualifications. Highly intelligent and self-disciplined, he mastered the test subjects easily with tutors guiding his learning path and providing supportive resources. Despite earning his GED certificate in 2019, immigration laws have denied his permission to work legally in the U.S. Further, his undocumented status blocks his access to higher education funding and opportunities. Knowing that his return to Mexico could jeopardize his safety, Felipe currently works manual labor and construction jobs where he can find them. While he lives in the shadows hoping and waiting for more opportunities to build on his education and succeed in his career.



Eva graduated with her GED in 2018. She was a quick learner and during her preparation studies, the tutor team noticed Eva's natural gift for teaching others. Combined with her bilingual abilities she was a great fit for the program's part-time Tutoring Coordinator position. Eva's service and time has helped the Adult Community Education program to reach deeper into the Latina community, strengthened our volunteer team's bilingual outreach, and provided continuity for participant enrollment and volunteer recruitment.

For more information about the Adult Community Education program, or if you would like to volunteer as a tutor, click [here](#). To make a donation that helps cover testing fees (\$200 per participant) and online curriculum subscription costs (\$750 per year), direct the donation to:

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