

ESOL Summer Program Celebrates 12 Graduates

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Families, friends and staff gathered at the University of New Hampshire’s Manchester campus earlier this month to celebrate 12 graduates of the college’s English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Summer Program. Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the [ESOL Summer Program](#) has helped more than 400 adult learners from 60 countries improve English skills and prepare for college.

“You’ve worked incredibly hard to get here and have so much to be proud of,” Manchester Mayor Joyce Craig, an alumna of UNH, said during her remarks. “The City of Manchester is lucky to have you here.”

Craig was joined by Kerry Holmes from U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan's office, who read a statement from Hassan at the ceremony.

"New Hampshire has a strong tradition of inclusiveness, where each generation brings new energy, talent, and hope to our state and country, and strengthens our communities, democracy, and economy," Hassan's statement read. "By successfully completing this program, you have improved your language skills, which will help you in the workplace or in pursuing further education."

Through reading and writing assignments, class discussions and field trips, students in the five-week program improve written and spoken English while learning about Manchester's history and student life in the United States.

Sandrine Volpi came to the U.S. from France through an au pair service, and she chose the ESOL Summer Program to fulfill course requirements throughout her stay. She said the program is not just a language-learning experience, but a cultural one as well.

"We have a cosmopolitan classroom. We have different lives, languages, cultures, ideas, point of views," Volpi said. "The classes are interactive and we exchange a lot, and that made us more open-minded about the world."

Volpi joins the ranks of ESOL Summer Program alumni, many of whom have gone on to pursue undergraduate or graduate degrees. Returning in summer 2019, the program will continue to serve the growing population of English learners in southern New Hampshire thanks to continued collaboration and support from UNH Manchester, Manchester School District, the International Institute of New England, English for New Americans and the Manchester Community Resource Center.

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