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## Q1

### Applicant Information

Name	Holly Peterson-Ramos
Company	Grace Lutheran Church of Naples/Pelican Community Center & Lutheran Church
Address	860 Banyan Blvd.
Address 2	5800 Golden Gate Parkway
City/Town	Naples
State/Province	Florida
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## Q2

Name and E-mail address of Primary Contact for Grant Implementation (type "same" if it is the person listed above.)

same

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## Q3

Yes

Is your organization a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or government-based agency that provides adult basic education/literacy, ESOL and/or family literacy instruction in Florida?

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## Q4

Nonprofit Community-Based Organization

Organization Type

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**Q5**

Organization's total operating budget (school districts and community colleges may use the adult education program budget.)

\$1,343,341.70

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**Q6**

**No**

Does your organization charge a fee for instructional services?

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**Q7**

Number of adult ESOL and/or family literacy students provided instruction during fiscal year 2020-21.

145

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**Q8**

Number of volunteers (if none, enter "0")

24

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**Q9**

Number of paid instructors (if none, enter "0")

0

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**Q10**

Number of students to be provided with instructional services under this grant.

250

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**Q11**

**No**

Are you a 2020-21 recipient of this grant?

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**Q12**

County or counties served by this grant.

Collier

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## •WHAT WE DO

The Pelican Community Center and Lutheran Church has been providing free ESL classes to the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic community within Naples, Florida since August 2017. To date, we have served over 1,125. The focus of the Pelican Community Center and Lutheran Church is to assist the immigrant adult population through instruction to learn the English language. The goal is to achieve independence and empowerment through ESL classes. The power of literacy is not just the ability to read and write. It is for each person to apply these skills and to effectively connect, decipher, and recognize the complexities of the world in which they live.

## •OUR MISSION

The mission of the Pelican Community Center and Lutheran Church is to support *all* families and individuals through their daily struggles of life, by providing what they need most to be happier and healthier families, and to become productive members of society. Our center provides English Literacy classes in the mornings and evenings. We serve the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic communities within Collier County. The Pelican is a mission church, and our work is reviewed and overseen by Grace Lutheran Church of Naples. Our center welcomes all!

## •THE NEED

The Pelican Community Center provides a personalized and unique experience and approach for adults who want to learn the English language. A significant amount of the families that we serve are living at or below the poverty level. The language barrier is a main factor that limits their opportunity for better employment. A secondary factor is caused by the long waiting period for obtaining work permits and social security numbers. Many of our adult students work multiple jobs and accept irregular work shifts to earn the money they need to support their families. To improve their financial situation, many immigrants will work as clerks or baggers in supermarkets, or in the fast-food industry. These positions are not financially substantive to support a family.

The immigrant population suffers additionally due to prejudice of employers, lack of community organization support, transportation barriers, language barriers and lack of skills. It is unfortunate that the immigrant has not experienced full and equal assimilation into the workforce. Immigrants often do not know the basics that are necessary to apply for employment electronically. Many companies, such as Walmart, Home Depot, Publix, etc. require online application completion. There are cultural differences with some immigrants, and we must become more receptive and empathetic to their fears. An example of this is an individual who applied for many positions and never heard a response. He did not reach out and contact them after his initial interview, because in some countries, “persistence” is viewed as rude. In the United States you need to be proactive and consistent, because of the competitive job market. Our goal is to empower our students through learning the English language and use these tools for students to successfully apply these skills to effectively connect and recognize the complexities of the world in which they live.

Southwest Florida experiences a monumental tourist season. The population of the Naples area increases from 230,000 to 330,000 residents between November through the week after Easter (April). While the tourist season may bring many who are interested in volunteering at the center, it also puts a heavy demand on our students, who are the “*work force*” to serve the tourists. Many employed within the service industry must work long hours and miss our classes, or they are too tired to attend. Language acquisition is not a “*seasonal*” learning approach but requires consistency and focus. The winter tourist season pulls many away and creates a lot of inconsistency with those who could otherwise learn more quickly.

We are requesting \$5,000.00 to be used for program support. Since the Covid-19 Pandemic and of the uncertainty of the border, the Pelican Community Center is experiencing a significant influx of adult immigrants moving to Collier County/Naples and in need to learn our language. Originally, we provided classes two days per week in the mornings and evenings. In May 2021 we had to increase our classes to four days per week to accommodate our students and to keep classes manageable. We offer classes in

groups of 8-10, with two teachers(volunteers) per group. In addition, we are hiring a Part-Time Bilingual ESL Program Administrator to oversee student curriculum, assessments and manage our volunteer teachers.

### •Cultural Challenges

Every Hispanic nation and group have their own culture and norms. As much as we try to avoid a clash with this, it does happen. The learning curve is quick, but sometimes as soon as you have overcome one challenge, you find another cultural norm on the next level, which you did not know existed. This can impact attendance, perception, involvement, and “*spreading the word.*” Timing, seasons, hours of operation, and the wording of an invitation can make major differences in whether something is received well, or not.

### Demographic Profile Within Collier County<sup>i</sup>

Collier County Population	
Collier County Population	321,520
Collier County Population Estimate (2020)	360,103
Hispanic Population (25.9%) Population	83,180
Hispanic Population Estimate (2020)	93,158

Poverty Within Collier County Cities	
Naples	9.3%
Naples Park	14.4%
Golden Gate	22.6%
Naples Manor	20.3%
Immokalee	43.4%

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<sup>i</sup> American Fact Finder (2013-2017) Five Year Estimates

English is not an easy task for adults to learn, coupled with students with low literacy skills in their native languages. Immigrant students who enter our program initially are apprehensive about providing their personal information, such as addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, educational history, etc. We need this information during the initial assessment phase. Eventually, it is provided after the Pastor and the Ministerial Assistant assure the student that the Pelican is here to help them with their daily struggles of adapting to a new country. We encourage each student to register for work permits and with the Social Security Administration to maximize their participation in the systems and structure of the United States.

Pastor Mark Eisold accompanies students through the process of the Social Security office by making calls and provides the expertise in the ability to navigate these services. The Pelican Community Center collaborates with the *Amigos Center in Estero* for professional and legal assistance in the process of citizenship in the United States. Many of our political refugees that attend class are under the rules of asylum. They are educated and experienced and over 40 years old with a full family of dependents. We strive to connect them with the work they need to survive and become established and provide them with the contacts needed to become recognized and viable to work in their field in the United States. The Pastor and/or his assistant accompanies people for job application submittal and interviews by request. It is the Pelican’s personal approach that we have recognized as a key to success in obtaining the required information to assess each student’s individualized personal needs.

### •CLASSES

#### ESL Classes (English as a Second Language)

We currently offer classes on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays from 10-11:30. Evening classes are on Tuesdays 6:30 – 8:00 and Wednesdays 6:30 – 8:00. Classes are 90 minutes in length with breaks, refreshments and snacks provided.

#### Conversational Spanish Classes

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We currently offer this class on Wednesday mornings from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. We would like to add an evening class during 2022.

#### Quarterly Workshops

We offer free eye clinics through the Lions Club of Naples. We have had workshops on stress management, home budgeting, home ownership, rent vs. buying, banking, medical well-checks, Diabetes Management, etc.

#### Friday Night Family Fun Night (*this is currently on-hold due to Covid-19*)

This is dedicated and geared towards families to provide movies, board games, campfires, karaoke. We provide pizza and refreshments in a safe and friendly environment. It is offered from 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

#### Counseling

Pastor Eisold offers family counseling, marriage counseling, personal counseling to all members of his congregation and students attending classes at the Pelican.

#### •**Project Description**

When a student enters the program, the student will meet with the Director to complete a **Literacy Needs Assessment**. This will provide information as to who they are, address, phone number, their country of origin, what language is spoken in the home, highest grade in school completed and if they have any English-speaking skills abilities. The student's progress will be tracked using a **Student Performance Level (SPL)** descriptor for listening and oral communication, general language ability, listening comprehension and oral communication. There will be 10 levels to measure the students' progress. Each student is also given a **Beginning Level Language Log**. This log will track the amount of English used during each week. Questions like, "where did you speak English this week?" Students are also given a **Needs Assessment/Self Evaluation Tool** to accurately log what was difficult for them in the class, and what was easy. Our records indicate that approximately 65% of students that we serve will become functionally literate and have the literacy necessary for coping with most employment and everyday situations as a result of attending our program. Students are placed in four categories for instruction based on their initial assessment. **Beginner A/B, Intermediate, Conversational**. For groups of 6-8 students, we provide 2-3 volunteer (bilingual) teachers per group. This allows a more personalized approach for the adult student.

Classes are ongoing, so if you are unable to attend for a specific time, you can always come back and resume where you left off. We also add throughout the year, "*English Camps*." We do these in three-day intervals and add a lot of socializing. Our goal is to make it a fun experience. Volunteers arrive ½ hour before class. We introduce students to the curriculum for the night and provide a copy. The curricula is always "theme based." An example would be, "Maps of the USA." This is a great example because many do not know where they are relative to other states and cities. We then break them up into groups, and according to their level of English proficiency. When a group completes the curriculum, they are asked (*who, what, when, where and how*) questions to practice vocabulary and sentence structure. We reassemble, test the students by asking questions, with the intention of students being able to demonstrate what they have learned. The next week we review previous curriculum to see how literate they are. If needed, we review again and try to progress with more sophisticated questions using the vocabulary to test for independent English sentence usage. We add vocabulary words with pictures and add them to the prior questions. This style of class, reviewing the prior week lessons is most efficient for creating English speakers. The Pelican uses Step-by-Step with pictures by Ralph Boggs and Robert Dixon. We use English Made Easy, Volume One – Learning English through Pictures by Jonathan Crichton and Pieter Koster.

Volunteers play a significant role with the instruction of these classes. Our ESL program involves three major activities: direct language instruction, the creation of a culturally inclusive environment, and differentiation and modification of curriculum. Our volunteer instructors need to have a great love for people, a working knowledge and understanding of language as a system, and the components of a language and speech, specifically sounds, grammar, meaning, coherence, communicative strategies, and social conventions. Our volunteer teachers need to have a sense of what signs to look for when a student

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struggles with language learning and communication. Teachers must have a working knowledge and understanding of the role of culture in language development. Cultural differences often affect the student in classroom participation and performance. These are challenges which we will resolve through the hiring of a Bilingual ESL Administrator. Finally, due to the large amount of people coming through our doors, and with the uncertainty of our border, we anticipate that these numbers will continue to grow and impact our center beyond what we can handle without additional, bilingual staff.

▪**Collaborative Efforts**

We have attached a document that represents the collaborative efforts of agencies and businesses that we work with throughout the year.

▪**Recognition**

We will recognize Florida Financial Literacy Initiative and Wells Fargo through our Pelican Community Center website, Facebook. We will post a recognition on the Naples Chamber of Commerce website, as we are members of this local organization. We will also advertise in the “El Mensajero” magazine, which has the highest Hispanic readership within Southwest Florida. We advertise monthly in this magazine and many of our students come to us through our advertising efforts.

▪**Timeline**

January 2, 2022 – December 31, 2022

▪**Evaluation**

Success for the program will be the ability for each student to progress through each portion of the class curriculum. When each group of the class reviews what they have learned, they will be asked questions and testing will be performed. If the teacher believes that the student needs to not advance at this time, he or she will be given time to reassess and review until they are able to move on to the next level of class. We are instructing a diverse group and teaching them study skills, like using a notebook and index cards to learn vocabulary and sentences. We integrate additional skills such as learning to count money and make change, time management, budgeting into our English curriculum. Students are tracked using a Student Performance Level (SPL) descriptor for listening and oral communication. General language ability, listening comprehension and oral communication. There are 10 levels to measure the students continued progress.

Measure 1: - Education

The Pelican provides the adult student with the tools and information, resources, and teaching skills to successfully learn English through our ESL classes.

The Pelican will provide these ESL classes so that students will become more familiar and successful with job employment through learning English.

The Pelican will increase students learning knowledge with speaking, reading and writing English.

The Pelican will assess each students’ learning of the English language through tests and structured assessments completed through each course of the curriculum.

Measure 2: - Financial Stability

The Pelican will provide information for students to access what is available to them through their status with immigration under the “Asylum” guidelines, i.e., medical services, legal services, housing, etc.

The Pelican will assist families in locating affordable housing opportunities. We will provide workshops for budgeting, banking alternatives and renting vs. owning of homes. We will provide contact information and direct our students to LSF (Lutheran Services Florida) for families who are on the path to citizenship and successful assimilation into the United States.

The Pelican will assist students with submitting paperwork to the Social Security office in regard to social security cards, work permits. The Pelican will also provide direction to students who require legal representation through the Amigo Center and the Legal Aid Society of Collier County.

The Pelican will provide emergency support services/mercy assistance for rent, housing, sustenance, basic needs for struggling families.

#### ▪Impact of Covid 19

Before Covid-19, many immigrant families were struggling in their day-to-day lives, because many worked multiple jobs within the service industry. During the stay-at-home orders and subsequent business closures, these workers were extremely impacted. Many of our families who attend our ESL classes were under the asylum laws of our country and were not eligible for unemployment, or stimulus income provided by the government. We have a combination of educated immigrants from Venezuela Cuba, Colombia, Chile, Bolivia and Peru. We have a significant group of immigrants who are not educated, nor have the ability to communicate effectively in English. They are employed in multiple positions due to the language barrier and struggle to provide food and basic necessities for their families. It is an ongoing month-to-month battle. It became far worse due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Beginning in May 2021, we began to experience a significant influx of families arriving directly from the border who are ill equipped to begin a new life here. They arrive here due in part to a family connection in southwest Florida. The Pelican continues to provide free ESL classes so that students will have the necessary tools for success and to familiarize themselves with the English language and to become gainfully employed. We will continue to increase our students' abilities with learning the English language and enhance their writing skills.

**What the Pelican Community Center and Lutheran Church provided to residents of Collier County during pre and post Covid-19 Pandemic:** We served an average of 31 households (155) people each month May 2020 – October 2020 with food support within our Haitian and Hispanic outreach efforts. This is ongoing. We provided toilet paper, paper towels, with 8-12 families monthly from May – October 2020. In August we restarted our free “fellowship lunches” each Sunday. Attendance from August – December 2020 was 213. In January 2021 – March 2021 we served 185. The Pelican distributed between \$1,400 - \$3,500 in financial support each month for food, rent, etc. to the Hispanic and Haitian communities within Collier County between April 2020 – February 2021. We received \$5,000.00 of support from the Community Foundation of Collier County and assisted eight families financially.

PELICAN COMMUNITY CENTER ESL ADULT ENGLISH CLASSES	
Revenue	\$251,428
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$251,428
Expenses	
Salary and Related Expenses	\$177,313
Rent and Utilities	\$14,090
Operating Expenses	\$31,725
Training	\$10,200
Transportation	\$7,800
Program Materials	\$16,300
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$257,428
<b>NET INCOME:</b>	(\$5,000.00)
Comments:	
The Pelican receives annual support from Grace Lutheran Church of Naples, contributions from local LCMS churches, mission supporters, Sunday offerings, LCMS grant opportunities, Marco Foundation, Hope Lutheran Church Foundation, Community Foundation of Collier County. We apply annually to numerous private foundations. Our in-kind donation of volunteers throughout the year is approximately \$5,460.00.	

## Collaborative Efforts – The Pelican Community Center

Organization	Purpose
Amigos en Cristo – Immigration Services	The Pelican Community Center directs participants of our ESL classes to the immigration attorneys that are available through Amigos en Cristo. To date, we have directed approximately 150 students for attorney services relating to immigration status and/or path to citizenship. These services are offered free, or on a sliding scale. The center offers family based, country-specific, and victims of crime, immigration and citizenship services. The attorneys are accredited representatives through the Department of Justice. Many families are unable to pay the fees of a private immigration attorney, or do not know where to turn for trustworthy assistance. This center provides families a safe and affordable way to take care of their legal needs.
BB&T Bank	This is a local bank in Naples and they offer workshops to our students in the area of banking basics, budgeting, financial planning, homeownership
Collier County Public Schools	CCPS Exceptional Education and Student Support Services. The Pelican Community Center has made a commitment to provide information to school-age youth that are experiencing loss of housing or economic hardship.
Core Health Partners	We have partnered with Core Health Partners to participate in a screening event for diabetes. This organization provides medication and care for individuals diagnosed with diabetes.
El Mensajero/Frontier Ventures	We advertise in this magazine, as this has a monthly circulation of over 10,000 Hispanic readers in Naples and Bonita Springs. We receive significant referrals about our services offered at the Pelican.
Florida Georgia District of LCMS	We work with this district of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod for events, workshops, grant opportunities, etc.
Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	We have the opportunity to network with many Hispanic owned businesses throughout the State of Florida to provide information about our organization and the services we offer to the Hispanic communities.
Highlands Latin Cottage School	We offer our facility on Mondays for students attending the Highlands Latin Cottage School



Lions Club of Naples	The Lions Club provides eye clinics two times a year at the Pelican. This is free eye examinations and referrals. Each time we have a significant amount of families that come to receive their eye examinations. They are a wonderful organization to provide these free services to our students and their families.
Lutheran Services of Florida	The Pelican uses this organization for students that are struggling financially, displaced, immigration/refugee issues, housing, sustenance.
Man in the Mirror Ministries	This organization meets on Saturdays for a men's group. Their vision is for every church to disciple every man.
Naples Chamber of Commerce	The Pelican Community Center is participating in the Naples Chamber's "Get Involved Collier 2019 Volunteer Expo" to be held at the Hilton on 10/21/2019 from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Naples Christian Academy	Naples Christian Academy has donated many items to include desks, chairs, workstations, computers to the Pelican.
Neighborhood Health Clinic	The Pelican provides information to our students and parishioners to this low-cost health clinic for individuals who do not have healthcare. The clinic provides quality medical and dental care to patients who have an acute, episodic or chronic illness.
Panira Healthcare Clinic	We have partnered with this clinic. They have provided informative workshops for our students and offer healthcare services on a sliding scale for individuals who do not have healthcare.
Paradise Coast Church	We have hosted this church to use our facilities for their bible study meetings each Thursday.
Project Hope	Is a local nonprofit in Naples and they have provided workshops for our students regarding stress management. It examines topics of the physical, emotional and health-related conditions attributed by stress.
St. Matthew's Thrift Store	The Pelican works with St. Mathew's in providing non-perishable food donations to their organization. We keep a large crate outside of our facility and this allows people to come and donate their goods. Collier County has a great need for food donations, and we are committed to St. Matthew's.