

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

September 2021



**VOLUNTEER  
SINCE  
2019**

## MEET MARILYN!

When Marilyn first began volunteering at the Center in May 2019, she worked one-on-one or in small groups with workers tutoring them to support their English skills. As time progressed Marilyn began holding weekly workshops where workers were able to create greeting cards on her die-cut machine. During the workshops, workers showed their creativity, making birthday and holiday cards to give to their loved ones.

Due to the pandemic, even though we had to switch to remote activities, Marilyn continued her support by researching and helping create a working doc filled with resources members could use. Resources include health, basic necessities and recreational. Marilyn is always eager and willing to support and does so with excitement!

### LEARN MORE ABOUT MARILYN'S VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:



Materials used for the card making workshop.

#### WHY DID YOU WANT TO VOLUNTEER AT THE CENTER?

*My first reason is that I love watching people learn, and I love learning from those I am teaching. We become a team. The second reason is because of a strong feeling I've had since I was a child that everyone has the right to belong and to be included. I felt so sad about how the US government is excluding people. One day I thought I need to do something instead of feeling sad. That's when I remembered driving by the DWC, and I thought maybe I can help by tutoring people who are learning English since I have a background in teaching basic English skills. I've learned over the years when people have skills and a chance they will succeed.*

#### WHAT HAS VOLUNTEERING AT THE CENTER MEANT TO YOU?

*I was enjoying the time I spent at the Center, slowly getting to know people, showing people how to make greeting cards, and doing some English tutoring. I even signed up for a beginners Spanish class at Palo Alto High and was planning to practice speaking Spanish at the Center but then Covid struck. Thanks to weekly emails from Gwen (ESL Coordinator), I began to learn how resilient and resourceful the folks at the Center are. As things were shutting down, it seems the Center expanded to provide services for those in need, including vehicle residents. New opportunities sprung up such as sewing masks for other groups of people. Some workers participated in online learning and others became advocates. I feel an incredible dynamic strength growing in DWC that will lead to new laws that will benefit us all.*

#### ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC MEMORIES YOU HAVE?

*I enjoyed conversations with workers about their day to day lives and the hopes and dreams they have for themselves and their families. I liked showing folks how to make cards and then watching them use their imagination and skills to make greeting cards for people they love. I liked the smiles on people's faces when they looked at their creations. I also enjoyed helping people learn more about speaking English although it was a challenge for all of us because I speak little Spanish. I remember all the encouragement I received from the students when I substituted in an ESL class. Several students helped by translating from English into Spanish when I couldn't explain a concept. The Center is a friendly, welcoming place!*



Marilyn working with compañeros during a card making workshop.

**THANK YOU  
MARILYN!**