



<http://www.pcsb.org/tomlinson>

Administrator- Godfrey Watson; Evening Coordinator - Patrick Jennings

## A Quarterly Community Newsletter

### Tomlinson Adult Learning Center

296 Mirror Lake Drive North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701  
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## The Tribute

Winter 2016

## Special Visit in September

### Mayor Kriseman speaks to Students

Mr. Chad Bryant, our Citizenship teacher, arranges for the mayor of St. Petersburg to come and speak with all of our students each year. He explained how this came to be.

"One year, I was taking the students on a field trip to the Holocaust Museum. As we walked down Central Avenue, we came across the mayor. He gave me his card and asked me to contact his office about coming to speak. The students were so surprised that he was friendly; in their countries they wouldn't have seen a top city official walking on the streets among the people. I've been able to have the mayor come each year after that," said Mr. Bryant. "Each mayor has been happy to come."

Bryant explained that the topics usually include community issues and the students' roles in the community. "He also goes over opportunities for students," said Bryant. "Most of our students want to learn all they can about our country and they are excited to have our mayor come and speak." Each year, the room is nearly packed because our students want to immerse themselves in our customs, our culture, and experience our world, first-hand.



**Above:** Administrator Mr. Godfrey Watson welcomes the Mayor to speak to interested students in Tomlinson's room 303.

**Left:** ESOL student and journalist visiting here from Egypt, Mohamed Maher, interviews Mr. Kriseman in his office.

**Left:** Room 303 was "standing room only" as Mayor Kriseman took questions from the audience. All Tomlinson students were invited to be a part of this annual event and get a glimpse of American democracy at work.



## Past ESOL Student Remembers Tomlinson Fondly

Harry Gostivari is a hardworking refugee from Albania who arrived in Florida from a relocation camp in Austria in the early 1990's with nothing but a fierce determination to succeed and his family's blessings, after the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Luckily, Harry had some watchmaking skills handed down by his family, help from Lutheran Family Services and, of course, Tomlinson! He started here and can't say enough good things about the ESOL program, which is fine-tuned to meet the needs of students as they advance. On a recent sunny October afternoon in his shop, he said that he has referred dozens of students to us over the years, and still keeps in touch with many of the friends he made here. He has wonderful memories of the inclusive international atmosphere, which gives students a feeling of belonging. Harry also suggests listening to talk radio and stations like NPR to hear as much spoken English as possible.

Harry Gostivari, Owner of A & M Watch Repair at 14 4th St. No., St. Petersburg, Florida





## SOME NEW FACES IN OUR...



**Left:** New Media Specialist, Nina Cornelius, comes to us from the K-12 arena.

**Below Left:** Barbara Riddle-Dvorak moves from the Guidance Office to the Career Lab, where she and Nina will be administering the Career Interest Inventories to all of our Tomlinson students.

One thing that both of our “newbies” have in common is a wealth of background knowledge from their prior experiences in the workforce. “Variety is the spice of Life,” could be the life-motto for both Nina Cornelius and Barbara Riddle-Dvorak.

Nina was born and raised in St. Pete and started working in the school system when her children were young; she has 2 grown children and 2 granddaughters now. Her history includes working in Human Development, social work, business education, social sciences and a software company.

Barbara, on the other hand, comes to us from “The Big Apple” but has called St. Pete “home” since 2012 and has also been involved with “people-oriented” jobs her whole life. From environmental technician to writing, to real estate, to civil rights issues, she has always had “an interest in people and other cultures.” We’re thrilled she’s putting those skills to work for us.



## Field Trips Available for Tomlinson:

### Students Step “Off Campus” for Additional Enrichment



A trip to PTC was well-attended in early December, where students got the opportunity to “tour” each program at the Clearwater facility so they could get ideas on what kinds of fields they might be interested in after they graduate from Tomlinson. The picture above, on the left, shows ESOL students gathered around the instructor for the “machinist” program as he explains the im-

portance of the Safety Regulations and Procedures, as well as the many job opportunities available with this particular certification. Northeast Community Center partnered with Tomlinson for this endeavor to bring two busloads of over 100 students to participate in this event. We thank the representatives from the Pinellas County School District for both organizing and chaperoning this experience, along with our dedicated teachers.

Another field trip opportunity this term was for Mrs. Nancy Fox’s students to go to the Holocaust Museum. This trip was sponsored by **Read Pinellas**; the gratitude of the participants was overwhelming. Students wrote “thank you” letters to the organization expressing their appreciation for the trip after having read the book, *Yours, Anne*. “The museum made it all come to life and be real.”



**Above:** Ms. Donna Lawless and Rhakeem Jackson celebrate success. **Right:** Troy Fisher, Holly Heintz’s student is proud of his accomplishment.



## GED Grads

**Center:** Jennifer Cosentino displays her diploma. **Left:** Matthew Allende, also Holly Heintz’s student, couldn’t be more pleased.