An exciting program to help students improve communication, build relationships on campus, practice English-speaking skills and embrace cultural diversity.

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For more information about the ICP program or to volunteer as a Conversation Partner, please contact
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Special thanks to Khairia Fazal, Margaret Roidi, John Findura, Tara Farber, Staysha Taylor, Amy Beckers and the CLAC staff for their cooperation in helping to make ICP a successful and exciting program.
How will ICP Benefit the Participants?

The ICP program benefits the entire campus community. Through this program, students build connections with one another and learn about the importance of diversity. They receive firsthand knowledge about cultural differences and learn the importance of tolerance in a diverse world.

Benefits for English Language Learners

The program is designed to help English learners/international students feel comfortable speaking the English language while developing confidence in their conversation skills. This social, one-on-one setting allows international students to practice English and learn more about American culture. Participating in ICP is a great way to develop intercultural communicative competence, while building relationships on campus.

International students who participate in ICP learn:

- Natural conversation outside of the classroom
- Conversation skills and listening comprehension strategies
- Vocabulary, idioms and other language proficiencies
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Cultural diversity

Benefits for Conversation Partners

Bergen students selected each semester to work as Conversation Partners find this experience to be quite valuable for themselves and their international Conversation Partner.

Conversation Partners will:

- Earn Service Learning credit
- Receive help with admission into the College’s Allied Health programs
- Gain excellent volunteer experience to highlight on resume
- Improve communication and listening skills
- Learn about cultural diversity

What is Intercultural Conversation Partners (ICP)?

Intercultural Conversation Partners (ICP) at BCC matches English-language learners with English-speaking students for the opportunity to have cross-cultural conversations. Goals of the program are to strengthen communication skills, expand cultural knowledge, promote cultural awareness and build relationships among students.

ICP allows students to:

- Develop language and listening skills
- Understand verbal and nonverbal communication
- Learn about different cultures and understand diversity
- Create friendships with students on campus

How to Participate in ICP

ICP is located in the Henry and Edith Cerullo Learning Assistance Center (CLAC) in room L-125. Students who want to participate in these conversation sessions should visit The Writing Center in L-125 or call (201) 447-7489 to make an appointment. Walk-in sessions are also available.

Students Helping Students

Conversation Partners are fellow BCC students. Every semester a handful of Bergen students volunteer their time to work in the CLAC as Conversation Partners. In addition to volunteering, students also earn Service Learning credit for their participation in the program. Any student wishing to become a Conversation Partner should contact Gina Herrmann at ghermann@bergen.edu for additional information.

ICP Promotes Academic Success

International students who take advantage of ICP find the program fun, helpful and extremely informative as they acquaint themselves with the American culture. Since the program’s inception, ICP has helped hundreds of international students develop confidence in speaking the language as they navigate an unfamiliar environment and make new connections. Academic achievement starts with a strong support system. Many former and current Bergen students attribute ICP as a vital factor in their own success stories.

“I always recommend this program. I believe that it’s a tool that our college gives us to improve our skills, and it’s free! You learn a lot, and you can ask as many questions as you have…”

Lina Lopez, International Student from Colombia

“In reflection, I have to say that this program has always made me feel so good. Not only is it a pleasure to meet people from different countries, but helping them just for the sake of helping kindles a warmth inside that can’t be matched by anything else.”

Nicole Acosta, Student Conversation Partner, Bergen Community College

“I think this was valuable to the students because there are people and places you can reach out to who make it possible for you to assimilate smoothly and efficiently. Although I already enjoy interacting with other cultures, it opened my eyes even wider to our beautiful world.”

Brandon Reis, Student Conversation Partner, Bergen Community College