



Special guest Monica Stephan visits Monday mornings ESL class. Stephan was there to explain the process of applying and testing to become a U.S. citizen.

Danielle Bober looks at instructor Suzanne Bruce during Tuesday nights bartending class. Bober hopes to pay for school by bartending when she moves into the city.



Educational center offers traditional, non-traditional classes *Part six of a six part series*

The Bloomingdale Center for Independent Learning is in a unique position by offering a vast variety of classes.

"In every sense of the word it acts as a regional center by providing similar programs and services," Associate Dean Joanne Parke said.

"We offer 200 independent classes as well as your traditional credit and non-credit classes including English as a Second Language and prep course work for General Education Development testing," Supervisor of Instructional Assistance, Christine Carcenac said.

It is easy to see that students are taking advantage of the independent learning center, as there was a line of students waiting to speak to English instructor Jody Stapleton. Brittany Stejskal was one of those students. Stejskal is taking English 1101 independently.

"It gives me the freedom to take my own time in the class," Stejskal said.

It is much easier for many students to attend classes at the Bloomingdale location than main campus due to location. It is much closer to home and the parking is vast.

"The independent classes give

me more time to work on the class assignments. I do my own studies. I live much closer to Bloomingdale center than main campus, I only live five minutes away," Arwinder Singh Bhalla said.

The center also offers a full GED program so Spanish speaking students can get the equivalent of a high school diploma, giving many Spanish speaking people the opportunity to get an education. This also makes a bridge from GED classes to ESL classes. "I am glad that everyone supports you to continue with your education, be it the GED class or ESL," Michelle Santos said in Spanish.

Another unique aspect of the Bloomingdale location is the bartending class that is offered. It is a seven-week class that offers the certification to be a licensed bartender. "I plan on being a bartender, I will be moving into the city for school and there are a lot of bars. I want to pay for school and bartending pays good money," Danielle Bober said.

Any way you look at it the main goal of the Bloomingdale Center for Independent Learning is to reach out to the community and educate as many community members and non members as possible.

Photos and Story by Aldo Blanco



The Bloomingdale Center for Independent Learning is located off of Bloomingdale Road in the Town Square of Bloomingdale shopping center.

Christine Carcenac is the centers Supervisor of Instructional Assistants.

Carcenac started in 1990 as a Testing Lab aide and briefly left and came back to COD in 1998 as an instructional assistant.

