

## **SCALE Connections launches four conversation groups!**

Did you know that many English language learners don't get to speak much English outside of their class? They speak their native language at home, with their friends, and often even at work.

How do they ever learn to speak English? Very slowly!

That is why we started SCALE Connections. It's a new project that helps English language learners practice conversation skills and build connections in the English-speaking community. It is based at SCALE, the adult education program in Somerville, and made possible by a grant from First Literacy.



The project uses trained volunteer native English-speakers from the community to lead small conversation groups on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8:30 PM. Learners appreciate being in small groups (3-5 learners and a facilitator) because they have more time to practice speaking than in large classes and because it's a safer space to receive corrections. Once a month, we get all the groups together for a social event. That gives the learners practice conversing in different social settings. It also allows folks from the community to get to know people from different cultures in a relaxed setting.

The volunteer facilitators stay after each conversation session to debrief with me. We are all learning a lot from each other and building our own sense of community.

Our first social event was a potluck that included a whole group conversation mixer. Our learners want the second social event to be a movie night, so we are planning to watch and discuss several short films.

We plan to open future social events to the broader community. Do you want to be involved? Let me know and we will add you to that announcement list.

We plan to send out three quarterly news updates. Let me know if you want to receive these news updates, or if we should take you off the list. Feel free to share this with others who might be interested.

Be well,  
Lori Segall