

High Point University and Reading Connections

Reading Connections and High Point University formed a partnership in August 2017, with Dr. Amanda Mbuvi, Assistant Professor of Religion, Department of Religion and Philosophy. Dr. Mbuvi was hoping to place her students in a community service agency; earning hours for participation. Arlene Lent, Program Coordinator for Reading Connections in High Point, was hoping to offer students at Reading Connections the opportunity to branch out to experience meeting people in the United States who had different views, came from different walks of life, and who could offer insights about our culture other than what they have heard about or read about from secondary sources. [Read more here.](#)

In late September Dr. Mbuvi's students received training in their classes at HPU from Arlene to be prepared to work with students from other countries. The HPU students were scheduled to come into Reading Connections two days a week for 2 hours each day. The students worked around their busy schedules to come to Reading Connections at first developing reading curriculum that could be used in the classrooms by our tutors. After much prompting, our Reading Connections students became more comfortable coming to the sessions to work on specific goals they had set for themselves as Reading Connection students. Jamie Trogdon, a HPU student, tutored Alvaro Torres and his wife, Mireya working specifically on improving conversational English. James Linehan, from HPU, tutored Abraham Asres and worked specifically on helping Abraham develop presentations for his college classes. Alex Jasper, assisted one of our tutors, William Powell, in an ESOL classroom, and Taylor Hatch helped with various tasks at our Reading Connections Office.

Everyone developed unexpected bonds during the program which, I am convinced, will last a lifetime. As a result, a deeper understanding of cultures and society as a whole became evident as these relationships developed. May 2018 the High Point University students planned and invited all the Reading Connection students who participated in our partnership to a campus visit. Students from both organizations expressed their gratitude for the opportunity this partnership presented them. Wesal, a Reading Connection student had never been on the High Point University campus before and was amazed how a campus was so beautiful and offered students so many opportunities in life.

On May 2, Reading Connection students and Coordinator were invited to High Point University to celebrate our success of partnering together this first year. Students were provided a wonderful lunch with many options to choose from. After lunch, we all tried our skills in the Arcade. Once we finished playing skeet ball, air hockey, pinball machines, and ping-pong in the arcade, and oh yes, walked past all the strange mirrors, we were ready for a stroll on the campus.

We'd like to thank Dr. Amanda Mbuvi and her students for partnering with Reading Connections in High Point. We look forward to another year with Dr. Amanda's Fall and Spring Classes at High Point University.