Tutor Appreciation!
(It does happen!)

Tutors & Learning Specialists Discuss Times That They Have Been Appreciated by Students

Tutor Appreciation

A Closer Look at SI

My VPI Lab

Mayetta Lee Wins Award

Life & Times of Dr. Trumpet

Five, Seven, Five

Tale of the Mysterious $20

Suzanne Rivell assists a student with a paper in the Writing Lab.

Students sent flowers to the labs in appreciation.

Students come to the Math Lab to study and receive tutoring.

An SI study session is a unique & helpful opportunity for students.
Working for Palm Beach State College’s Student Learning Center requires an extraordinary amount of patience, kindness, energy, and spirit. It also demands a certain amount of toughness. As tutors, we must be motivators, educators, and sometimes counselors. Our roles shift with every student: how we facilitate understanding is unique to every person requiring assistance. Thus, the ability to be versatile is absolutely necessary. It is an understatement to say we work hard in our jobs—an understatement to say we care about our students. Because of all this, being appreciated by students and by each other is extremely rewarding. Students do truly value the help our labs provide, and understanding this always makes my day a little brighter. —April Blair

We asked tutors and Learning Specialists to describe a time students appreciated them, and here’s what they shared:

“"One of my students did particularly well in my Vo Prep Math class. She did everything I told her to do! She passed the final exam in flying colors. When I saw her later after she had entered her program of study, I asked her if she had learned anything useful in my class. She replied, ‘Absolutely yes! Haircutting is all about geometry and hair coloring is all about formulas!’ This is all the appreciation I needed.”

--Gina Rose, VPI Lab

"A student brought me his graded paper that we had worked on with an ‘A’ on it and thanked me.”

— Pat Jablonski, English Writing Lab.

"There was a student that I would see once a week at 6pm just before her class at 6:30. She said that she would always make the highest score on her tests and that she was encouraging her classmates to come to the Lab.”

— Nadine Clarke, English Writing Lab.

The Haitian Student Community sent flowers in appreciation of the Reading & Writing Labs for their “international understanding toward all immigrant students.”

The SLC recently provided HESI workshops for students preparing to take the HESI in order to enter the nursing program. When we asked these students if the workshops were helpful, they said:

“Thanks for your support and energy!”

“Thank you very much!! This is super helpful. I’m very grateful for all the help you are offering me.”

“With the help of our tutors, I was able to gain knowledge, share my fears, and receive encouragement from talking to other students who were in the same boat like me taking the HESI exam.”

“The Math Lab called all of the participants & offered one-on-one tutoring. It’s so great how supportive everyone at PBSC is!”

“I’m so elated to tell you that I got accepted into the nursing program. I really want to thank you and your HESI study team again for all your encouragements and guidance. You’ve been a really big help!”

--JoAnne Blair, English Writing Lab

— April Blair, English Writing Lab

—--Nadine Clarke, English Writing Lab

— Gina Rose, VPI Lab

— Pat Jablonski, English Writing Lab.
Supplemental Instruction has been revolutionizing learning for more than two generations. Called “SI” for short, it grew out of the political and social ferment in the USA in the 1960s and 1970s, which forced open the doors to higher learning for millions of people who had never before had access. Large numbers of them were not adequately prepared for the rigors of college and needed learning support beyond the traditional venues of tutorial remediation. Structured study groups facilitated by their peers, focused on the development of learning strategies in addition to course content, helped them through their most challenging coursework. Just as importantly, these study groups helped students feel a part of things, giving them a greater sense of attachment to their academic community and increasing the likelihood that they would stick with it and finish college.

Flash forward to the early 1990s in the Republic of South Africa and the fall of the racial apartheid system. Vast populations of citizens never before given a chance at an education suddenly poured into the nation’s university system. (Imagine the USA’s 60s social revolution on steroids.) Many thousands of these new South African students entered university without an adequate foundation in study skills and this amounted to a national emergency. In response, SI was adopted on a massive, nationwide scale to ensure that these students benefited from the higher education opportunities once they had access to them.

Around this same time period, SI gained a foothold right here at what was then Palm Beach Community College. Drioes of students enrolled in tough science courses were giving up and dropping them. Two of these courses were assigned SI leaders and the turnaround began. The SI attendees felt better anchored to the college, had someone dependable to guide their study, grasped their course content more fully, and developed learning skills that would serve them throughout their college career, including in those courses where an SI leader was not available.

Today, the SI program at Palm Beach State College is 96 times the size it was at the beginning. Sixty-three SI sections are running at the Lake Worth Campus, 64 at Boca, and 65 at Eissey. At the Lake Worth Campus, 80 percent of SI participants earned grades of A, B or C in their SI-targeted courses during the last four academic years. Their grades (GPA) in those courses averaged 2.80 compared with 2.14 for those of non-attendees. While many of the benefits of SI cannot be quantified, the support of the SI program is invaluable to students.
My VPI Lab
ETA 235
by Gina C. Rose
Learning Specialist
Palm Beach State College
Lake Worth Campus

Vocational Preparatory Instruction. That’s what we do. Reading, Math, Language. Have you heard of The Reading Lab? The Math Lab? The English Writing Lab? Yes, you have! If not, you might be stranded on a desert island or an honors student.

But what is the VPI Lab? Let’s use our CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS. Please refer to Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Let us dissect VPI. I like to do the easy stuff first. Instruction. Got it. Vocational Instruction: we have that here! Did you know Palm Beach State College teaches welding, cosmetology, automotive technology? Did you know Palm Beach State could train you to be a licensed practical nurse (LPN) in about one year? Cool, ha! You will be if you graduate our HVAC/R program (air conditioning and refrigeration). We teach machining technology too! Case closed. It would be if you heat fused it shut after you graduated our welding program.

What does this all have to do with the Student Learning Center? This is the preparatory part. To be successful in these programs, our students need to be proficient in reading, math and language. In real life, we do need to read the instructions, and be capable of writing them, too. We need to communicate with someone and calculate something whether it be mixing a hair color formula, cutting angles in a haircut or understanding the mathematics of air flow for that new range hood we might be thinking of buying. Remember “Math is Money” written by Jesse Rogers in the last edition of the Student Learning Chronicle? Everybody likes money!

It is “MY” VPI Lab for our students. Our students have so many choices

Choose what to learn:
Reading, Math, Language

Choose with whom to learn:
Learning specialists, workforce assessment advisor, lab assistants, tutors, fellow students.

Choose how to learn:
Class, computer, lab, home, workbooks, software, apps, library books

Choose where to learn:
Class, lab, home, bus

Choose to learn more about VPI?
Visit us in person: Lake Worth Campus ETA 235


Call us maybe: 561-868-3795
Here is what students are saying about the
Computer Lab Staff:

"Awesome! Made me feel comfortable with the process!"

"They helped me understand what I thought was so difficult. I was able to continue on with my homework without any problems."

"Always encouraging!"

"They are willing to take the time."

"They guided me through, made sure I understood and was prepared for my midterm. I received an A!"

"They helped me understand the concept from a student’s perspective."

The Haitian Student Community also appreciates the Math Lab for the helpfulness and generosity shown to all students.

Not only do students appreciate the hard work of all the SLC staff, but we also appreciate one another! Who do you appreciate?

For me, the person who comes to mind first is Espe Noble. Espe brings to her job a thoughtfulness and conscientiousness toward others that strike me as instinctual - something that can't really be taught but is inherent in one's character. Beyond that, I think all or most of us in the SLC contribute to a positive synergy that makes us look forward to coming to work every day. Millions of people in this country work at jobs that make them dread Monday mornings. I don't think that can be said of the SLC at Palm Beach State College, Lake Worth. I think we're blessed. At least, I feel that way.” — Steve Arterburn, SI Learning Specialist

I appreciate everyone, but I especially appreciate Claudett Batchelor. She watches over the Lab with a caring eye; she sees how she can help and then does so; she never says no when asked by me to fill in at the TD or to trade a student appointment with me. She never gets so absorbed in her own activities that she loses sight of the fact that she is in the Lab to work for the Lab, to be a team player, and to help students. I can't say that about myself. She goes around and straightens chairs, keeping a watchful eye over our work place. Her attitude, her appearance, and her demeanor are consistently professional, and I'm proud to work with her.”

— Pat Jablonski, English Writing Lab

I appreciate everyone, but I want to shout out Janice Clough. Janice always goes above and beyond with the students. She happily picks up the slack if things are super busy or if we're just short on tutors. She is also a pleasure to work with; she's always so positive.” — Nadine Clarke, English Writing Lab

I would like to thank the Computer Lab staff for continuing to go above and beyond to help our students. It is your commitment to student success that allows students to realize that they can succeed. A little encouragement goes a long way.” — Lisa Newton, Computer Learning Specialist
Weekend Book Festival Organization Rewards Mayetta Lee for Hard Work

Mayetta Lee, Learning Specialist in the Reading Lab, recently won an award in recognition of her work from the International Weekend Book Festival (IWBF) organization. This organization’s mission is to heighten cultural understanding through academic excellence in reading, writing, and math among students at different educational levels.

The award from IWBF expresses appreciation of Mayetta’s contributions of faithful service and dedication to student success. It also recognizes her high standards of professionalism and leadership as an EAP Learning Specialist at Palm Beach State College.

The president of IWBF is also a current student at Palm Beach State. While studying in the Reading Lab, he remembered how patiently Mayetta helped him and how she went around the lab eagerly helping other students.

“This award is special to me because it came from a student,” Mayetta said. “It encourages all of us here as tutors because it shows how the students appreciate the academic support we give them.”

The Life & Times of Dr. Trumpet...

After many years in the SLC, Dr. David Bethea has left for a full time teaching position at Motlow State Community College in Tullahoma, Tennessee. Dave started his academic career here at Palm Beach State College. He went on to take a BEA at the University of North Florida in 2001, followed by an MS at the University of Central Florida in 2004 and a Ph.D. at FAU.

Before becoming an English Learning Specialist, Dave tutored in both the VPI Lab and the Computer Lab. His expertise in research and computer technology made him an asset to his co-workers as well as to our students. In addition, he was always a pleasure to work with because of his amiable personality and his ready sense of humor.

Dave was lucky enough to have had several family members also working at the Lake Worth campus. His sister, April, is the e-learning coordinator; his mom, Sharon, is an administrative assistant at the LLRC; his wife, Dawn, was a tutor in the Reading Lab. Even his brother-in-law, John, formerly worked in the English Writing Lab. Often, if Dave was “missing,” he could be found in one of the neighboring departments. With all these relatives working close by, he was never out of touch for more than a few minutes.

In addition to working in the SLC, Dave taught music here at PBSC and at FAU while searching for a full time position. All his co-workers in the EWL encouraged him during his quest for a job and were both happy and sad when he succeeded. He is sorely missed.
The Tale of the Mysterious $20

A true story by Claudett Batchelor

I couldn't believe it when I saw the $20...

The local weather channel had warned of a cold front coming through, but that was no ordinary cold front. It was Chicago winter in March. Layered in an old winter coat I had not worn in years, I cranked the front door open and braced for the frigid cold. It was raining too. Inhaling and exhaling the crisp, white air that almost chilled my physiognomy, I rushed towards the staircase. Without missing a step, I arrived at the bottom, incident free. I dashed to my car, on the opposite side of the elevator, unlocked the door, and jumped in. The inside was bone-chilling. Pressed for time, I cranked the engine, turned up the heat, and drove off.

Minutes later, I descended the ramp at Boynton Beach Boulevard into the fast and furious onslaught of I-95 traffic, with some vehicles crawling at 40 miles per hour and others rushing by at 90-miles per hour. I engaged the traffic, cutting in and out of lanes, quite fearlessly, till I made my exit at 6th Avenue. As I approached and entered the busy intersections, I eased off the accelerator, knowing very well that the cops were usually on patrol along that stretch. But the way was clear, no cops at all, so I raced along all the way to the College, where I abandoned my car in the reserved section of Rose Lot.

Shivering, I made my way to the TC building. Instead of waiting for the elevator, I hurried up the steps to the English Writing Lab. The clock on the wall said I was ten minutes late, but I was not the only one. Others were late, too.

After what felt like a very long day working with students, I was ready to head on back home. I signed off for the day, gathered my purse, and walked out into the cold, brilliant afternoon, in search of my car.

I spotted the car even before I crossed the road, but could not believe what I saw. The car appeared abandoned, seemingly ditched by someone in a great hurry. Suddenly, a sheet of paper pinned under the wiper summoned my attention. Concerned, I reached forward to secure it. It was a citation, a citation for bad parking, for taking up two parking spaces, but that was not all.

Underneath the official document was a piece of white paper, with the words “BAD PARKING JOB” distinctly and assertively penned in blue ink. And that was not all: folded in that piece of paper was a twenty-dollar bill—unimagined.

Perplexed, I perused the items in my hand, over and over. My first instinct, however, was to go to the source, campus security. In less than three minutes, I was in their office, standing in front of two female security officers, soliciting answers. After scrutinizing the ticket, one of the women, a student with whom I had had the pleasure of working in the Lab, informed me that the citation was issued as a warning only. But that was not my real concern. I desired to know whether the person who issued the citation and the one who left the money were one and the same. After learning that I did not have to pay a fee, my gut instinct told me security had not left the money. Nonetheless, I showed the security woman the twenty dollars with the handwritten note.

“Are you sure you don’t have a secret admirer on campus?” she intimated teasingly before letting me know that the person who wrote the ticket had already left for the day. Smiling, I not only thanked them, but I also promised to return in the morning, to speak with the person who had issued the ticket. Then I turned towards the exit and let myself out. Baffled, I returned to my car and off I went again, back home to Boynton Beach.

The next day was another cold February morning, but it was Valentine’s Day. I arrived early at work, for I could not wait to share the previous day’s happenings with my colleagues. After narrating the story, the strangeness of the tale engendered a lively debate. “Weird, creepy, and strange,” were some of the words my colleagues ascribed to the story, and we all seemed to have different and varied reasons as to why any person would have left me the twenty. Eager to find out more, I headed back over to the Security Office. No, the officer who issued the ticket had not leave the money, so said the security officer on duty.

“Obviously you got yourself an early Valentine’s gift,” my colleague Debra teased upon learning the news, while the others poked fun at me.

Indeed, it was Valentine’s Day. After all, I felt a bit encouraged to entertain my wildest imaginings, even as I secured a warm spot in my wallet for the “BAD PARKING JOB” note.

After work, I hopped back into my car, a bit more consciously than usual. “Thank you, kind stranger,” I thought, hoping the giver of gifts would hear me.
Five, Seven, Five

Five, seven, five. What does that combination of numbers sound like to you? A math equation? The winning lottery numbers for today (yes, feel free to play them if you’d like – I’m sure you’ll win). Maybe it’s the amount of your summer electric bill. But it’s not. Well, hopefully not. If so, you may need to play those numbers for the Cash 3 drawing tonight.

No, five, seven, five is a formula – one of the rare equations exclusive to language. Its origins come from the Japanese (I haven’t researched this, though, so don’t quote me). But here in a place where we speak English, five, seven, five is just as recognizable, and in some circles, popular.

In the English Writing Lab, where essays are king and researchers seek rebirth for their papers, the five, seven, five formula has taken over like a weed and infested the break room bulletin board. Our tutors are infected with the craze, having produced over twenty-five versions of this magic set of numbers. Like the laughter, tears, and groans that come with every Post-It where the formula has come alive, the spread of this new trend does not seem to have an end:

The Dish from Debra by Debra-Anne J. Singleton, SLC Manager

I’m thrilled to see another edition of the Lake Worth Student Learning Chronicle rolling off the presses! The SLC is a dynamic part of the Palm Beach State College experience, so a newsletter is another great way of getting our message out to the College community. We are growing and changing in response to the needs of the students we serve with strategies that include:

- Looking for the best ways to offer meaningful help to students enrolled in developmental education, credit, and bachelor’s level classes
- Communicating a clear and consistent message to faculty and students about how we support the College community
- Maintaining a well-defined and interactive web presence for the SLC to meet our students’ growing need to access services online and through social media

The SLC is making a difference every day! Stop in and see us.