



# Celebrating the Past and the Future:



# ORT's November 2010 Graduation



Winter 2011

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ORT's hallways were filled with reflections of camera flashes and the sound of navy blue graduation gowns swishing around as graduates smiled for photos and adjusted their robe and flat hat to prepare for a walk they would always remember—the winter 2010 ORT graduation on Monday, November 15, 2010.

ORT's twenty-first graduation was a memorable event for students, their families, as well as the ORT staff.

The ceremony began with a spe-

ech by ORT director Marina Chudnovsky. She congratulated the graduating class on their accomplishments but reminded them that learning is never done.

Following the singing of the Star Spangled Banner, graduates were addressed by Dr. Ephraim Buhks, director of USA ORT Operations, and Dee Bass, Chairman of the ORT Board of Trustees. They expressed delight upon seeing ORT's mission fulfilled in the newly found self-sufficiency and newly acquired employable skills of the graduates.

Next to address the graduates was keynote speaker Audrey Lumley-Sapanski, the employment supervisor from Refugee and Immigrant Community services, a part of Heartland Alliance, Inc. ORT partnered with Heartland Alliance to place several ORT students and graduates in a variety of different jobs.

Student speakers Danijela Novajkovic and Juliet Isaac, both ESL graduates, spoke of the sense of community and camaraderie between ORT students and faculty.

All who attended this graduation were captivated by comedian and magician Dennis DeBontd who performed with the help of audience volunteers. Laughter and applause vibrated throughout all of ORT as DeBontd made cards appear, birds disappear, and magically restored torn \$100 bills.

After the magic, the real magic moment each graduate was waiting for arrived. Students walked across the stage and received their certificates-ready to begin the rest of their lives.

## ORT Receives \$1000 from The Joseph and Sylvia Stone Fund at The Chicago Community Trust

Zarem Golde ORT Technical Institute has received a \$1,000 grant from the Joseph and Sylvia Stone Fund at The Chicago Community Trust.

Mr. Joseph Stone is a current member of the ORT Board of Trustees and he devotes a lot of time and energy to helping the school. Aside from his work as an ORT board member, Mr. Stone runs a legal clinic at the Loyola University Chicago School of Law. Despite his

demanding work schedule, Mr. Stone and his law student interns do corporate legal work for ORT on a voluntary basis.

Being so close to the school and its mission to help all students attain employment training, Mr. Stone personally recommended ORT to receive this grant. ORT staff, faculty, and students are grateful for Mr. and Mrs. Stone's contribution to the school and plan to use this grant money to benefit our students.



## ORT's 2010 Advisory Board Meeting



*ORT Director Marina Chudnovsky welcomes the 2010 ORT professional advisory board while participants enjoy a delicious dinner.*

Staying current with hiring trends in various industries is top priority for ORT because we're dedicated to teaching students skills that will get them employed in their field of study.

To give students the best advantage in their careers, ORT hosts an Advisory Board Meeting each year.

The purpose of this meeting is for ORT faculty and staff to meet with working professionals in the field. The professionals review ORT's various curricula and make suggestions for valuable additions and necessary changes based on trends in their workplaces and their industry knowledge.

In 2010, a total of 34 people attended the Advisory Board meeting, including two ORT board members, 16 ORT faculty and staff members, 16 working professionals, 12 of whom were new members this year.

After introductory remarks by Director Marina Chudnovsky and Associate Director Lisa Burnstein, the Advisory Board broke into small discussion groups devoted to each program at ORT: Accounting, Computer Networking, Medical Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, Computer Graphics/Web Design, CADD, and ESL.

ORT faculty and staff received a plethora of positive suggestions from the Advisory Board that will be implemented in 2011.



*ORT Associate Director Lisa Burnstein informs the advisory board members about the multitude of positive changes ORT has made in 2010.*

## Career Services Success Story x 5



*ORT students and Oakton Fresh Market staff come together for a photo. The staff appreciates the students' hard work transforming a dollar store into a full grocery store with more plans for expansion soon.*

ORT's mission has always been to help our students reach employment and self-sufficiency – and it's playing out today in our own community.

Manhal Odicho purchased the building on 4616 Oakton St. in Skokie formerly occupied by Happy Foods grocery store. He renamed it Oakton Fresh Market, set it up as an "everything and the kitchen sink" dollar store, and opened his doors for business.

The problem was that as a new business owner, he didn't have the resources to hire staff and expand the store. Many shelves were empty and he was working day and night trying to keep the business afloat and stock merchandise to bring in customers.

Enter the ORT Career Services team. Through the Put Illinois to Work program, ORT Career Services placed five students to work in the store. The goal of the Put Illinois to Work program is to assist the unemployed gain work

experience and to jumpstart the economy in the local community. The ORT student workers, Santa Oshana, Maytham Oshana, Atra Kifarkis, Peter Butrus, and the newest member Lenda Sawa, assumed a variety of responsibilities in the store including working as cashiers, stock clerks, deli workers, and more.

With the ORT students' hard work and dedication, Odicho was able to turn his store around. Oakton Fresh Market now is a full grocery store with fresh produce, a deli counter, and a meat department. The atmosphere is clean, organized, and friendly. The next project for ORT student workers is to add a made-to-order fresh sandwich counter to the store. Not even a small shadow of the former dollar store remains.

ORT is delighted at this magnificent success story and hopes to help more students find work through the Put Illinois to Work Program.



## ORT Students Attend Recruiting Event/Industry Talk for Local Businesses



**“At this event, students got to hear—straight from an employer— about professionalism in the workplace.”**

**Jill Shahr, Career**

On Tuesday November 2, 2010 at 2 pm, ORT students attended a recruitment event and industry talk at ORT hosted by Mr. Shalom Klein from Moshe Klein and Associates accounting firm and Mr. Elliot Richardson, an attorney from the Small Business Advocacy group.

The purpose of this event was twofold: introduce students to Mr. Klein’s and Mr. Richardson’s organizations and give students practical tips in their job search, interview process, and internships.

Mr. Klein said that students

need to sell their knowledge, and skills to an employer. Both speakers made it a point to tell students that researching an organization before the interview— and then bringing some information from that research to the interview – was crucial and would set them apart from other candidates.

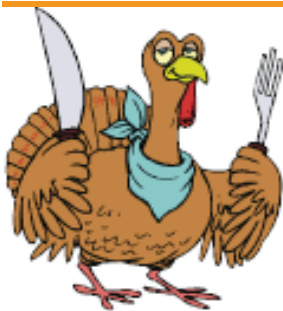
Mr. Richardson encourages students with no previous job experience to work harder and overcome this setback.

“Come to work early and stay late,” said Mr. Richardson. “Send emails early and late too. Show the boss you’re

working beyond the call of duty and make sure he or she knows it. Never say you’re tired. We’re all tired! Be upbeat and optimistic; that’s what people like.”

Mr. Klein and Mr. Richardson were delighted to share their tips and wisdom with ORT’s accounting students and took questions from the audience.

“I am looking forward to giving ORT students advice, guidance, and connections to help them in their future job searches,” said Mr. Klein. “As a business owner, I’m looking forward to bringing in more ORT interns and helping them gain experience.”



## Thanksgiving at ORT: Posters, Parties, and a lot of Turkeys!



On Monday November 22, ORT hosted two Thanksgiving parties for both daytime and evening students.

ORT served turkeys while students brought their own home cooked dishes to share during the potluck feast.

Faculty, staff, and students enjoyed the unique international Thanksgiving feast where different cultures were celebrated, but came together for this great American holiday.

Each ESL class created a poster to decorate the school’s halls for the Thanksgiving party.

Each class designed their poster. Themes ranged from Thanksgiving recipes to the first Thanksgiving celebrated by the Pilgrims and Indians. Students voted and Bob Foster’s level 1 class received a certificate for having the best poster. Each class also earned a certificate for being the best in a certain category.

Students loved participating in the contest and look forward to next Thanksgiving’s poster competition!



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## In the Classroom...

### *A Trip to the Chicago Adler Planetarium*



*Students get up close and personal with the solar system on their trip to the Adler Planetarium.*

On Tuesday, November 2, 2010 level 3 teacher Wioletta Tarasek and her level 3 ESL students spent the day in downtown Chicago exploring the stars and planets in the Adler Planetarium.

Besides checking out all of the exhibits at the planetarium, the students saw a special show called *Great Observatories in 3D*. With their 3D glasses wrapped around their eyes, students went on a journey to today's modern observatories to look at the stars and planets through some of the largest and most powerful telescopes in the world.

The class enjoyed the Planetarium as well as views of the Chicago Skyline, Lake Michigan, and Navy Pier. "They practiced their English in a cultural context," said Tarasek, "They learned new vocabulary connected with the subject and enjoyed the trip while discussing themes that came to their minds spontaneously."

## ORT Adds Second Van to Fleet of Student Transportation to and from School

This winter, ORT added a second van to its expanding fleet of student transportation vehicles. The new 2010 Chevrolet Extended Passenger van has been decorated with ORT decals and positively received by ORT's students and staff.

"We purchased the new van because we were unable to accommodate all the students who were in need of transportation," said ORT Associate Director Lisa Burnstein.

ORT's transportation service for students sets the school apart from

others in the area. "We are providing low cost transportation for our students—one of several important student services that we provide," said Burnstein. "Others include learning center and career services. It is part of the package of services we can provide to our students."

Both ORT vans currently transport 150 students to school. With the addition of the second van, ORT expects this number to grow as the school continues to advertise and outreach to other areas that were previously unreachable.



### Editor and Writer

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