



## 2004 Meeting Minutes Multi-Lingual Issue Committee Meetings

- September 17, 2004
  - August 20, 2004
  - June 3-4, 2004
  - May 21, 2004
  - April 16, 2004
  - March 19, 2004
  - February 20, 2004
  - January 16, 2004
- 

### Multilingual Issue Committee Meeting Minutes

*September 17, 2004*  
1:00-2:00 PM ET

#### **Roll Call & Confirmation of Quorum (3)**

TAP Program Analyst Inez E. De Jesus took the roll call, and quorum was met. Quorum=3, and there were 6 committee members present and the Designated Federal Official. (100% attendance)

#### **Designated Federal Official (DFO)**

- Nancy L. Ferree

#### **Panel Members Present**

- Linda Bader, Chesterfield, MO
- Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem, Winchester, MA, Vice-Chair
- Delford Jones, Griffith, IN
- Sharon Lassar, Miami, FL
- Joseph Meissner, Cleveland, OH
- Bruce Twomley, Juneau, AK, Chair

#### **MLI Program Owner(s)**

- Raymond G. Mills

#### **TAP Staff**

- Inez E. De Jesus (Program Analyst and Scribe)

#### **Public Participant(s)**

- None



## Welcome/Announcements/Review Agenda

Chair Twomley opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

## Review/Approve Meeting Minutes of August 20, 2004

The minutes were approved with no objections.

## Review All Action Items from Previous Meeting

DFO Ferree reviewed the following action items with the committee:

- On Page 2, Action item for the entire panel: Letter of Support to Immigration, regarding alerting immigrants before they reach the United States of what is expected of them: **Status:** Since there is currently a working relationship with USCIS (United States Citizenship & Immigration Services) this action item will be an on-going activity of this committee. (Issue # 3179)
- On Page 2, Coston, Ferree, Twomley, Goldberg, to get together to define next steps based on contractual agreement between Low Income Tax Clinics (LITCs) and TAP. **Status "change" since last meeting:** "Since the TAP MLI has already established an on-going partnering relationship with LITC's, this matter will be an on-going activity for this committee." (Issue # 2988) Chair Twomley stressed that this needs to be kept on the radar screen.
- On Page 2 & 5, A second follow-up response to the National Women's Law Center will be prepared by MLI Program Owner Mills; **Status:** Mills made a commitment to send an interim response out by no later than September 24, 2004. Mills explained that he has not responded since recently the "prioritization of the translation of key documents" is being readdressed as a result of a TIGTA report. (1040 Impact Assessment) He wants to be sure that the information he shares with the National Women's Law Center is the most current and up to date. **(Action Item)**
- On Page 2, Mills will be responding to the panel on the Kiosk questions: **Status:** Mills shared that he is waiting to meet with William Love, Policy Analyst, who has been out of the office; Mills hopes to meet with Mr. Love by the end of September 2004, or by first week of October 2004. Mills promised to share the meeting minutes with the panel. - **(Action Item)** (Delford inquired if "I Speak" options will be incorporated into the kiosks.)
- On Page 2, Mills is to draft LITC Annual Survey. **Status:** Mills shared that he has been in communication with LITC Director Randy Swartz and Alan Goldberg, Manager in charge of ESL Program; he hopes to have a meeting soon with them in order to build on what was discussed during the MLI face-to-face meeting, as well as to prepare for the TAP Annual Conference meeting in D.C. Mills also mentioned that the IRS Website in Spanish is a main basis for the survey as well. The goal is to improve the opportunities to work with LITC's. DFO requested that the panel and staff be kept informed of future meeting(s) with Swartz & Goldberg. Mills said he would. A teleconference meeting between, Swartz, Goldberg, Mills, Ferree, De Jesus, Twomley, and Meissner should occur by no later than October 8, 2004. **(Action item)**
- On Page 2, ESL Partnering opportunities with stakeholders, follow-up with Sally Sandy once she gets funding. **Status:** To be removed as an action item. Nonetheless, the committee has an ongoing interest in monitoring Mrs. Sandy's progress and ensuring IRS supports her and does not lose any benefit to be derived from Mrs. Sandy's initiative. The committee will need to consider how to continue its monitoring. DFO Ferree clarified that whether Mrs. Sandy gets funding or not has no bearing on this committee's efforts with ESL. Mills shared that he will be meeting with Mrs. Sandy on Monday, September 20, 2004, since she will be in D.C. on other business. He also informed everyone that Mrs. Sandy did receive funding. DFO Ferree reminded Mills that Mrs. Sandy is not a volunteer TAP member. Mills promised to keep the Panel informed after he meets with Mrs. Sandy of any "need to know" information. **(For the record, Mills did not contact Mrs. Sandy; therefore, this meeting did not take place.)** Also, Linda Bader shared that she had recently met with Mrs. Sandy and had turned over to her the "Money Smart" information. Bader also mentioned the 2 papers she had prepared some time ago, the second one needs to be shared with Ray Mills. **Action item:** DFO Ferree will be forwarding this data to Mills.

- On Page 2, Response to Elevated Recommendation received on August 30, 2004 and shared with the entire committee and DFO. **Status:** Mills inquired if there were any comments, and DFO Ferree requested Clarification on the response to Recommendation Item #5 which reads as follows: " The IRS and English as Second Language (ESL) educators should collaborate on the development and promotion of a tax education curriculum that can be implemented in adult ESL programs across the nation."

Response: "I understand that your committee has taken on the responsibility of implementing this recommendation. This recommendation is of particular interest because it would promote tax education to a specific LEP segment of the population. As newcomers to the United States, ESL students would be prime candidates for such a course. Please keep us posted on your progress with this effort."

Mills stated that what is actually currently being done with Sally Sandy is using her program as a test pilot to learn what are the best practices. **(Linda Bader feels this statement is incorrect since to her knowledge, currently, there is no testing of a pilot program using Mrs. Sandy's contribution to this committee.)**

It was agreed that "the IRS has the responsibility of implementing this recommendation" NOT the TAP MLI Issue Committee.\*\* All agreed that a "Draft Response" to the Program Owner is needed for clarification and at the same time pinpoint what the panel is currently actually doing. (Development of the curriculum; clarification of the implementation, the fact that the IRS is working with the Department of Education and Citizenship as a prerequisite for funding) **Action item:** entire committee and staff effort: Chair Twomley will create first draft and share with everyone, requesting input, timeline to have the first draft out is September 24, 2004.

**\*\*On September 24, 2004, Program Owner Toni Cross expressed via email, her disagreement with the statement that the IRS has the responsibility to implement this recommendation. Cross' request that this matter be added to the next TAP MLI Meeting Agenda will be implemented. "Action Item" for DFO Ferree & Analyst De Jesus**

\*Also, on the ESL subject, Mills mentioned that it would be a good idea to share the ESL Tax Curriculum template with LITC's at their sites in the future, and that setting up this curriculum is a long process, it can take about 2 years. In the interim, perhaps the MLI Bilingual Brochures may be used. He planned on sharing these with Sally Sandy. One must keep in mind that there are 3 levels of students, "beginners, intermediate, and advanced".

- On Page 2-3, Global Hue Report was shared with the panel as per individual requests. (Inez mailed copies to Meissner & Ghoniem-Brodbine so far)
- On Page 3, Invitation from the Program Owner to the panel, to attend the next Executive MLI Initiative Council Meeting in November 2004 **Status:** Mills informed the panel that the next meeting will be in January 2005, not November as previously planned, and that it will be held in Atlanta. As per the request of DFO Ferree, MLI Program Owner is to extend an invitation to TAP MLI panel member in writing once the actual date is set. **(Action item)**
- On Page 3, MLI Bi-lingual Brochures were sent out to the panel on August 20, 2004 by email and hardcopies were mailed also on same date. **Status:** Chair Twomley inquired if the panel would have an opportunity to comment on these documents and Mills responded that the panel's comments will be welcomed; **Action item:** panel members are to send their comments prior to October 1, 2004, directly to Mills, before finalization of the brochures occur. Chair suggested that everyone be copied when comments are sent to Mills. (Mills shared his telephone number with the panel and his email address is already known to the panel). Twomley shared that he wanted to provide some input regarding Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) information which appears to be lacking in the MLI Bilingual Brochures, and Meissner shared that he feels there should be some information regarding "Retirement/Contributions" for low income families.



- On Page 4, Mills will be coordinating a follow-up teleconference meeting with USCIS and the MLI Issue Committee, **Status: Pending**- this was not discussed during the September 17, 2004 teleconference meeting; **(Action item)**
- On Page 4, Inez sent out on August 20, 2004, copies of the TAP Annual Self-Assessment Form to the entire committee- RSVP- September 10, 2004. **Status:** Inez has received 2 so far and has forwarded these to the Chair. (Bader & Brodbine-Ghoniem)- During today's call it was confirmed that these were the only two submitted so far. **Updated Process:** Chair Twomley requested that the remaining panel members that have not responded yet, including himself, to please submit their comments by no later than September 24, 2004, using the same guidelines outlined earlier. **Action item:** DFO Ferree promised to send a copy to Delford Jones by U.S. mail and will be including a self-addressed stamped envelope for his convenience.

#### **Response Received Re: Elevated Recommendations (Issue # 2987)**

As previously noted under the "Review all Action Items from Previous Meeting" (Page #3 of these minutes), this committee will be responding back to Mary E. Davis specifically to Recommendation #5. Chair Twomley will be sending out first draft for the panel's review by September 24, 2004.

#### **Discussion-response to National Womens Law Center**

As previously noted under the "Review all Action Items from Previous Meeting" (Page #2 of these minutes), Mills will be sending an interim response to this organization by no later than September 24, 2004.

#### **Guidance from the Program Owner(s)- "Next Steps"**

Mills indicated that he is in the midst of coordinating with LITC National Director and the ESL Manager and getting ready for the TAP Annual Meeting in D.C., November 4-6, 2004.

DFO Ferree stated that this committee looks up to the MLI Program Owners for guidance. Ferree also mentioned that September 30, 2004 will be the end of the term for some of the members and in November there will be a new membership established.

Since Linda Bader will be leaving, Mills made an inquiry about who is going to take over what Linda has done so far with the ESL component. Chair Twomley stated that if the MLI Issue Committee continues, who is going to be on the committee will be decided in November 2004. DFO also said that members leave but the issues continue.

#### **LITC Surveys Timeline**

DFO Ferree requested that a MLI panel member be invited to attend the LITC National Conference in Philadelphia scheduled for the week of December 6-10, 2004. (Sharon Stetz attended last year's conference.) Mills will ensure that an invitation in writing be sent to TAP/MLI from the Program Owner/LITC office. This invitation should be extended by November 6, 2004, hopefully during the TAP Annual Meeting. (Action item)

Mills stated that the focus is on improving opportunities to work with LITC's is an ESL mandate.

For the record, Joseph Meissner attended last year's LITC National Conference and has indicated that he would be available to attend the upcoming conference.

#### **Next Steps with External Partners (USCIS)**

Not discussed during today's call. (Action item: to be carried over to the new panel)

#### **News from the Staff**

DFO Ferree shared that tentative selections for new panel members have been made and we are awaiting approval by the Department of the Treasury.



Ferree also shared that for those members who are leaving, a letter and or certificate of appreciation is forthcoming from the National Office.

During the Joint Committee meeting in Denver recently, there was talk of an informal alumni association to be formed.

DFO Ferree and Analyst De Jesus, both expressed their appreciation for the efforts of Linda Bader and Sharon Lassar and both were told that they will be greatly missed.

#### **Public Participation/Input**

None

#### **Closing Assessment:**

- There will be "no" October 2004 TAP Meetings
- Orientation for New Members, November 3, 2004, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm ET in D.C.
- Annual Meeting: November 4-6, 2004 in D.C.

Delford Jones will be sending an article he thinks is of interest to this panel and the staff will share it with everyone.

Chair Twomley expressed that he was very grateful to Linda Bader and Sharon Lassar for their initiative. Linda Bader showed tremendous initiative in developing the ESL component in the absence of direction from the program owner. Similarly, Sharon Lassar made a valuable contribution through her independent inquiries and her resulting critical analysis of translation of IRS forms. Twomley applauded both of these ladies.

Twomley shared that during the recent Joint Committee's face-to-face meeting in Denver, chairs agreed by consensus that each committee chair will be elected once a year, and the next election of chairs will occur right after the annual meeting. They also decided that no individual can serve more than two years in this capacity.

Meeting was adjourned by Chair Twomley.

These minutes were approved by the TAP/MLI Issue Committee by consensus on September 30, 2004.



## Multilingual Issue Committee Meeting Minutes

August 20, 2004  
1:00-2:00 PM ET

### Roll Call & Confirmation of Quorum (3)

TAP Program Analyst Inez E. De Jesus took the roll call, and quorum was met. Quorum=3, and there were 6 committee members present and the Designated Federal Official. (100% attendance)

### Designated Federal Official (DFO)

- Nancy L. Ferree

### Panel Members Present

- Linda Bader, Chesterfield, MO
- Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem, Winchester, MA, Vice-Chair
- Delford Jones, Griffith, IN
- Sharon Lassar, Miami, FL
- Joseph Meissner, Cleveland, OH
- Bruce Twomley, Juneau, AK, Chair

### MLI Program Owner(s)

- Raymond G. Mills

### TAP Staff

- Inez E. De Jesus (Program Analyst and Scribe)

### Public Participant(s)

- Amy Korytowski, National Women's Law Center

### Welcome/Announcements/Review Agenda

Chair Twomley opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and extending a special welcome to Ms. Amy Korytowski from the National Women's Law Center who was representing Ms. Cristina Begona Martin Firvida.

### Review/Approve Meeting Minutes of June 3 & 4, 2004

The minutes were approved with no objections, and praise was given to Inez for the minutes being thorough and detailed.

(There was no July 16, 2004 teleconference meeting; it was cancelled since only one panel member signed on.)

### Review All Action Items from Previous Meeting

DFO Ferree reviewed the following action items with the committee:

On Page 8, Action item for the entire panel: Letter of Support to Immigration, regarding alerting immigrants before they reach the United States of what is expected of them. **Status: Pending**



Page 8, Coston, Ferree, Twomley, Goldberg, to get together to define next steps for communicating with Low Income Tax Clinics (LITCs) and TAP. Bruce invited and Joe Meissner accepted the opportunity to join this conversation. **Status: Pending, DFO and Program Owner will take the lead and this issue will be carried over to the next meeting's agenda.**

Meissner shared that the Low Income Tax Clinic National Director Randy Swartz and ESL Manager Alan Goldberg will be visiting the Northern Ohio area sometime in early September 2004, and he will be involved with this venture.

Page 11/12, Response Letter to the National Women's Law Center regarding "How to Improve Services for Limited English Proficient Tax Filers". **Status: response letter from the MLI Chair on behalf of the committee was mailed on July 9, 2004.**

**A second follow-up response is required from Program Owner Mills to the National Women's Law Center:**

"To provide a detailed account from the IRS of their initiatives to date on how they provide meaningful access for Limited English Proficient taxpayers to the tax system."

Page 12, Mills to address and respond to the panel on Kiosks questions previously submitted-**Status: Pending**, Mills stated that this information should be available by September 2004 since the manager who will be updating him on this has been in a car accident and he needs to follow-up on if he can obtain this information via somebody else.

Page 14, Mills is to draft LITC Annual Survey-**Status: Pending.**

Page 15, top of page, ESL Partnering Opportunities with Stakeholders, Follow-up once Sally Sandy is funded-**Status: Pending.**

Page 15, mid page, Mills will share "elevated recommendations" responses with the panel as soon as they are available and ready to be shared. **Status:** Mills shared that there has been some minor editorial changes to this document and it is not ready to be distributed; it is awaiting the signature of Mary E. Davis, Director, Strategy and Finance, who is in charge of the Multilingual Initiative Project Office. As soon as it is signed, Mills promised to forward it to the staff and MLI Committee. He expects this to happen no later than August 31, 2004. He appreciates the committee's patience.

Page 15, bottom, Mills is to share Global Hue Report with the panel-**Status:** since this document is very large it was decided that it will be made available to those who are interested in obtaining a copy of it. (It is a detailed geo-demographic study of the top Limited English Proficient areas in the United States and it also entails qualitative Hispanic Market Research and IRS LEP Hispanic Research and Implications as of October 2003.)

**Action item for Program Analyst Inez E. De Jesus:** send an email out to the entire committee requesting who is interested in obtaining a copy and to send report out accordingly.

Page 17, MLI Panel Member will be invited to attend the next Executive MLI Initiative Council Meeting on August 26, 2004 in Crystal City, outside Washington, D.C.- **Status:** Mills shared that there has been a lot of changes with this meeting and it will now take place in Atlanta, GA; unfortunately, an invitation was not extended to the committee but hopefully an invitation will be extended for the upcoming November 2004 Executive MLI Initiative Council Meeting. **(Pending)**

**Status Report on Formal Response Re: Elevated Recommendations**

As noted earlier, the response from the Program Owner is expected by the end of the month.



### **Guidance from the Program Owner- "Next Steps"**

Mills inquired if the panel members had attended this year's tax forums since they have been so informative. He stated that he had not been approached by any panel member during the focus group sessions. There are two additional tax forums forthcoming, one in San Antonio and the other in Las Vegas.

Mills shared that the IRS Multilingual Initiative has bilingual brochures in English and Spanish. Linda Bader inquired if the committee could get copies of these.

They are entitled as follows:

- Publication 4346, Opening the Door to Spanish-Speaking Customers
- Publication 4346A, Basics of Tax Processing
- Publication 4346B, Why Should I Pay Taxes
- Publication 4346C, IRS Toll Free Telephone Service
- Publication 4346D, EITC 2004
- Publication 4346E, Understanding Your IRS Notice
- Publication 4346F, Getting Help With Unresolved Tax Problems

**Action item for Mills:** will send these electronically to the TAP Staff office for distribution among the panel members.

### **LITC Surveys Timeline**

Mills shared that there has been dialogue between him and Randy Swartz and Alan Goldberg and he will be meeting with them during late September 2004, and will keep the panel informed.

### **Immigration Orientation Guide Report**

Mills shared that there has been communication with Laura Patching from the USCIS, United States Citizenship & Immigration Services, and her staff. They have inquired on what they can do from a multilingual initiative perspective regarding their new Immigration Orientation Guide and developing information related to taxes.

Mills is trying to arrange a follow-up call with USCIS and plans on coordinating it for sometime in late September 2004. (Currently Mills is involved with the 2004 Nationwide Tax Forums). **Action item for Mills:** to coordinate follow-up meeting with USCIS and MLI Issue Committee.

Mills emphasized that working with USCIS is a great partnering opportunity.

### **News from the Staff**

DFO Ferree shared that we are in the midst of finalizing the interview process and ready to make selections for new members. Information will be made available via the area committees by the end of August or early September 2004. We are also in the midst of planning for the Annual TAP Meeting in November in Washington, DC. There will be an orientation segment on November 3, 2004, from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. (Travel a day before or early morning on the 3rd of November) The Annual Meeting will begin on November 4th thru November 6, 2004, Noontime.

DFO Ferree reminded the committee that the Issue and Area Committee Annual Assessment form is due to the Joint Committee by the 15th of October 2004. She suggested that a sub-committee be established to complete this task; Chair Twomley expressed that since this is a small committee, he would appreciate input from all members. The following was agreed on:

**Action item for Inez:** Inez is to send out a copy of the self-assessment form to the entire committee, requesting feedback be received by no later than Friday, September 10, 2004. The staff issues or comments are to be submitted to the Chair only and visa versa, comments regarding the



Chair should be submitted to the staff in order to protect anonymity and provide a comfort level for free expression and honesty.

Delford Jones inquired if it was too late to provide feedback to the in-coming panel members and DFO Ferree responded that he could do so through his area committee.

### **Public Participation/Input**

Chair Twomley introduced Ms. Amy Korytowski from the National Women's Law Center and it was noted that Program Owner Raymond Mills will be responding to this organization with a detailed account from the IRS of their initiatives to date in regards to addressing Limited English Proficient taxpayers' access to the tax system. **Action item for Mills:** follow-up letter to the National Women's Law Center. Ms. Korytowski shared her email address.

Joe Meissner inquired if the letter sent to the TAP MLI had been shared with anyone else or with Low Income Tax Clinics. DFO Ferree addressed that these may be raised via area committees and mentioned that there is a TAP Area 2 committee.

Ms. Korytowski shared that she would share all this information with Ms. Firvida, and Chair thanked her for her participation.

### **Closing Assessment: Confirm Next Meeting: September 17, 2004 at 1:00 PM ET**

Before the end of the meeting Chair Twomley shared that he will be attending the Joint Committee's face-to-face meeting in Denver on September 10 and 11, 2004. He mentioned that one of the agenda items for this meeting is regarding the chairs' role for the transition; should chairs continue in the chair role for the one year term or should they be mentors? Bruce stated his inclination to avoid a blanket policy and leave it up to individual committees and invited the committee to give him guidance. Based on the conversation that followed it was agreed that he will take back to the Joint Committee from the MLI Issue Committee, that this should be left to the individual committees to decide.

Twomley also inquired from Linda Bader if Sally Sandy had received funding yet and Linda shared that Sally Sandy was being asked to reduce monies and she is currently in the process of reviewing the program to see where she can make a cut.

Twomley also mentioned that for the good of the order, it is important to capture communication with LITC's and how to do so more effectively.

Linda Bader mentioned that in Area 5, it was learned that just in Ohio, there is a new identification number being developed by the State in order to be used in lieu of a social security number in order to curtail identity theft.

Meeting was adjourned by Chair Twomley.

\*These minutes were approved by consensus on September 17, 2004.



## Multilingual Issue Committee Meeting Minutes

*June 3, 2004, 8:00am-Noon & 1:00pm-5:00pm EDT-"Day One"*

*June 4, 2004, 8:00am-Noon-"Day Two"*

Brooklyn, NY

### Thursday, June 3, 2004- "Day One"

Quorum= 3 Total Members Present= 6 (for both days)

#### **Designated Federal Official (DFO)**

- Nancy L. Ferree

#### **Panel Members Present**

- Linda Bader, Chesterfield, MO
- Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem, Winchester, MA, Vice-Chair
- Delford Jones, Griffith, IN
- Joseph Meissner, Cleveland, OH
- Sharon Lassar, Miami, FL
- Bruce Twomley, Juneau, AK, Chair

#### **TAP Staff and IRS Program Owner**

- Bernie E. Coston, TAP Director, June 3, 2004
- Inez E. De Jesus, TAP Program Analyst and Scribe
- Raymond G. Mills, MLI Program Owner

#### **Guests**

- Randy Swartz, Director, Low Income Tax Clinic (LITC), June 3, 2004
- Alan M. Goldberg, LITC, ESL Program Manager
- Sally Sandy, Educator, St. Louis, MO
- Joyce Heller, South Brooklyn Legal Services, June 3, 2004
- James Logan, South Brooklyn Legal Services, June 3, 2004
- Mike Haber, South Brooklyn Legal Services, June 3, 2004
- Carl Callender, Director, Queens Legal Services, June 3, 2004
- Cindy Katz, Queens Legal Services, June 3, 2004
- Andrea Kim, Queens Legal Services, June 3, 2004
- Gia-Hoa Ryan, Cleveland, OH, LITC, Friendship Foundation, June 3, 2004
- Shyconia Burden-Noten, Dept. of Homeland Security, NYC of Citizenship & Immigration Services, June 4, 2004

#### **Chair's Welcome and Announcements**

Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, and he expressed delight that the TAP Director was present. He also thanked the staff for their efforts in organizing this meeting.



## **TAP Analyst- Roll Call-Confirm Quorum**

Analyst Inez E. De Jesus took the roll call and quorum of 3 was met; all committee members and Designated Federal Official were present.

## **TAP Director, Bernie Coston, Opening Comments**

TAP Director Bernie Coston began by sharing that he will be present during today's session, and that he was attempting to attend as many face-to-face meetings as humanly possible. He also shared that within the next couple of days, he will be attending the Area 1 face-to-face committee's meeting in Portsmouth, NH.

Coston continued by providing an update on the current Recruitment efforts:

- 970 applications have been received nationwide, including Puerto Rico.
- 20 IRS employees have applied but are not eligible since IRS employees are exempt from applying.
- 10 Human Resource experts are available to assist during the interview process.
- All the applications are ranked and by order by State based on the ranking cut-off score.
- Plans as of now are to start the interviews during the weeks of June 21st, , June 28th, then begin again a week after July 4th, week of July 12 and July 19th, 2004.
- Twenty different locations nationwide have been selected for the interviews.
- The Chairs have been asked to request for volunteers to participate with the interviews.
- During the interviews, plans are to have one TAP Member present, one representative from the TAP office, either Bernie, Nancy or Inez, and one TAP Advocate, most likely the DFO or Local Taxpayer Advocate who are site neutral. The best cost effective measure will be considered as well.
- 300 Persons will be interviewed.
- The process of fingerprinting has been improved; the "ink and roll" process has been replaced with the "live scan" process.
- Tax checks will also be conducted.
- The goal is to have the new members attend the Annual Meeting from November 4-6, 2004 in the Hamilton Crowne Plaza Hotel, in Washington, D.C.
- There are 52 slots to fill and we go by States.
- Alternates will also be filled at this time; Coston shared that "we did not do a good job in the past; we have to do a better job in this area."
- There is a need to eliminate background checks on folks who already have government background checks.
- There is currently a one-third turnover rate on a yearly basis- plans are to extend the membership to a 3-year term. Coston shared that he will be contacting Treasury to obtain their approval.
- The National TAP Office has taken an active role with the recruitment process this year, as well as Steve Berkey's position, National Office Program Analyst, has helped to take the load off the field offices which in turn can better provide support to the panel members.
- The TAP Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is currently being worked on since the TAP Director's goal is to have all TAP offices working in alignment; there will be a consistent flow across the board on how tasks are done. Coston hopes to have the draft SOP for internal operations by the August/September 2004 timeframe.

Bernie Coston then opened the floor for questions from the panel. Members wanted to know the locations for the interviews, and Coston responded, the interview sites chosen are in Brooklyn, Seattle, Dallas, Laguna Niguel, Atlanta, Fort Lauderdale, D.C., Richmond, and Kansas City. Coston



stressed that these locations are central and convenient to bring the interviewees into. He reminded everyone that he would be available all day, and is open to hear from everyone.

Coston went on to inform the panel that they were doing an excellent job! The Multilingual Initiative Issue is one that everyone encounters in all neighborhoods and the English as a Second Language is a hot issue today.

### **Chair –Review/approve minutes from May 21, 2004**

Before the minutes from the previous meeting were approved, the action items noted were addressed as follows:

- Twomley shared that the invitation extended to Sharon Stetz to participate during a future MLI Issue Committee meeting was declined. (Page 2)
- The panel sent their “kiosks” questions to Raymond Mills. (Page 2)
- Ferree shared the telephone number she had for the Department of Education with Mills and he attempted to make the contact in seeking a speaker. (Page 3)
- The LITC questions were submitted timely to Mills as requested. Chair made any inquiry on who had submitted questions, and Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem stated that she had. (Page 3)
- Nancy did update the agenda, and kept the TAP Director informed. (Page 3)
- Ray, Nancy, and Inez did get together regarding the pre-read materials for the panel members. All confirmed that they received the information timely. (Page 4)
- Nancy confirmed that Shyconia Burden will be attending tomorrow’s session. (Page 5).
- Meissner inquired if there had been any feedback received from the H&R representative that was on the last MLI teleconference call, and the response was “No”.

The minutes for the May 21, 2004 teleconference meeting were approved by consensus.

### **Program Owner’s Meeting Objectives**

DFO Ferree shared that due to an emergency, Program Owner Raymond Mills is expected to arrive by Noontime. The meeting objectives will be discussed later on today.

TAP Director Coston stated that it is his and the National Taxpayer Advocate, Nina E. Olson’s goal, to maintain this program as a “grassroots” committee.

### **Randy Swartz, Low Income Tax Clinic (LITC) Director’s Overview**

Randy Swartz welcomed everyone to New York and encouraged the panel to do some sightseeing while they were here. The LITC guests all introduced themselves at this point.

Swartz distributed Publication 3319, Low Income Tax Clinic, 2005 Grant Application Package and Guidelines. The actual application is included in Publication 3319. The application may be submitted between May 1, 2004 and July 1, 2004 by 4:00 pm EDT, and it applies for grants for the period(s) from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005.

Swartz brought to everyone’s attention the letter in the opening page of Publication 3319 from the National Taxpayer Advocate, dated April 2, 2004. He went on to suggest that the panel share LITC information with others during their outreach efforts. He also suggested that the panel familiarize themselves with the information in this publication. He also referenced page 8, “LITC Program Standards”- He emphasized that sites need to be monitored in order to make sure that they are following the guidelines, and this is currently being addressed.



Swartz also shared that LITC's handle controversy matters concerning tax audits, and that LITC's are not return preparers only if preparing the returns is part of the controversy. It was not Congress' intent to have LITC's be tax preparers. There is currently a bill in both houses requesting an additional \$10 Million dollars be granted. It has passed in the Senate and needs to go to the House. Current funding is \$7.5 Million; originally there were 137 clinics established, some were rejected for various reasons, and currently there are 134 clinics, and every State is being represented with the exception of one.

Swartz's presentation was followed by several questions from the panel:

- Jones inquired about what feedback has been received that confirms that clients are being served. Swartz responded that currently there are no standards established and it is an area that needs to be addressed. There are currently review intake sheets, and clinics are required to submit an annual report. Swartz emphasized that he is aware there is a need to monitor what languages are served.
- Lassar made an inquiry regarding whether there is any data available before a grant application is submitted and a panel member invests time in attempting to open a new LITC. How does one know that there is a demand for service? Swartz responded that there is a need but folks just don't know that the LITC's are out there; it has been a continual battle in getting the word out on LITC's; especially in rural communities where there is a great need for them. Swartz explained that the IRS/TAS cannot advertise the LITC's; General Counsel gave an opinion that the IRS can do very limited advertising. The Advocate cannot refer anyone to a LITC; there cannot be any specific referrals made. The LITC's are fully an independent force.

Swartz also shared that there are posters available for the public at Taxpayer Assistance Centers with information on their local LITC's. Swartz thought that perhaps having stuffers sent out with IRS notices might be an idea but also clinics cannot be burdened with excess traffic. There is a definite need to reach a broader audience, and Swartz suggested that panel work closely with their local Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) offices.

Guest speaker Sally Sandy shared at this point that "trust" is a commodity you cannot buy and suggested that the panel partner with Adult Education Programs (on a National level) which are free, and are already out there and its working; she has been in this business for 35 years. Guest Cindy Katz chimed in and stated that in certain States, the Department of Labor funds some of these programs.

**Alan M. Goldberg, ESL (English as a Second Language) Program Manager**

Goldberg began by stating that whereby Randy Swartz addressed the clinics that handle controversy issues, he will address the ESL (English as a Second Language) program which is also a component of Low Income Tax Clinics.

At this point, Goldberg distributed copies of Publication 4134, Spanish Version, which lists all the LITC's throughout the country, and the languages they serve. Goldberg shared that as everyone knows, the immigrant community is a growing population as noted in the last Census. Goldberg stated: that currently there are 40 different languages and dialects being served by LITC's. Some of the clinics have a toll-free number. There is not a standard way of running clinics; some are managed in the native language of the community. Clinics usually know their target communities and strengths of their volunteers and staff and what the staff is capable of doing and work accordingly. Also, trust, fears, confidentiality and privacy is top of the list of priorities at all LITC's. Goldberg concluded by emphasizing the importance of outreach and education, financial literacy, and the networking with community based organizations. He emphasized on the importance of networking with like minded advocacy groups and non-profit charitable organizations.



Goldberg also distributed the brochure distributed by the Bentley Low Income Taxpayer Clinic, in Waltham, MA, titled: "Need Income Tax Assistance?"

This led as a lead-in to the LITC guests and their perspective presentations which followed.

**James Logan, South Brooklyn Legal Services, Inc. Presentation**

James Logan and Joyce Heller confirmed that they do everything Alan Goldberg shared earlier at the South Brooklyn Legal Services, Inc.; there is no need to do outreach for them since they have plenty of clients.

Logan and Heller shared that they are legal services lawyers and provide free legal services in their community. They cover 20 zip codes in the Southern and Western areas in Brooklyn, NY. They handle housing, benefits, and family law issues. This all derived from the Welfare Reform Act when their clients made a transition from the welfare to work program and then encountered that they had to learn how to file a tax return. The Brooklyn LITC does both controversy representation and ESL outreach and education through community based organizations that partner and work together with LITC's.

The panel received from presenters copies of the outreach flyers that they use entitled: "Need Help With Tax Problems?" in English, Spanish, and Russian. This has worked as a great tool to make the community aware of services available in their own language. This LITC also has an active hot line.

**Other information shared by the Brooklyn LITC Presenters:**

Local politicians are contacted as well and kept informed of the needs of the community.

The clients are informed of the need to keep good records. This LITC ensures that a comfortable environment is established. Evening activities are often scheduled so that it is convenient for the clients.

The staff training is on-going and kept very simple; legal issues are made simple for the LITC volunteer staff and ESL's individuals.

The Brooklyn Legal Services uses the community based organizations to assist them with the translations of documents, and it does not cost anything. This is very cost effective. Seventy percent of their clients are ESL.

Written evaluations to ensure folks understand written comments are also done at this site.

Logan and Heller also said that Brooklyn is a melting pot with a variety of cultures and languages and also some of the family structures are not seen by the IRS as traditional; there may be single fathers or grandparents taking care of children.

Based on their experiences, there is a need for clarity of IRS notices and forms. These need to be simplified. Literacy is also another issue for concern as well.

TAP Area 1 Chair Jim Grimaldi has been very engaged with the Brooklyn LITC.

In conclusion, both presenters shared that the Brooklyn LITC main problem is resources.

**Cindy Katz- Queens Legal Services Presentation**

Cindy Katz and Andrea Kim began their presentation by sharing that at the Queens Legal Services, similar to the Brooklyn LITC, outreach is not an issue. The community is aware of their existence and



services rendered. Queens is the center of multilingual issues. More than one-third of the population in Brooklyn, and Queens are immigrants. Forty-eight percent are non-English speaking, and therefore speak in another language other than English.

Katz and Kim emphasized that this population is treated with respect and is not turned away. The Queens LITC hires a multilingual staff and also shared that Spanish is the most common language, followed by Chinese, Creole, Hindu, Korean, Russian, and Urdu.

The Queens LITC uses "I Speak" sheets, these sheets are shown to the individuals in order to be able to assist them; the individual points to the language they know, and staff person can direct them accordingly so that they are assisted in their own language. They also have use of a "language line" service that is available for the clients. The wait time for translation on this line is between 5-10 minutes. Home visits are also conducted by the staff at this LITC.

A chart was distributed titled: "English Language Proficiency of Speakers of Selected Language Groups, New York City, 2000" which indicates that the number of persons not proficient in English, as of 2000 totals: 1,768,977. Percentages of those not proficient is broken down as follows:

Spanish	52.1%
Indo-European Languages	26.5%
Asian & Pacific Islander	18.4%
Other Languages	3.0%

**Other information shared by the Queens LITC Presenters:**

Emphasis is made to work with community based organizations.

One cannot relate to the translation of documents alone. The problem with translation is that some of the clients may be illiterate in their native language and this is entirely another issue.

Networking is very important; some banks have incentives to open accounts for LITC clients.

Sometimes ethnic media is used as a means to get the word out of the services available at the Queens Legal Services.

Another concern has been not having enough ESL at VITA sites.

At this point, Panel Member Delford Jones made an inquiry if any organization has shared with immigrants before they come to this country what is expected of them and he received a response from one of the guests in the audience, Ms. Gia-Hoa Ryan, from the Cleveland, Ohio LITC, Friendship Foundation that provides service to a Vietnamese community. Ms. Ryan responded that "Yes" – this is a practice that her organization does. Before her clients arrive in this country, they are given an overview of the expectations and it is made clear to them that nothing comes easy here. One must work in order to earn monies and be able to take care of themselves independently.

This led to a brief discussion by the panel and the following is an action item:

**Action item for the panel to address in the near future: Since agreement was made that Immigration should be made aware of alerting immigrants before they reach the USA of what is expected of them, that perhaps a letter of support to Immigration should be drafted as per TAP guidelines.**



Chair Twomley expressed to all the LITC presenters that on behalf of the panel, “we are very grateful for your presentations”, and he extended an invitation that they could stick around and join the dialogue later on today with the committee if they so wish to.

Panel Member Joe Meissner shared that he noticed in on Page 7 of Publication 3319, Low Income Tax Clinic, 2005 Grant Application Package and Guidelines, that the LITC’s are required to partner with TAP multilingual tax initiatives/“workgroup service”. As a result, TAP Director Coston stated that he will follow-up on this.

**Action item for Coston, Ferree, Twomley, Goldberg: will get together to define next steps based on the contractual agreement between LITC’s and TAP.**

**After Lunch – Afternoon Session**

Chair Twomley welcomed everyone and was glad to see that the Queens LITC Representative Cindy Katz was still in attendance. He then requested that DFO Nancy Ferree provide the committee with an overview of the Program Owners “Meeting Desired Outcomes” and she did as follows:

- Develop template for annual LITC surveys one for the local LITC office directors and one for their clients;
- Develop ESL template for basic tax education that is in line with USCIS and Department of Education guidelines and can be integrated into their ESL efforts.
- Identify partnership opportunities with other Federal (Executive Order 13166) and State (we will need to see what legal mandates exist at the state level that are perhaps tied to Executive Order 13166 to understand the ability of states to partner with us) organizations that provide service to customers/clients who have difficulty speaking and understanding English.

Most recently, Executive Order 13126, “Increasing Opportunity and Improving Quality of Life of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders” is also being addressed by the MLI Program Office.

There is a lack of basic tax obligations/responsibilities out there.

Pending projects are shared later on by Program Owner Raymond Mills:

- The IRS Spanish Website is currently being worked on by Mills and will soon be available to the public.
- The MLI Program office is also addressing a Spanish free-file service.
- The LITC Grantee survey put together at the National LITC Conference, December 2003 will be discussed later on today or tomorrow.
- Bi-lingual brochures with English and Spanish, side by side.
- There are currently 7 brochures on “Why do We Pay Taxes” but it is not available to be shared.

Cindy Katz suggested that space be made available on the bi-lingual brochures so that LITC’s and VITA’s (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) can piggy back on or use for contact information.

Reminder was made that all brochures need to be sanctioned by the IRS.

Terminology used: STP= Standardized Translation Process and VTO=Virtual Translation Office.

**Sally Sandy, Educator from the Parkway Area Adult Education Literacy-ESL Program - St. Louis, MO**



Before introducing Ms. Sandy to the group, DFO Ferree shared Ms. Sandy's resume and background as an educator that has been teaching ESL students for many years and is currently the Director at Parkway Adult Education and ESL Program in St. Louis since July 2003.

Ms. Sandy began her presentation by sharing how Missouri is organized, there are 43 Program Areas, and 7 school districts that have the ESL components which she is responsible for. There is a large Bosnian population in this area, and she has had students drive one and a half hours one way to attend ESL classes. She went on to explain the funding process (Federal and State funding) which is based on a combination of student attendance and progress.

Ms. Sandy emphasized "needs based" method she uses which is that as you teach language skills include taxes. Explaining the "why they are paying taxes" is crucial in the learning process so that they also learn compliance and be more understanding of why they are paying taxes. One must always keep in mind that students are in different stages of learning. The goal of the program is that the student needs to walk out with language skills they did not have before they walked in the classroom. ESL classes are taught in a variety of ways.

Ms. Sandy wrote the following up on a chart for all to view:

<u>Basic Skills</u>	<u>ESL</u>
Work Readiness	English in English
GED Prep	8 levels
	Citizenship

Ms. Sandy recently requested a grant and anticipates that she will be funded by next summer in order to teach students civics.

Ms. Sandy shared the following information with the panel:

- School's website: [www.parkway.k12.mo.us/all/](http://www.parkway.k12.mo.us/all/)
- Chart: Parkway Area Adult Education Literacy/English as a Second Language Program- "Countries Represented in FY 2003-2004"
- Basic Tax Vocabulary- (teaching tool)
- Multi-level Dictation- Income Tax -(teaching tool)

Ms. Sandy also shared how she met Panel Member Linda Bader at the school and worked with her in creating the "Outline of Proposed ESL Tax Curriculum" which is currently a recommendation that this committee has elevated to the IRS MLI Program Owner and is in pending status.

Panel Member Sharon Lassar asked "Is there a standardized way to measure progress?" Sandy's response was that some things on the test are not practical and in essence the response was "No".

Ms. Sandy concluded by stating that marketing is very important and that she sees that the next step may be a "health literacy" program being the focus on a national level.

Cindy Katz shared that to her knowledge the Consumer Bankruptcy & Credit Company handles financial literacy issues and the NY State Department of Banking does also and neither of these are available for ESL's.

Meissner suggested that a partnering with other entities may be necessary.



Chair Twomley expressed gratitude on behalf of the panel to Ms. Sandy for sharing her experiences with all.

### **Wrap-Up Day One**

Tomorrow's meeting will begin at 7:30am instead of 8:00am as previously scheduled.

## **Friday, June 4, 2004- "Day Two"**

### **Recap Day One**

Chair Twomley opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and turning the meeting over to Sharon Lassar.

**National Women's Law Center Discussion Document-How to Improve Services for LEP Tax Filers-** Lassar shared that she has a history with this organization going back to previous comments on their EITC initiative.

Lassar stated that although she agrees with a lot of the work this group has done, she is still uncertain about the argument regarding the translating of documents. If "IRS was to translate all important tax forms and publications into Spanish and other languages for limited English Proficiency (LEP) Tax Filers" would these documents be used?

After the panel reviewed the letter received, there was agreement that most of the issues that are being addressed are all in the process of being done by the IRS, and perhaps we should share recommendations elevated by this committee already. Also any questions to the organization will be incorporated in the response. An invitation for them to attend future teleconference meetings was also suggested. Mills volunteered to draft the response to this group, and Lassar will attempt to help but currently has other obligations. Several suggestions were shared.

**Action item: Mills will prepare first draft and forward to Chair Twomley by June 18, 2004.**

**Chair Twomley will then review first draft and then share with the entire committee by June 25, 2004. Twomley will attempt to share with panel and Lassar prior to her trip to China on July 18th.**

**By July 2nd, 2004, the committee is to review and provide their input.**

### **Kiosk Discussion**

Mills shared that he was not able to get response from the Wage & Investment Project Manager but promised to follow-up on this. **Action item for Mills: to address questions previously submitted on the kiosks and get back to the committee.**

Mills was able answer a few questions, e.g.

1. How many kiosks are there in operation today? Response: 37 kiosks.
2. Kiosks look like ATM Machines.
3. Regarding the costs of kiosks, Mills should have this information by next week.

Delford Jones shared that his area committee visited one and learned that these are very expensive and there was a problem with the printing of documents. The area committee made a recommendation.



Mills agreed that there are funding issues to consider. Mills emphasized that electronic means vs. paper versions are less expensive and also a great way to meet the needs of LEP's.

DFO Ferree reminded everyone that the connection this panel has with kiosks is the multilingual perspective. Bader shared that she visited the kiosk in Cincinnati and she was able to obtain prints both in English and in Spanish. Bader recalled asking Program Owner Cross if there was any way to know the hits and Cross had said no, but Bader claims that this information is available.

Kiosks are not useful to immigrants as they are now. Mills shared that initially the purpose of kiosks was to provide services in under-represented locations/rural areas.

Lassar shared that when she was chair of this committee she had the opportunity to attend a MLI Executive Board meeting and learned a lot of what the MLI Project Office deals with.

### **Shyconia Burden, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS)**

Ms. Burden is a Community Liaison Officer from the Department of Homeland Security and she began her presentation by thanking DFO Ferree and the panel for inviting her and she hoped to be able to take back with her information from the panel. The concept of both agencies partnering and working together in ways to address LEP's is quite welcome she said.

Ms. Burden shared information regarding on how USCIS checks to be sure that information on marriage applications are accurate. This is basically a concern when a person with a "green card" requests to be married to an American Citizen whereby their status changes.

Ms. Burden also shared that an "Immigration Orientation Guide" is currently being developed for immigrants. The purpose of this is to provide high level information and refer the immigrants appropriately; she believed that it contains some information on the IRS and how to obtain a Social Security card.

In respect to a "Naturalization Examination", Ms. Burden stated that this too is in re-design form and will be available in different languages. Most likely it will not be ready until Fiscal Year 2006. (Languages: English, Spanish, Creole, French, Russian, and another language she could not recall at the time). This briefly will tell what their responsibilities will be in this country.

Educating immigrants on their responsibilities is a common initiative that USCIS and the IRS can continue a dialogue on. In New York there are about 1 Million illegal persons and they are working. These individuals are referred to community based organizations that may be able to help them. When applicable, these individuals are referred to the IRS Website.

There was a discussion between Ms. Burden and the panel regarding the clarification on sharing of information and Disclosure issues specifically when USCIS requests a copy of a tax return and then asks the person to obtain IRS transcripts in order to compare information. Immigrants do not have the resources to check all the information that is out there. There is a lot of fraud out there Ms. Burden stated. There is a "moral character clause" out there which is another matter. "Employment Card" was also briefly discussed.

Delford Jones inquired if USCIS received more monies when the merger occurred and the response was "No". Ms. Burden said that Congress does not support Immigration and the Office of Citizenship. Their fees recently were increased and this is what pays salaries. The majority of the monies go to pay for enforcement. This is a major issue for this agency.



Ms. Burden's primary duty is to deal with "illegal aliens"- and attempts to assist them in obtaining legal status. Some can get a green card if their employer supports them. Citizenship is currently partnering with ESL.

Ms. Burden discussed the fear that is encountered and what she does is provide information to help the immigrants become more cognizant of immigration laws. She too, deals a lot with LEP's and in situations like this she brings a translator with her. The headquarters office is working with the Census Bureau to determine languages they should be addressing.

Touch screen kiosks are soon to be available.

A brief discussion was made on H2B Visa, temporary work visa for skilled workers with degrees, and also there are visas for unskilled, Visitors Visa. Many try to circumvent the law issue. Since September 11, 2001, Immigration monitors the students with a "J" visa and exchange students.

Ms. Burden concluded by saying that the key factor is to get information to this audience.

It was agreed, that any recommendation this committee decides on will be written to the IRS requesting that contact be made with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Website: [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) was shared with all as well as Ms. Burden's direct telephone number and email address. Since members requested to know who was their local community liaison officers, Ms. Burden said that she can be contacted directly and she will provide this information upon request.

Powerpoint Presentation: Office of Citizenship and Information about I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification was shared and discussed with the panel.

The panel expressed their thanks to Ms. Burden and looked forward to be working with her in the near future.

### **Workshop/Discussion**

Finalize drafts of surveys and ESL template- not completed during this meeting (see comments below)

### **Workshop**

1. Finalize template for ESL curriculum outline- not applicable at this time\*
2. Strategic plan outline/timeline for development, dissemination and implementation

### **Continued Workshops/Discussion**

This was on-going and captured separately.

### **Workshop (discuss issues brought up by speakers)**

- *Develop Annual survey to hand out to LITC's (external stakeholders)* Due to the time constraints, Mills shared that since he already has a draft survey already created, he will share this with the panel. **Action item for Mills: share "Draft LITC Survey" with panel by June 7, 2004 and panel is to respond back to him by June 11, 2004.**
- *Develop Annual survey for LITC clients (taxpayers)*  
This one needs to be developed. In December 2004, Mills said "we will know which LITC's have been awarded"- (the ESL's might not be able to be done this year) *No deadline on this survey*



### **Identify/Discuss ESL Partnering Opportunities with stakeholders**

Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem asked Linda Bader if Sally Sandy had received sanction from headquarters, whoever that is, and Linda responded that the grant is expected sometime in July. The pilot will most likely be developed by September. **Action item: After Sandy is funded, get information and share with this panel. Linda will take lead with the ESL project.**

Mills suggested that Sally Sandy be invited to attend the LITC National Conference in December 2004 and Linda reminded everyone that she will not be here in December since she is not extending her term as a volunteer TAP Member.

### **TAP Elevated Recommendation Discussion**

Mills shared that the response to the elevated recommendations submitted by the panel back in October 2003, cannot be shared yet since it is in draft form and has not been signed yet.

He shared that this panel has been a valuable source to provide input to assist LEP's taxpayers.

DFO Ferree requested to know if the panel has further work to do specifically regarding the "Outline of Proposed ESL Tax Curriculum"\* which was number 5 of the elevated recommendations, and Mills responded, "No, it's in the IRS' court now". He stated that most likely this part of the recommendation will be forwarded to the IRS Units, and TAS, from the MLI Executive Council. The team will be called upon since this will be a process; the product is not finished yet. Mills said that work with on a Federal level with the Department of Education will most likely occur. Mills stated that by the week of June 7, 2004, MLI Program Manager, Mary Davis' response should be available and Mills will officially share with the panel. **Action item for Mills: to share "elevated recommendations" responses with the panel as soon as they are available to be shared.**

Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem stated that there should not be any duplication of efforts.

### **Wrap-Up/Next Steps**

Mills stated that he would like to see what Federal funding will be available so that we can model after format Sally Sandy uses.

**Action item for Mills: To share Global Hue Report with the panel by June 7, 2004.** (This determines needs and gives insight on quality information)

**Action item for Ferree: To Remind Mills to send her the PDF file on the Global Hue Report.**

The OMB, Office of Management and Budget as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act was briefly mentioned.

Mills also shared that a disclaimer should be placed on surveys to determine ESL.

Another issue the IRS is dealing with, said Mills, is the use of minors to translate information. This is a reason why bi-lingual brochures will be very helpful and effective tool to be assimilated into programs. Mills liked the idea of side by side-languages with English on one side, and all agreed that this would be very effective. Also, there is awareness that certain terms are not translated. (Bader had shared earlier the pamphlet entitled: "Your Voice, Your Vote"- which is published by the Office of the Secretary of State, Missouri, Elections Division, with English on one side and Bosnic on the other.

Mills promised that the panel will have input for the upcoming IRS Spanish website.

Currently there is no LITC website.



Lassar asked if the LITC can be on TAP website based on NTA's comments last year.

Jones mentioned a "Talking Language Machine" which may be applicable to where you may need it.

Mills mentioned IRS' "OPI" Over the Phone Interpreter service similar to the "I Speak" cards previously mentioned by the Queens LITC Presenters. On OPI, there are 144 languages already available.

Elizabeth shared her preference for the Bentley LITC model and suggested that Ms. Sandy work directly with Bentley College and Linda did not agree with this idea. Elizabeth thought that getting the best practices from a variety of sources would be most effective. Mills said: "We can pilot from the best". Bader shared with Mills her copy of the Bentley Model.

DFO Ferree reminded everyone that the IRS has the Outline ESL Tax Curriculum and it has been accepted. It is not the TAP Mission to develop the product. This is a great success for the panel. Ferree continued by saying that there may be a need for follow-up once Ms. Sandy gets funding and we can see her model.

DFO Ferree also took this opportunity to inform the Program Owner that it is time that the panel be given another project to work on by the MLI Project Office. Perhaps "Citizenship" connected with the ESL portion, with outreach, may be an idea. The panel can elevate the new issue to the IRS and then the IRS to Immigration.

Mills stated that he envisions a template, Office of Citizenship, with the critical parts to give a person with basic tax knowledge.

DFO also requested that a MLI panel member be invited to attend the next Executive MLI Initiative Council meeting on August 26, 2004, in Crystal City, Outside Washington, DC. **Action item for Mills to follow-up and ensure that it happens.**

Meissner inquired about the results from last year's Annual LITC Conference.

All were reminded to fill out the Meeting Satisfaction Survey.

Chair Twomley expressed his appreciation again to the staff for all their efforts in coordinating this meeting; Chair then adjourned meeting and reminded everyone that the next teleconference meeting will be held on Friday, July 16, 2004 at 1:00 pm ET, same dial-in number and participant's code will be used.

#### **List of Flyers, etc Received by the Presenters/Speakers**

1. The Bentley Low Income Taxpayer Clinic Brochure
2. The Brooklyn Low Income Tax Clinic-"Need Help With a Tax Problem?" Flyer in several languages.
3. The Brooklyn Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic -"Taxpayer Education Workshop-Evaluation Form" in several languages
4. The Brooklyn Low-Income Tax Clinic's List of CBO's (Community Based Organizations) in partnership with the Brooklyn Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic
5. The Brooklyn Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic- "Need Help With a Tax Problem?- Want to Learn More About Your Tax Rights?"
6. Allan M. Goldberg- ESL Program Manager (LITC)- New York City's -Highlights of the 2000 Census Information.



7. Low Income Taxpayer Clinic List, Publication 4134 (Spanish)
8. Chart: "English Language Proficiency of Speakers of Selected Language Groups- NYC 2000 (Queens LITC)
9. TAP MLI's Outline of Proposed ESL Tax Curriculum prepared by Linda Bader
10. Parkway Area Adult Education Literacy- ESL Program- Sally Sandy- List of Countries Represented in FY 2003-2004
11. Sally Sandy's example of "Tax Vocabulary" list
12. Multi-level dictation: Income Tax Information
13. National Women's Law Center- May 27, 2004- Comments to the TAP MLI Issue Committee regarding: "How to Improve Services for Limited English Proficiency Tax Filers"
14. Office of Citizenship Information
15. About Form I-9-Employment Eligibility Verification
16. 2003 Low Income Tax Clinic (LITC) Conference Survey



## **Multilingual Issue Committee Meeting Minutes**

*May 21, 2004*  
1:00-2:00 PM ET

### **Roll Call & Confirmation of Quorum (3)**

TAP Program Analyst Inez E. De Jesus took the roll call, and quorum was met.

Quorum= 3, and there were 5 committee members present and the Designated Federal Official.

### **Designated Federal Official (DFO)**

- Nancy L. Ferree

### **Panel Members Present**

- Linda Bader, Chesterfield, MO
- Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem, Winchester, MA, Vice-Chair
- Joseph Meissner, Cleveland, OH
- Sharon Lassar, Miami, FL
- Bruce Twomley, Juneau, AK, Chair

### **Members Not Present**

- Delford Jones, Griffith, IN
- \* Effective May 19, 2004 , Sharon Stetz resigned from TAP.

### **MLI Program Owner(s)**

- Raymond G. Mills

### **TAP Staff**

- Inez E. De Jesus (Program Analyst and Scribe)

### **Public Participant(s)**

- Teresa Douglas, H&R Block, World Headquarters, Kansas City

### **Welcome/Announcements/Review Agenda**

Chair Twomley opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Twomley shared the news for those who had not heard yet of Panel Member Sharon Stetz' recent bad car accident, and that as a result she has decided to resign from TAP. Twomley suggested that each member communicate individually with Sharon if they wish to. Everyone on the call expressed their concerns and well wishes for Sharon 's speedy recovery.

The thought of inviting Stetz to join the committee by phone whether during the upcoming face-to-face meeting or at a future teleconference meeting arose, and Chair made the commitment to contact Sharon Stetz and extend this invitation to her. Twomley also inquired if the proper technology was



available in order to make this happen. **Action item for Chair Twomley to invite Stetz to participate during a future MLI Issue Committee meeting.**

#### **Review/Approve Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2004**

Minutes were approved by consensus.

#### **Review All Action Items from Previous Meeting**

DFO Ferree reviewed the following action items as noted from the previous meeting minutes:

- On Page 3, April 16, 2004 MLI Meeting Minutes, Mills is to coordinate field trip to visit kiosk in Queens, NY on June 2, 2004 with those members who are interested- **Update:** Mills shared that he should be arriving in New York around Noontime on this date, and he plans on renting a car and depart for Queens around one o'clock in the afternoon. He polled the committee to see who will be available and it resulted in none due to members arriving later on in the day.

Dialogue which followed related to kiosks- Linda Bader thanked Program Owner Mills for his quick response to questions she had sent to him a day earlier. Mills reminded everyone that the information shared was in draft form and for your eyes only status. Mills went on to explain that there will be a meeting next week with the Kiosk Group and he should be able to update the committee with additional information during the upcoming face-to-face meeting.

Chair Twomley expressed his interest in the three kiosks in Alaska, primarily the one in Juneau which he plans on visiting once it becomes available.

#### **Action item: for the MLI Issue Committee**

Mills requested that any questions the committee may have regarding kiosks be sent to him by **no later than Monday, May 24, 2004, Noontime.**

#### **Review All Action Items from Previous Meeting-Continued**

- On Page 4, previous meeting minutes, Nancy is to find out the room size of the conference room that will be used for the upcoming face-to-face meeting, to determine how many people it holds comfortably. Update: Nancy shared that it holds approximately 34 people.
- Also noted on Page 4, Nancy is to send to Mills, a copy of the U.S. Citizen Packet- Office of the Citizenship and the Development of the New Citizenship Test. **Update:** This has been completed.
- On Page 5, Bader is to submit all her kiosk questions to Program Owner Raymond Mills. **Update:** This has been done as previously discussed during today's call.
- On Page 5, DFO Ferree will pursue the Tax Educational ideas with the guest from the Department of Education once she makes the contact. Update: Ferree shared that this contact has not been finalized yet; the one with U.S. Immigration has been. Mills made the commitment to assist Nancy Ferree in pinning down the responsible individual. **This remains an Open Action Item for Mills and Ferree: Ferree will send Mills the telephone number she has on record.**

#### **Status Report on Elevated Recommendations**

Mills reported that Program Owner Toni Cross will not be able to participate on today's call, but plans on attending the upcoming face-to-face meeting. He plans on having at the face-to-face meeting the final version of the memo which addresses what the MLI Program Owners are doing. Information regarding the Low Income Tax Clinics (LITC's) survey will be available as well.

Mills shared that his goal for the committee is to go into the face-to-face meeting with good things and come out with good things.



Chair Twomley made an inquiry: Can we get something before we get on the plane? **Action item for Program Owner Mills: Mills requested that individual LITC questions be sent to him (he apologized for the short turn-around time) and he would forward these to the LITC National Director who in turn will share with the invited LITC guests. Mills goal is to accomplish this by Wednesday, May 26, 2004.**

#### **Guidance from the Program Owner**

Mills shared that Toni Cross was very pleased with the draft agenda for the upcoming face-to-face meeting.

#### **Review Agenda for Face-to-Face Meeting & Address Any Other Related Matters**

Mills proceeded to ask if everyone had the latest version #5 dated April 12, 2004 of the draft agenda. Mills will be confirming with Randy Swartz and Alan Goldberg regarding LITC participants/guests.

Chair Twomley mentioned that he was made aware during the recent Joint Committee's face-to-face meeting in Chicago that TAP Director Bernie Coston will be attending the MLI issue committee meeting in Brooklyn, NY. Mills noted that the agenda should reflect that the TAP Director be given the honor of opening the meeting and suggested that 15 minutes be allotted for this. DFO Ferree made the commitment to make sure to communicate to the TAP Director all pertinent information. **Action item for Nancy / to update agenda and communicate with the TAP Director.**

Mills also stated that in case the representative from the Department of Education is not able to attend, we need to have a Plan B in place. He shared with all the recent inquiry we have received from Kimberly Glassman from the National Women Law Center who may be sending a representative to the meeting and/or be addressing the committee by written comments. **Pending-** Inez shared that confirmation should be obtained during the week of May 24th. Mills suggested that space be allowed for limited participation of this person who has experience with LITC's and multilingual issues. (Based on communications between Ms. Glassman and Inez, the partners of this organization conducted a tax credit outreach campaign in New York, focusing on low income taxpayers with children by using an English and Spanish flyer about Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, and Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. They have also worked with the translation of flyers into 3 additional languages: Arabic, Chinese, and Russian. They would like to emphasize to the committee the importance of providing tax information in additional languages)

This led to Mills emphasizing the importance of the committee having questions beforehand for the LITC guests so that the LITC's can format their presentation around the committees' specific concerns. This will also allow time for Ms. Glassman's representative.

Mention was also made of TAP Area 1 Jim Grimaldi's intention or awareness of the MLI face-to-face meeting. Nancy confirmed that she had sent invitational flyers to him.

Joe Meissner suggested that the LITC presentations be made around questions related to What are LITC's doing for ESL- English as a Second Language individuals? Joe emphasized that the committee should provide the LITC's with good topics, good issues. The goal should be to find out what are their best practices.

DFO Ferree shared based on inquiries made that the South Brooklyn Legal Services services individuals in the languages of Russian and Spanish, and the Queens Legal Service Corporation services Chinese, Creole, Hindi, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu.

Mills concluded that the opening of the meeting should be shared among Bernie Coston, Jim Grimaldi, and Toni Cross. If Sally Sandy is in early, then a portion will be allocated to her as well (20-25 minutes total).



It was recommended that Juniors Restaurant might be the closest and best choice for lunch on that first day.

**Action item for Ray, Nancy and Inez:** Mills suggested that he, Nancy and Inez speak off line regarding the packages that need to be prepared prior to the meeting.

Mills continued to review the draft agenda, and stated that after Sally Sandy's 30 minute presentation, another break, another workshop/LITC workshop. There may be time allotted around 3:15-3:45 pm to discuss kiosks. From 4:15-4:30 pm will be the wrap up of day one.

For day two of the agenda, time is allotted to Shyconia Burden, but currently commitment has not been firmed up yet. **Action item: Nancy promised to send Ray the contact telephone number she has so that Ray may follow-up as well.**

Ray shared that there should be alternates; perhaps he will look into seeking representatives from the State level that deal with multilingual issues.

Chair Twomley stated that the agenda looks good and he was looking forward to a good and productive meeting.

#### **News from the Staff**

DFO Ferree asked if anyone had any questions. There were no responses.

Ferree shared that TAP Recruitment for new members was very active and so far approximately one thousand applications have been received. The next steps will be firming up interviews, and screening process.

Appreciation was extended to Raymond Mills for his guidance with this committee.

Regarding travel, Ferree stated that it sounds like everyone has confirmed their travel plans.

#### **Public Participation (Input)**

Chair Twomley welcomed Ms. Teresa Douglas from H&R Block, Kansas City , headquarters office who services multilingual communities. Chair asked the committee if they had any questions for the public participant. Ms. Douglas wanted to know what was meant by kiosks and Mills responded and in essence he shared that they were created originally in order to reduce taxpayer burden specifically for those who could not visit a Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC) when they had tax problems. This avenue gives the taxpayers an opportunity when they cannot visit a TAC. This machine/system provides the user with access to services and information. Current and prior year federal tax forms are available.

#### **Closing Assessment- Confirm next meeting: Face-to-Face, June 3&4, 2004, Brooklyn, NY**

Chair Twomley expressed his appreciation on behalf of the committee to Ray, Nancy, and Inez for putting this together.

Mills questioned the technicality surrounding having a telephone in the conference room and reminded everyone to send their topics of interest to the LITC to him, if possible, today will be fine.

Chair adjourned meeting, and confirmed the June 3 & June 4th meeting in Brooklyn, NY.



## **Multilingual Issue Committee Meeting Minutes**

*April 16, 2004*  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST  
Teleconference

### **Roll Call & Confirmation of Quorum (4)**

TAP Program Analyst Inez E. De Jesus took the roll call, and quorum was met;

Quorum=4 and there were 5 committee members present and the Designated Federal Official.

### **Designated Federal Official (DFO)**

- Nancy L. Ferree

### **Panel Members Present**

- Linda Bader, Chesterfield, MO
- Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem, Winchester, MA , Vice-Chair
- Joseph Meissner, Cleveland, OH
- Sharon Stetz, Salt Lake City, UT
- Bruce Twomley, Juneau, AK, Chair

### **Panel Members Not Present**

- Delford Jones, Griffith, IN
- Sharon Lassar, Miami, FL

### **MLI Program Owner(s)**

- Raymond G. Mills

### **TAP Staff**

- Inez E. De Jesus (Program Analyst/Scribe)

### **Welcome/Announcements/Review Agenda**

Chair Bruce Twomley opened the meeting by welcoming everyone; he will be sharing his recent conversation with Sharon Lassar, regarding the new Financial Literacy and Education Commission project later on this call, and also shared that Lassar will not be able to participate on today's call due to other commitments.

### **Review/Approve Meeting Minutes of March 19, 2004**

These minutes were approved by consensus; and, appreciation was expressed for how well detailed they are, and this is very helpful for when a member misses a meeting.

### **Review all Action Items from Previous Meeting**

DFO Ferree reviewed the action items from the previous meeting, and for the record:

1. Follow-up to FDIC, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Financial Education Money Smart Curriculum: since the last meeting, the link where one can place an order for these materials



was shared by email with the entire committee. Ferree asked whether everyone had placed an order and had the product arrived yet. Responses varied; some had and others had not yet. Inez stated that if anyone needed assistance with this matter, to please let it be known to the staff.

2. The draft agenda for the MLI Issue Committee face-to-face meeting on June 3 & 4, 2004, was coordinated among Nancy, Ray Mills, and Inez. This draft agenda is a topic for discussion during today's teleconference.
3. The topic Partner with Homeland Security/U.S. Citizen Packet-Tax Filing Responsibilities has been added to today's agenda.
4. The topic Draft Recommendation-Partnering with the New Financial Literacy and Education Commission has been added to today's agenda.
5. Chair Twomley did speak during the past month with Lassar about the new Financial Literacy and Education Commission, and will be sharing discussion with all during today's teleconference.

### **Status Report on Elevated Recommendations**

Program Owner Raymond Mills reported that the final version of the memo from the MLI Executive Owner should be finalized by next week, and ready by the next call. This memorandum will address the elevated recommendations that this committee has made.

### **Guidance from the Program Owner**

Raymond Mills shared that the upcoming face-to-face meeting will be in a workshop setting and he proceeded to walk-through the draft agenda as noted below.

### **Update on Face-to-Face Meeting & Review Draft Agenda**

Before commencing the review, Mills inquired if everyone had a copy of the draft agenda. He proceeded by reminding everyone that the travel day will be Wednesday, June 2, 2004, and the meeting will be the whole business day on Thursday, June 3, 2004, from 8:00am to 4:30 pm ET, and on Friday, June 4, 2004, from 8:00am to Noontime, and travel day back home beginning that afternoon for all. (Break times have been allocated throughout the agenda).

Meeting will begin with the usual procedure of Welcome, Announcements, Roll-Call, Confirm Quorum, Review/Approve minutes from previous meeting, and comments from National Office Representative.

Panel member Joe Meissner wanted to know, Are we going to meet with any LITC, Low Income Tax Clinic, representatives or are we visiting any LITC's in the area?, and this was answered by Mills when he referenced that the **LITC National Director Randy Swartz** is scheduled to give an overview of the LITC program on June 3, 2004, from 9:15am to 9:30am.

Swartz's overview will be followed by a **presentation from Alan M. Goldberg, ESL (English as a Second Language) Program Manager.**

Then, the **South Brooklyn Legal Services, Inc.** LITC representative(s) will be giving a presentation based on their experiences with their contacts, English and Spanish languages.

Afterwards, the **Queens Legal Services Corporation** LITC, will be giving a presentation based on their experiences since they deal with clients in 4 languages.

This will be followed by a questions and answers period, and then a workshop to discuss issues brought up by the speakers.

The panel will then be given the opportunity to develop a **formal survey** to hand out as a way to obtain feedback from various focus groups.



The group will then break for lunch and the afternoon session will begin with a 30 minute **presentation given by Ms. Sally Sandy**, Program Director/Instructor from Parkway Area Adult Education and Literacy, St. Louis , MO. Ms. Sandy has been very instrumental in working with Linda Bader on the draft Tax Curriculum for English as a Second Language (ESL) Individuals.

After an afternoon break, time has been set aside for a workshop to address:

- Finalize template for ESL curriculum outline
- Strategic plan outline for development, dissemination, and implementation.

From 3:15-4:15 pm , time has been slotted for Continued Discussion and committee asked if perhaps a LITC site visit or a visit to see the kiosk in Queens , NY is a possibility. Mills stated that he would look into this but before the call ended, Mills reported that this would be very time consuming and in the midst of rush hour traffic in a large city.

Mills did share that he was planning on arriving early in NY on June 2, 2004, in order to visit the kiosk in Queens , NY and others chimed in and expressed an interest in joining him. **Action item for Mills:** coordinate field trip to visit kiosk in Queens on June 2, 2004 with interested parties.

From 4:15-4:30 pm, will be Wrap up for Day One.

The panel requested that the LITC representatives remain for as long as they may be needed for assistance, and Mills said that he will make the appropriate arrangements.

Friday, Day 2, June 4, 2004, meeting will begin at 8:00 am by a Recap of Day one.

At 8:30 am, a 30-minute presentation will be given by a representative from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. This will follow with a Q&A session. (Committee is interested in learning what testing is done when folks come to the United States from other countries.)

At 9:30 am, a 30-minute presentation will be given by a representative from the Department of Education. This also will be followed by a Q&A period.

At 10:15am there will be a **Workshop/Wrap-up** to cover:

- Identify Partnering Opportunities
- Develop formal programs with partners for ESL (Tax Education)

From 11:30am to Noon will be wrap up.

The committee expressed unanimously that this is a remarkable agenda and they were looking forward to the face-to-face meeting. Agenda was accepted.

#### **Questions that arose after reviewing the draft agenda were:**

1. Linda Bader had good questions regarding kiosks and Mills requested that she forward these to him by email.
2. Will the LITC representatives stick around? Mills responded yes.
3. How big is the conference room (2C) where we will be meeting? **Action item for Nancy : find out room size to determine how many people it holds comfortably.**
4. What is the purpose of the formal survey? Mills responded that it will be a way to obtain feedback from focus groups.



### **Proposal on Ways to Work with Low Income Tax Clinics (LITCs)**

Meissner stated that he was looking forward to learn at the face-to-face meeting what materials did the LITC's have when they dealt with LEP (Limited English Proficient) individuals.

Mills stated that he would share this inquiry with the LITC guests beforehand.

The proposal previously submitted was not discussed.

### **Partner with Office of U.S. Citizenship (U.S. Citizen Packet-Tax Filing Responsibilities)**

Chair Twomley motioned that instead of using the term Homeland Security, the committee use Office of U.S. Citizenship and the committee agreed.

DFO Ferree asked if everyone had received the information she had sent by U.S. mail several weeks ago. Responses varied. **Action item for Ferree: send Mills this information.** (For the record: 1) Office of the Citizenship & 2) Development of New Citizenship Test)

Ferree also shared that she has made contact, as stated in the draft agenda, and there will be a representative from the USCIS, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

### **MLI Referral-Tax Curriculum for English as a Second Language (ESL) Individuals**

Linda Bader shared that she has spoken to Sally Sandy and she has confirmed that she will be able to attend the upcoming face-to-face meeting. Ms. Sandy will have lots of exciting news to share with the committee regarding a grant she has recently written. (Teacher's grant on tax obligations) Ms. Sandy is assured that it will be funded. Bader also noted that the committee will become very knowledgeable after meeting with Ms. Sandy.

As noted in the draft agenda previously discussed, regarding the ESL curriculum, the committee would have already had heard from Alan Goldberg, LITC ESL Program Manager, during the morning session, and would be ready to develop the draft that Bader has been working on.

Bader asked at this point, Are we going to discuss kiosks/costs/upkeep/how many leads? Raymond Mills responded that this was a good point, and currently there are 37 kiosks Nationwide, and that she should forward all her questions directly to him as previously noted. **Action item: Bader to submit all her kiosk questions directly to Program Owner Raymond Mills.**

Elizabeth made an inquiry about the distance between the Brooklyn IRS office and Queens where the kiosk in New York is located since the committee had earlier expressed an interest in visiting the kiosk site. A trip to this site will be coordinated by Mills as discussed earlier.

### **Draft Recommendation-Partnering with the New Financial Literacy and Education Commission**

Chair Twomley shared that he has spoken to Sharon Lassar and she brought to his attention that Area 1 Committee was addressing this same or similar topic. Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem shared that the Area 1 Chair, Jim Grimaldi, will be a good source of information on this. She will be communicating to Grimaldi, MLI's concerns.

This is being addressed as Tax Educational ideas; the goal is to reach agencies beyond the IRS to fully explore the Commission and how it proposes to move forward. **Action item: DFO Ferree will pursue this with the guest from the Department of Education once she makes the contact.**

### **News from the Staff**

DFO Ferree reminded everyone that the upcoming MLI face-to-face meeting will be held at the IRS Brooklyn Office, located at 625 Fulton Street, within walking distance of the New York Marriott Hotel-



Brooklyn where arrangements have been made for the committee to lodge. Ferree referenced email sent out by Inez on March 29, 2004 , at 3:51 pm ET which has all the pertinent travel information.

Panel members are to send the TAP Reservation Request Form, once filled out, to TAP Secretary, Jenny Reyes, fax # 954-423-7975 and Jenny will make all the travel arrangements. Members may make their hotel reservations directly with the hotel, and if not, they are to provide the staff with their credit card information, and reservations will be made for them if they wish. Deadline to make hotel reservations is May 5, 2004.

**Public Participation/Input**

None

**Closing Assessment**

Chair Confirmed next meeting: May 21, 2004 @ 1:00 PM EDT

Chair Twomley adjourned meeting and thanked everyone for their participation.

\*These minutes were approved by the MLI Issue Committee by consensus on May 21, 2004.



## Multi-Lingual Issue Committee Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2004  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST  
Teleconference

### Roll Call & Confirmation of Quorum (4)

TAP Program Analyst Inez E. De Jesus took the roll call, and quorum was met;

Quorum=4 and there were 6 committee members present and the Designated Federal Official.

### Designated Federal Official (DFO)

- Nancy L. Ferree

### Panel Members Present

- Linda Bader, Chesterfield, MO
- Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem, Winchester, MA, Vice-Chair
- Delford Jones, Griffith, IN
- Sharon Lassar, Miami, FL
- Joseph Meissner, Cleveland, OH
- Bruce Twomley, Juneau, AK, Chair

### Panel Members Not Present

- Sharon Stetz, Salt Lake City, UT

### MLI Program Owner(s)

- Raymond G. Mills

### TAP Staff

- Inez E. De Jesus (Program Analyst/Scribe)

### Welcome/Announcements/Review Agenda

Chair Bruce Twomley opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, and a warm welcome was extended to DFO Nancy L. Ferree.

The Chair had no new announcements for this month.

The agenda was accepted as is by the committee.

Joe Meissner made referenced to an email he had sent out to all earlier in the day entitled Working with Low Income Tax Clinics on MLI Issues which will be discussed later on during this call.

Chair Twomley inquired from the TAP Staff for clarification on the dates of the Joint Committee face-to-face meeting which all chairs attend. These dates are Friday, May 7, 2004 , all day and on Saturday, May 8, 2004, half day meeting in Chicago , Illinois . The travel dates will be May 6th and



afternoon of May 8th. Twomley reminded everyone that the MLI Issue committee will only have one meeting before this event and he wanted the committee to be aware of this in case there were any recommendations ready to be elevated by this time.

#### **Review/Approve Meeting Minutes of February 20, 2004**

Delford Jones pointed out that on page 4, under Closing Assessment a clarification needs to be made: Delford Jones met with the **secretary of the Secretary of the Treasury**. Analyst De Jesus is to make this correction and the committee agreed by consensus that once minutes are modified, they will be considered approved as amended.

#### **Review all Action Items from Previous Meeting**

Analyst De Jesus confirmed that all actions items were carried over as agenda items for this month's meeting; these are:

- Status Report on Elevated Recommendations from Program Owner
- Meissner to draft a Proposal on Ways to Works with the LITCs
- Partnering with Homeland Security (U.S. Citizen Packet-Tax Filing Responsibilities)- Ferree
- MLI Referral-Tax Curriculum for ESL Individuals- Bader
- Draft Recommendation- Partnering with the new Financial Literacy and Education Commission- Lassar
- Analyst's cost projection for Face-to-Face meeting in New York-De Jesus

#### **Status Report on Elevated Recommendations**

Raymond Mills updated everyone by sharing that currently there is a draft memo from Mary Davis, Director, Wage & Investment, Strategic & Finance, (who oversees the Multilingual Initiative Program) which will be shared soon with this committee that responds to the MLI's previously submitted elevated recommendations.

Mills also stated that #5, Recommendation, The IRS and ESL educators should collaborate on the development and promotion of a tax education curriculum that can be implemented in adult ESL programs across the nation, is definitely a great legacy for this committee to leave once its tenure has ended. He suggested that during the upcoming face-to-face meeting, the committee work this into the agenda and begin to work on a standardized ESL template.

#### **Guidance from the Program Owner**

Mills suggested that the face-to-face meeting in New York in June be a working meeting with emphasis on ironing out the committee's current draft recommendations.

Mills stated that partnering with Low Income Tax Clinics (LITCs) Directors should be one of the committee's goals as well. He suggested that a pilot survey to LITC's be created. He has identified 2 LITC's in Brooklyn, New York and 2 in the Washington, D.C. areas. He also shared that the Spanish language is the current focus.

Mills emphasized the importance of structure and he supports that the ESL will be a key component to work on.

Bader inquired whether the focus should be on a print or computer program when creating the template for the Tax Curriculum for ESL's. Mills responded that having it on-line would be costly and we should try to make it as basic as possible to begin with.

Bader also asked about booklets that are already translated into Spanish and reminded everyone of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Money Smart Curriculum which she had ordered a



while back. For example, there is a set on show to establish a checking account, etc., but there is none on taxes.

Meissner also stated that he has these and that this is a very good model to follow and suggested that everyone obtain a set and review this product. Mills chimed in and stated that if each committee member takes a product that is already out there and reviews it by the time the committee meets in June, they can have a very productive meeting. **Action item: Meissner and De Jesus are to order these for the entire committee.\* For the record, DFO Ferree sent out during this teleconference meeting, by email to all, the link where one can place an order for these materials, ([www.fdic.gov](http://www.fdic.gov))**

#### **Confirm Location of Face-to-Face Meeting & Brainstorm on Agenda Items**

Based on last month's discussion whereby Raymond Mills suggested to the committee that they should consider to meet in a city other than St. Louis where other languages are being served for example, in New York there are clinics that serves 7 languages. Mills emphasized that there are lots of benefits of partnering with LITC's that have experience with dealing with individuals that speak different languages. It's effective to link with multilingual projects that are already in place.

During this past month, with guidance from DFO Ferree, Analyst De Jesus created a cost projection with justification for the change of location and Brooklyn, NY was selected. The plan is to lodge at a downtown Brooklyn, NY hotel and hold the meeting at the IRS building within walking distance where the New York TAP office is located at no extra cost. The TAP Staff shared that this change has been approved by the TAP Director.

Twomley shared with Linda Bader what had occurred during last month's call since she was not present.

Mills shared that he will be meeting with the LITC National Director Randy Swartz and Alan Goldberg next Tuesday, March 23, 2004 and was planning on extending an invitation to them and would appreciate if he could obtain the draft meeting minutes for today's call so that he could share the committee's plans with them.

Mills emphasized that it is very important for the committee to begin to work on drafting the agenda items for the face-to-face meeting in June in Brooklyn, NY. He suggested that he and Inez draft a template to be shared with the committee and each member is to provide input. As Linda Bader suggested, in order to get on the invitees calendar, it is imperative that this is done as soon as possible. Mills suggested that he and Inez begin to work on this as of Monday, March 22, 2004. **Action item: Create draft agenda for face-to-face meeting on June 3 & 4, 2004. (DFO Ferree will be handling this with Mills instead of Inez, as per TAP operating procedures)**

DFO Ferree shared with all that Inez had created a flyer/notice with all the meeting location information. This can be used as an invitation to the guests.

Mills also suggested that representatives from other organizations that deal with multilingual initiative issues be invited to the June meeting. DFO Ferree agreed with Mills suggestions. Invitations can be sent to the following:

- Homeland Security key player(s) from the New York area.
- IRS personnel that deal with assisting ESL individuals from the NY area.
- LITC's directors from the NY area.
- State Department of Education/Brooklyn Educational community.



- Other federal agencies
- Department of Justice
- EEO

Before exiting the call since she had another commitment, Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem expressed that she had a conflict with the dates of the face-to-face meeting. The committee discussed changing the dates and Analyst De Jesus reminded everyone that the reason for having each committee lock in dates during the annual meeting was for the purpose of everyone being able to plan their calendars accordingly. Also, the TAP Director likes to participate on as many face-to-face meetings and having dates scheduled and firmed up is vital to everyone in order to avoid conflicts.

Before committee ended discussing this subject matter, Chair asked if there was any opposition to holding the meeting on these dates in Brooklyn, NY and there was no opposition.

### **Proposal on Ways to Work with Low Income Tax Clinics (LITCs)**

Joe Meissner referenced the draft proposal he had sent out earlier: Working with LITCs on MLI Issues and Reach Out to LITC Program:

For the record, Meissner's recommendations are as follows:

- We need to establish contact with the PITC's that work with ESL taxpayers. We need to get a list of these, with address and emails. (PITC's should be LITC's)
- We then need to communicate with them about our MLI committee, what we are trying to do, and what we have done. We need to draft a one or two page letter inviting them to work with us. Once we establish contact, we might then send a letter with a questionnaire. We would also invite ideas from them on how we can work together. (By the way, the new LITC contracts invite the LITC's to join with TAP on working on all sorts of issues.)
- We need to get copies of the annual reports from these LITC's. Every LITC turns in an annual report. These can be helpful in understanding what they do, what language groups they serve, and the problems and successes they encounter.
- We need to get materials used by these LITC's in educating their ESL taxpayers. We should ask them for any forms and other education materials they find helpful. Meissner noted during the call that during last year's face-to-face meeting in Miami , we were able to obtain materials in various languages.
- We need to begin an effort at identifying various taxpayer materials that are used to educate ESL taxpayers. We could search out various ethnic and language groups to see what they have available. One possible source might be various ethnic and language newspapers and magazines which may publish articles around tax times.

MEISSNER REQUESTED INPUT FROM THE ENTIRE COMMITTEE ON THESE.

It was noted that the current Publication 4134, List of all LITC's in the United States, revised on January 2004, does list the languages served at each location.

### **Partner with Homeland Security (U.S. Citizen Packet-Tax Filing Responsibilities)**

DFO Ferree shared that she has collected lots of information and will be sharing this information with the panel at a later date. This topic is to be moved to next month's agenda. **Action item for Inez: Add this topic to the agenda for April 16, 2004 teleconference meeting.**

### **MLI Referral-Tax Curriculum for English as a Second Language (ESL) Individuals**

This is pending and committee agreed that it should be added to the sample agenda for the face-to-face meeting in June.



**Draft Recommendation-Partnering with the New Financial Literacy and Education Commission**

This topic will be moved to next month's agenda. **Action item for Inez: Add this topic to the agenda for April 16, 2004 teleconference meeting and to the face-to-face sample agenda.**

**Action item for Chair: Bruce Twomley stated that he would speak to Sharon Lassar offline to learn more about this commission.**

**News from the Staff**

None.

**Public Participation/Input**

None.

**Closing Assessment**

Delford Jones wanted to know if there would be a relation between the ESL curriculum template and the recently revised Publication 1915 (ITIN) the committee had been asked to review by the National Taxpayer Advocate.

**Chair Confirmed next meeting: April 16, 2004 @ 1:00 PM EDT**

Chair Twomley adjourned meeting.



## Multi-Lingual Issue Committee Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2004  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST  
Teleconference

### Roll Call & Confirmation of Quorum (4)

TAP Program Analyst Inez E. De Jesus took the roll call, and quorum was met; Quorum= 4 and there were 6 committee members present and the Acting Designated Federal Official (DFO).

### Acting Designated Federal Official (DFO)

- Martha J. Curry, National Office TAP Program Analyst

### Panel Members Present

- Elizabeth Brodbine-Ghoniem, Winchester, MA, Vice-Chair
- Delford Jones, Griffith, IN
- Sharon Lassar, Miami, FL
- Joseph Meissner, Cleveland, OH
- Sharon Stetz, Salt Lake City, UT
- Bruce Twomley, Juneau, AK, Chair

### Panel Members Not Present

- Linda Bader, Chesterfield, MO

### MLI Program Owners

- Toni M. Cross
- Raymond G. Mills

### TAP Staff

- Inez E. De Jesus (Program Analyst/Scribe)

### Welcome/Announcements/Review Agenda

Chair Bruce Twomley opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, and a special welcome was extended to Acting DFO Martha J. Curry from the TAP National Office staff, as well as to Program Owner Raymond Mills who had been absent during the past 2 months due to illness.

The committee expressed their condolences and concerns towards Nancy Ferree due to her recent loss.

### Review/Approve Meeting Minutes of January 16, 2004

Panel member Sharon Lassar brought to the committee's attention that on page 3, under "Recommendation #2" a correction be made regarding the acronym, "TANF" it should read: "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families".

Once this correction is made, minutes were approved by consensus.



### **Review all Action Items from Previous Meeting**

Not discussed.

### **Status Report on Elevated Recommendations**

Program Owner Toni Cross reported that "Recommendation # 5, The IRS and ESL educators should collaborate on the development and promotion of a tax education curriculum that can be implemented in adult ESL programs across the nation", was currently being addressed and that she should have a final report on all elevated issues by the next MLI teleconference meeting. **Action: To be added to the agenda for the MLI's March 19, 2004 teleconference meeting.**

### **Guidance from Program Owner**

Toni Cross asked the committee: "What are your expectations from the Program Owner?"

### **Language Block Information (Documents & Written Materials in other Languages)**

Sharon Stetz shared that during the LITC National Conference, which she attended in December 2003, she learned of this concept from LITC Directors who mentioned that it has been their experience that the table card, also known as the Language Block, is a very helpful tool to ESL individuals.

Stetz went on to mention that instead of a stuffer that would go out with IRS mailings, if there was a language card, that could be sealed on IRS envelopes, it would be clear if the recipient couldn't speak English to call a certain number for assistance in their particular language.

This led to discussion among the members:

- Would this be on any particular correspondence or be a standard on all IRS envelopes?
- Assistant Program Owner Raymond Mills mentioned that perhaps a "disclaimer" would have to be placed. Chair requested that this be clarified. Mills went on to mention that currently the IRS has in place some provisions whereby some of the notices and letters already inform ESL individuals where they may obtain assistance in their native language, which is currently Spanish only.
- Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem inquired: "Is the expectation, that there would be someone available at the number provided that would speak a particular foreign language?" Toni Cross responded that currently with budget cuts these resources are not available. Cross said this was a good idea for the future perhaps.
- Toni Cross suggested this needed clarification/more research if the committee decides to pursue this proposal.
- There was mention also of checking a box, and there would be a toll free number whereby there would be an employee that speaks another language referenced on the envelope. Would be nice if the 5 identified languages by the IRS would be mentioned. Cross again stated "we are not at the point of placing 5 languages yet. Currently "Spanish" is the only language that is being addressed."
- Cross also mentioned that there is currently a focus group that is looking at envelopes and their content and measuring the level of calls received in Spanish.
- It was also discussed if a certain glossy color would be used, this could be a good idea for the future.
- Meissner mentioned the idea of perhaps checking a language box on the 1040 tax return. Mills thought this was an excellent suggestion.

### **Follow-up on LITC (Low Income Tax Clinics) Contacts**

Chair Twomley mentioned that he heard from his local LITC in Alaska that they do not have funding yet for this year, and Program Owner Toni Cross clarified that all LITC's are currently funded.

Question arose on what could the committee do with LITC's and the language block issue.



Committee discussed briefly that perhaps a letter to Nina E. Olson, the National Taxpayer Advocate or to the LITC Director might be a formal approach.

Chair Twomley emphasized that the committee needs to identify means to communicate with the LITC's and make sure all the information that needs to flow, does flow. There needs to be a better form of communication.

After discussion it was agreed upon that Joe Meissner will draft a "Proposal on Ways to Work with the LITC's". **Action: Meissner to draft a proposal on behalf of the committee. Also, an agenda item for the MLI's March 19, 2004 teleconference meeting.**

**Partner with Homeland Security (U.S. Citizen Packet- Tax Filing Responsibilities)-** this topic will be tabled till the next meeting, upon DFO Nancy Ferree's return. **Action: To be added to the agenda for the MLI's March 19, 2004 teleconference meeting.**

#### **MLI Referral-Tax Curriculum for English as a Second Language (ESL) Individuals**

On February 13, 2004, Linda Bader sent by email, a draft of the "MLI Referral Form" for the committee to review before this meeting; although she would not be present she suggested that the committee discuss.

The committee chose to carry this item over to the next meeting, since not all members had had the time to review this draft recommendation.

Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem mentioned that on January 2, 2004, she had made some suggestions that have not been captured in the draft recommendation and promised to re-send this data to Linda Bader so that it is incorporated into the draft.

In the interim, the committee is to review and submit their comments directly to Linda Bader. **Action: To be added to the agenda for the MLI's March 19, 2004 teleconference meeting.**

#### **"Draft Recommendation"- Partnering with the new "Financial Literacy and Education Commission"**

Sharon Lassar stated that she would attempt to get this done shortly.

It was brought to Lassar's attention that the Area 1 Chair, Jim Grimaldi, was also working on this subject matter.

Lassar stated that she welcomed any comments or suggestions from the committee. **Action: To be added to the agenda for the MLI's March 19, 2004 teleconference meeting.**

#### **News from the Staff**

None.

#### **Public Participation/Input**

None.

#### **Closing Assessment**

Delford Jones mentioned that he recently met with the secretary of the Secretary of the Treasury John Snow and will be sharing as requested by Raymond Mills information discussed with this committee by email.



Chair Twomley stated that during the Joint Committee meeting, the TAP Director informed the TAP Committee chairs that 7 committees will be allowed to have a second face-to-face meeting. Bruce stated to the Joint Committee his personal inclination to defer to the area committees but asked for the opportunity to consult with our MLI committee to see if any of our members saw a need for a second meeting. Before the Joint Committee meeting ended, the additional monies had been claimed among area and issue committees. Acting DFO Martha Curry stated that the TAP Director said that this committee can re-address the issue of a second face-to-face meeting if it is merited.

Assistant Program Owner Raymond Mills chimed in and inquired on what is the objective of the face-to-face meeting currently scheduled to be held in St. Louis, MO, on June 3 and June 4, 2004. He emphasized that the committee should think of "best practices" with the LITC's. Toni Cross also mentioned that the committee should be thinking of "cementing their legacy".

Emphasis should be made on having one constructive face-to-face meeting. Mills inquired on how locked in are we with the June 3 & 4th dates. Analyst De Jesus replied that originally the reason for having each committee locked in to a date was for planning purposes since most members participate on 2 committees and therefore, so that there would be no conflict. By having the dates scheduled until September/October 2004, one can plan better other activities. Acting DFO Curry also stated that the TAP Director likes to participate on as many face-to-face committee meetings as he can and by having the dates scheduled it is very beneficial to him.

Analyst De Jesus reminded everyone that St. Louis was originally selected in order to meet with the instructor that Linda Bader had been working with, Ms. Sally Sandy. Based on conversations with Linda Bader there might be changes since the original plan.

Mills suggested that the committee consider to meet in a city where other languages are being served for example, as stated in Publication 4134, List of all the LITC's in the United States, in Jamaica, Queens, New York, the LITC there serves 7 languages: Chinese/Creole/Hindu/Korean/Russian/Spanish/Urdu. New York is an option that Mills supported as an alternate site instead of St. Louis, and the committee seemed to be in agreement.

Mills also suggested that in order to make the face-to-face meeting worthwhile, contacts with IRS personnel who deal with assisting ESL individuals might be beneficial as well as the committee works on their various recommendations, various guests from IRS and LITC are possibilities. Personnel from the Homeland Security are another possibility.

Analyst De Jesus explained that she would need to work on a cost projection for New York and discuss with TAP Program Manager Ferree who is expected to return on February 23rd. This would then need to be approved by the TAP Director and shared with the committee to obtain their consensus by no later than the next meeting since she planned on working on coordinating this face-to-face meeting during the month of March 2004. **Action for Inez- cost projection for face-to-face in New York and agenda item for the MLI's March 19, 2004 teleconference meeting.**

Chair suggested that communications between the committee may be made by emails.

Mills also suggested that agendas for the face-to-face meeting be worked on as soon as we know that the location will be changed.

Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem mentioned to everyone that Jim Grimaldi, Area 1 Chair, who is in New York, could be a guest as well since he is addressing similar topics as this committee is. Elizabeth also suggested that Inez should check that there is no conflict with the upcoming political conventions that will be held in New York or for that matter any big event that might be a barrier to meeting in New York.



**Confirm next meeting: March 19, 2004 @ 1:00 PM EST**

Before adjourning the meeting Chair Twomley confirmed the date and time of the next teleconference meeting and briefly reviewed what was discussed and tabled till the next meeting.



## Multi-Lingual Issue Committee Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2004  
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST  
Teleconference

### Roll Call & Confirmation of Quorum \*(4)

TAP Program Analyst Inez E. De Jesus took the roll call, and quorum was met;

Quorum = 4 and there were 5 members present and the Designated Federal Official (DFO).

### Panel Members Present

- Linda Bader, Chesterfield, MO
- Nancy L. Ferree, Designated Federal Official (DFO)
- Delford Jones, Griffith, IN
- Sharon Lassar, Miami, FL
- Joseph Meissner, Cleveland, OH
- Bruce Twomley, Juneau, AK, Chair

### Panel Members- Not Present

- Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem, Winchester, MA, Vice-Chair
- Sharon Stetz, Salt Lake City, UT

### MLI Program Owner(s)

- Toni M. Cross

### TAP Staff

- Inez E. De Jesus (Program Analyst/Scribe)

### Welcome/Announcements/Review Agenda

Chair Bruce Twomley opened meeting by welcoming everyone and by inquiring if there were any objections to the agenda, and there were none.

Chair had no new announcements for this month.

Brief discussion was held concerning the reporter from the Capitol News who had expressed an interest in participating on this call, but at the last minute cancelled. Analyst shared that the reporter would be contacting the Program Owner, Chair, or Designated Federal Official by phone.

Panel member Joe Meissner inquired if the other committee members had received his email dated January 15, 2004, entitled ESL and Low Income Taxpayers/Educating ESL Students and Taxpayers about IRS, Taxpayer Rights, and Taxpayer Duties. Chair Twomley shared that he will provide his input directly to Meissner after the call. Other members expressed their support. For the record, this document details the experiences of the Friendship Foundation of American-Vietnamese organization in Cleveland, Ohio, which assists people immigrating from Indochina, and Viet Nam (English as a Second Language/ESL) individuals. The recommendations/suggestions shared on this document, based on their experiences are as follows:



- Tax subjects should be included in the ESL curriculum.
- The tax information needed should correspond to the financial situation of the individual.
- The translation of tax forms into various languages may not be that useful; perhaps it would be better to explain tax programs such as EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) to ESL or LEP (Limited English Proficient) individuals.
- Education about taxes and financial issues were incorporated into the ESL classes.
- The ESL instruction should include not only taxes, but also instruction on general financial matters.

### **Review/Approve Meeting Minutes of December 19, 2003**

Minutes were approved.

### **Review all Action Items from Previous Meeting**

Not discussed.

### **Status Report on Elevated Recommendation: Curriculum Proposal on Basic Tax Responsibilities**

Panel member Linda Bader shared that the subcommittee (Bader, Brodbine-Ghoniem, Meissner, Stetz and Ferree) met via teleconference since the last MLI teleconference meeting as discussed.

The subcommittee agreed that since the recommendation on the development and promotion of a tax education curriculum that can be implemented in adult ESL programs across the nation had already been covered and elevated to the Program Owner, (in the former Chair's Report of Activities and Recommendations from October 2002 September 2003), what was needed now was feedback from the Program Owner. **Action item: Program Owner Toni Cross agreed and promised to provide the committee with a status report on the recommendations previously elevated.**

DFO Ferree stated that the recommendations were not originally elevated to the Program Owner in the recommended format; however, they were elevated later in a separate document with a cover memo. Members went over the TAP MLI Report of Activities and Recommendations from October 2002-September 2003 prepared by then chair, Sharon Lassar.

**Recommendation #1:** The IRS should train more VITA volunteers in their native languages.

**Recommendation #2:** The IRS should work with TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) programs to insure participants receive basic tax education.

**\*Recommendation #3:** We recommend the IRS reach out to notarios and provide training workshops in their native languages. Notarios may be licensed as notary publics in the communities they serve. The local government should be able to provide a mailing list of license holders.

**Recommendation #4:** We recommend that the IRS provide a mechanism by which the unofficial documents and pamphlets prepared by LITC can be freely shared by all communities and organizations that serve LEP taxpayers. For example, the Director of the LITC program could establish a web site for this purpose.

**Recommendation #5:** The IRS and ESL educators should collaborate on the development and promotion of a tax education curriculum that can be implemented in adult ESL programs across the nation. **This is the recommendation that relates to the project Linda Bader is currently working on.**

\*All agreed that with the exception of #3, the Program Owner in her status report to this committee will address the other 4 recommendations.



\*Sharon Lassar reminded everyone that at one point it was discussed that each member would do something in their areas regarding notarios and Nancy Ferree shared that this is a term more familiar in the latino communities. It was also discussed that perhaps it is best to stay away from this since it deals with financial matters.

There was further discussion on various related topics:

Linda Bader will continue to work on the Proposal to Work with LITC's and ESL's. Bader mentioned that it would take money for the teachers to prepare curriculum.

Possible proposal to the organization would be to use the Bentley Model, and Toni Cross suggested that an outline be created. Primarily, make sure it makes sense and that it is designed by an entity within the IRS. Bader inquired if anyone had additional information on the Bentley model, and was informed that the only available information is the 6-page document she shared with the committee on December 5, 2003, which she had received from Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem.

Meissner referenced the 5 LITC recommendations previously noted where there is reference to FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) whereby ESL individuals are taught basic information, e.g. how to open a checking account.

Toni Cross emphasized the need to stay focus on taxpayers learning about their tax responsibilities.

Nancy Ferree reminded everyone that the IRS already has on their website an interactive program that helps students understand the U.S. Tax System (Understanding Taxes). This is very basic and it is addressed to High School students. This is a very important component for the committee to partner with the existing structure(s) that are already in existence.

Delford Jones suggested that whatever the committee decides to do, to just keep it small and simple. He has learned that you can lose people if you overload them with information and especially if there is a language issue.

Joe Meissner agreed that the important factor is to just give them the information they need to know.

Toni Cross summarized it all by stating that the IRS MLI Project Office's main objective is to teach LEP's/ESL's their tax responsibilities and obligations.

**Action: Bader will proceed with drafting a proposal on Basic Tax Responsibilities and will share with everyone. It was suggested that it be prepared in outline form.**

Toni Cross stated that the ESL will decide if and how they will incorporate it. She emphasized that it can get confusing if discussion is not related to taxes.

#### **Follow-up on LITC Contacts**

Toni Cross emphasized the importance of this committee to partner with the Low Income Tax Clinics (LITCs), and she ensured the committee that she can facilitate a partnership between this committee and the LITC's.

Nancy Ferree reminded the committee to keep track of what is currently being done by this committee in regards to ESL individuals.



Toni Cross reminded the committee of the LITC survey shared during last month's meeting, which indicates that not all LITC's have ESL's. Possible recommendation can be for the IRS to Partner with LITC's.

**Action item: DFO Ferree will contact the LITC Director, Randy Swartz or his assistant, Susan Gilbert, to obtain information on which LITC's service ESL individuals.**

Next steps planned: Once Ferree shares information she receives from the LITC Director, then a recommendation will be elevated through the Program Owner to the LITC.

Ferree referenced TIGTA Report, August 2003, Reference # 2003-40-163, Limited English Proficient Taxpayers Need Improved Written Products to Help Them Understand and Comply with Tax Laws.

**Background:** Lassar is recommending (and the committee and Program Owner agreed) for this committee to urge IRS to take advantage of the new Financial Literacy and Education Commission that is going to be chaired by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Education will be a member as well.

**Action item: Sharon Lassar will send template to Nancy Ferree, in order that a letter be drafted from the TAP MLI committee to the IRS Commissioner, suggesting that he work with the higher ups within the Department of Education in recommending that taxes are included in all curriculums within the Department of Education, ESL classes, and any other classes that deal with civic responsibilities.**

#### **Guidance from the Program Owner**

Program Owner Toni Cross stated that she was in support of the committees' discussions and plans during this call, and that she will attempt to provide the committee with a status report on the recommendations previously elevated to the IRS.

#### **Language Block Information**

Since Sharon Stetz was not available on this call, this topic will be carried over to next month's agenda, and in the interim analyst promised to send the link to all where there is detailed information on this subject matter. **Action item for Inez.**

#### **News from the Staff**

Nancy Ferree reminded everyone that during the week of January 26-30, 2004, the TAP Managers and Analysts will be in Washington, D.C., attending TAP Training Conference; TAP Secretary Jenny Reyes will be the only staff member available in the Florida TAP Office.

#### **Public Participation/Input**

None

#### **Closing Assessment**

Delford Jones thanked the staff on recent information he received in the mail from the Children's Services Council of Broward County and analyst shared that this information was the result of Sharon Lassar's recent outreach efforts.

Chair Twomley inquired about the recent Press Release from the IRS regarding the restructuring and Ferree promised to share information with him offline.

Chair Twomley adjourned meeting timely.

Confirm next meeting: February 20, 2004 at 1:00 PM EST