Director’s Corner

Welcome to this issue of *MEI News*, a *quarterly* newsletter of the Maryland English Institute (MEI) at the University of Maryland.

Every semester we have the *privilege* and pleasure at MEI of bringing together an extraordinary group of students, teachers, and scholars from around the world. MEI is now 33 years old, and we are more excited than ever about our future. As we continue to grow in numbers, diversity, and expertise, we remain *dedicated* to greater intercultural understanding and to English language learning and practice at the very highest levels in the most supportive environments.

We invite current MEI students and teachers as well as *alumni* and friends to share and participate in our expanding community. Send your contributions and latest news to mei-news@umd.edu.

We send our best wishes to all the English language learners here at MEI and around the world.

Dr. Elizabeth Driver, Director

The *blue bolded vocabulary words* throughout the newsletter go with the vocabulary crossword puzzle on page six. Test your knowledge of these words! Print the puzzle and complete it. Current MEI students, be the first to bring a correctly completed puzzle to Ms. Melanie in Cole 3111 to win a Starbucks’ gift card. Good luck! [Answers will be posted in the next newsletter].

Visit us at http://mei.umd.edu or on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/meiusa
WHAT’S UP AT MEI

- March 17 - 28: No class (Spring Break)
- March 24 - 28: No class; TOEFL / IELTS classes held March 24 - 28
- April 9: MEI All-Institute Field Trip to the Newseum
- April 29 - May 2: Final Exams and Achievement Tests (IEP)
- May 6: Final conferences and Final Ceremony (IEP)
- June 10: Summer Session and Final Ceremony (IEP)
- April 29 - May 2: Final Field Trip to the Newseum
- March 24 - 28: No class; (Spring Break)
- March 17 - 28: No class; TOEFL / IELTS classes held March 24 - 28
- April 9: MEI All-Institute Field Trip to the Newseum
- April 29 - May 2: Final Exams and Achievement Tests (IEP)
- May 6: Final conferences and Final Ceremony (IEP)
- June 10: Summer Session and Final Ceremony (IEP)
- September 2: Fall Semester begins

Global Communities | http://gcsa-umd.tumblr.com
“The Global Communities Student Association promotes cultural values as well as understanding and cooperation between cultures through social and academic activities and events.”

Project Hello Stranger | http://www.projecthellosstranger.com
“Project Hello Stranger unites students at colleges and universities to develop a happier and friendlier campus by breaking down the social barriers that inhibit us from interacting with others.”

Terps Boxing | http://www.terpsboxing.com
“The Terps Boxing Club is a sports-oriented club. They teach new members all of the boxing basics. The members can practice every Tuesday from 9-11 p.m. and Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8-10 p.m. in the School of Public Health (SPH). They do not need any equipment, because the club provides things like gloves, mitts, and punching bags. Anyone who wants to learn boxing can join this club. If you decide to join the club, you have to register at: http://crs.umd.edu/a/programs/sport_clubs_3/index.asp, and give them a payment of $25 annual dues. I enjoyed learning about the Terps Boxing Club, and I am considering signing up.”
-Sunwha Oh, South Korea

Habitat for Humanity | http://www.umdhabitat.org
“To fund and build simple, decent affordable housing for low income families. To involve individual students as well as student organizations and classes in working toward this common goal. To educate the University of Maryland community about the importance of eliminating poverty housing worldwide.”

Hear the Turtle | https://www.facebook.com/groups/heartheturtle/
“The need to speak and present yourself confidently follows you everywhere, from job interviews, to class presentations, to networking events and parties. Hear the Turtle is a UMD chapter of Toastmasters International, an organization with 280,000 members in 116 countries, dedicated to developing members’ communication and leadership skills.”

Engineers Without Borders | http://ewb.umd.edu
“The mission of “EWB” is to partner with disadvantaged communities to improve their quality of life through implementation of environmentally and economically sustainable engineering projects, while developing internationally responsible engineering students.”

Rooftop Community Garden | https://orgsync.com/64884/chapter
“The Rooftop Community Garden embodies and inspires urban sustainability through hands on urban agriculture and food justice education. We seek to explore where our food comes and how to grow, preserve, prepare, and eat food in a way that is culturally appropriate and regenerative to our bioregion.”

Sign Language Club | https://orgsync.com/64884/chapter
“There was a fair exhibiting campus clubs during the fall semester. We went there and we wandered around to have an idea about the clubs. While I was wandering through the fair, a club attracted me. This club is called the University of Maryland Sign Language Club. They are going to teach us how to communicate with deaf people. This means they will teach us the basics of sign language. I really liked the idea of the club and how they think. They are trying to help all kinds of people communicate with each other, even people who cannot speak. I admire these students for their respect for deaf people; they are making deaf people’s lives easier. Actually, I didn’t have a chance to sign up for this amazing club, but you can find more information about them on their Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/119356591520711/?fref=ts. I hope that I can sign up now, because this would really be a new adventure for me, and I’m sure that I would like it.”
-Mohammed Khayyat, Saudi Arabia

There is no better way to get involved with the greater campus community, make friends outside of MEI, and practice your English in natural situations than by joining a student club at UMD. Check out some of the clubs featured on these pages, or visit http://orgsync.umd.edu/browse_student_organizations for more information.
Every issue, we will look at a specific topic in English grammar. In this issue, we look more closely at the use of the present perfect. If you have a question you would like us to address in a future column, send it to ask-mei@umd.edu.

Have you ever sent an email to the wrong person?
Yes, I have. And it was embarrassing!

What happened?
I wrote an email to my girlfriend, but I accidentally sent it to my mother.

Ouch!
Yeah, I’ll never do that again.

1. Use the present perfect + ever to ask questions about experiences in someone’s life:

Question: Have you ever sent an email to the wrong person?
Possible Answers: Yes, I have. OR No, I haven’t.

Using the correct word order is very important:
Have/Has + subject + ever + past participle of main verb + complement of main verb

In the example above, the subject is “you,” the main verb is “send” with past participle “sent,” and the complement is “an email to the wrong person.” (The pattern is, “send something to someone”).

More examples:
Q: Have you ever thought about starting your own business?
A: Yes, I have. I want to open a restaurant.

Q: Has your brother ever been to Japan?
A: No, he hasn’t.

NOTE “Ever” is only used in the question, not in the answer.

2. Use the present perfect + never to talk about things you have NOT done at any time in your life:

I’ve never been to Australia.
He has never heard of Britney Spears.
Jia has never been to the ocean.
They’ve never told a lie. I know we can trust them.

Again, the word order is very important: “never” goes between the helping verb (have/has) and the past participle.

REMEMBER
• present perfect + ever is used in questions
• present perfect + never is used in statements
My poem
I am from Saudi Arabia
A place that is known for its abundant oil
As a young girl, I wanted everything
And as I grow up, I want nothing but myself
Myself is a mystery that I wish to know
I have tried many paths, but I could not do so
Myself, please let me know you more
So I can help us to reach what we are looking for
No matter how long it might take
I believe I will know you and I will make the right choice
My teachers, and my friends will help me to hear my inner voice.
-Sarah Binsalman

Q&A with MEI’s newest faculty member, Mr. Daniel Ball
Q: Where were you before you joined us here at MEI last fall?
A: I was living in the Dallas, Texas area, teaching English at the University of North Texas.

Q: Have you taught English overseas?
A: Yes, I taught English in an academic high school for two years in Sendai, Japan.

Q: Can you speak Japanese?
A: Yes, I’ve studied both Japanese and French.

Q: Great! What advice do you have for MEI students about how to improve their English?
A: You have to make friends with and spend most of your time with people who don’t speak your native language.

Q: When you’re not busy teaching English, what do you enjoy doing?
A: I enjoy woodworking, which is what you can see me doing in the picture.

Where I come from...
A big country in south America
Its name is Brazil
You may think soccer and samba!
Or going to a beach to chill
But like any other place out there
Not everything is always cool...
On the streets it’s warfare
And kids are out of school
The economy is growing fast
And they want the world to see
However they always forget
To show what only I can see
The country is awesome, if you are rich
Try being born in a poor family:
High School?
Most people will never reach
The best universities might be free
But the inside of them
Only rich boys get to be
Inequality, homelessness, and starvation...
But hey, there is a world cup coming!
Forget the bad things, we are the soccer nation!
-Felipe Pereira

**TEST YOURSELF ANSWERS**
*Can you spot the errors in these sentences? (Questions on Page 5)*

1. **Has** your sister ever been to Italy?
2. **Have** never seen that movie never.
3. **Has** your father ever heard of Michael Jackson ever?
4. **No**, he has never even eaten pizza.
5. I’m surprised he has never eaten pizza.
6. Have you ever felt fallen asleep in class?
7. **Have** they ever gone to Japan?

4. the activity or skill of making things from wood.
5. the tools, machines, clothes, etc. that you need to do a particular job or activity.
6. encourages and helps something to develop or increase.
7. prevent someone from doing something.
8. method or way of doing something.
9. the ability to continue without causing damage to the environment.

**VOCABULARY CROSSWORD**

*Use the clues below to complete the puzzle. The answers in the puzzle are the blue, bolded vocabulary words found throughout the newsletter.*

Across
1. the activity or skill of making things from wood.
2. the tools, machines, clothes, etc. that you need to do a particular job or activity.
3. encourages and helps something to develop or increase.
4. suitable, adequate, or acceptable.
5. a graduate or former student of a school.
6. showing something in a public place so that people can go to see it.
7. occurring four times a year.
8. committed.
9. a section of a newspaper or magazine regularly devoted to a particular subject.
10. method or way of doing something.
11. achieving or producing a significant amount or result; valuable and profitable.
12. the process of putting a decision or plan into action.
13. a graduate or former student of a school.
14. something regarded as a rare opportunity and an honor.
15. interacting with people to exchange information, develop contacts, and improve your career.
16. the tools, machines, clothes, etc. that you need to do a particular job or activity.
17. something regarded as a rare opportunity and an honor.

Down
1. has your sister ever been to Italy?
2. have never seen that movie never.
3. Has your father ever heard of Michael Jackson ever?
4. No, he has never even eaten pizza.
5. I’m surprised he has never eaten pizza.
6. Have you ever felt fallen asleep in class?
7. Have they ever gone to Japan?

**STUDENT POETRY**

Send your poetry to mei-news@umd.edu for a chance to be published in future issues of the newsletter.

-MEI alumni Christiano Francois (Haiti, 2013) recently signed on to play soccer for MLS team DC United. Chris played for the University of Maryland while a student at MEI and we look forward to watching him play professional soccer. Congratulations, Chris!