Peter Gu is an educator, and more specifically, an ESL instructor at CMP since 1994. He is the longest tenured staff at CMP and with generations of students achieving language proficiency as their first step toward gainful employment while learning to exercise their civic responsibilities.

Well-read, and with a sense of humor, Peter always speaks softly but commands attention and respect in his classroom. He deftly teaches multi-level ESL classes with students ranging from those with very limited English to those who are advanced speakers of English. He attracts and retains over 40 students in the traditional classroom setting and expanded his class size to more than 70 students when we moved the classes online during the pandemic.

His adult students would voluntarily set up the classroom or help with the online login so he can teach without distractions. Peter is able to mobilize his students like no others. Whether it is participating in the citywide annual celebration of achievements for adult learners or rallying for adult literacy funding at the City Hall steps or in the Capitol building in Albany, we can count on the full participation of his students.

While teaching essential language skills, Peter utilizes articles on current affairs found on the free AM New York newspaper, discusses poems he saw in the subway, and imparts a wide range of information to his new immigrant students day in and day out. He helps write resumes for those who are looking for jobs. He assists those who apply for financial relief during the pandemic. He chats with those who may need a tip or two on life in the City. Like many of CMP’s staff, Peter quietly takes on the roles of a friend, a mentor, and a counselor.

Whether at the podium or in his cubicle, Peter quietly addresses the needs and concerns of our immigrant language learners throughout his long tenure at CMP, for the past 28 years! With an average tenure at 10.5 years, staff has been the backbone and the biggest asset of CMP. And Peter is undoubtedly the epitome of all.