



# LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE

A 2015 Census report found that at least 350 languages are spoken at homes across America. Recent studies point to a range of unexpected cognitive and life benefits for those who speak a second language. For instance, a recent study out of the University of Chicago indicates a person makes better financial decisions when utilizing another language.

## KEY FACTS

- Harvard scientists found that on average a second language earned a worker a 2% yearly salary increase.
- Regardless of the benefits, college language enrollments fell 15% from Fall 2009 to Fall 2016, according to the Modern Language Association.

Fall Language Enrollments at U.S. Colleges


## THE VALUE OF LEARNING A LANGUAGE ON ONE'S HEALTH

Scientific studies indicate significant health benefits associated with learning a second language, as bilingualism offsets certain types of dementia by 4 to 6 years, regardless of age, occupation, sex, rural/urban residence, or even education level. Other studies found that being bilingual assisted with cognitive recovery following a stroke.

## INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

The National Security Education Program, Center for Applied Linguistics, and Georgetown University have collaborated on the **English for Heritage Language Speakers** program. This program recognizes the need for foreign language proficiency across the federal government, and it supports participants in the program with a full scholarship and living expenses as they attend an eight-month-long course at Georgetown University to prepare them for a job in the federal government.

The program seeks a diverse base of native speakers that includes Arabic, Korean, Persian Farsi, Turkish, and other "critical need" languages. Upon graduation, these bilingual workers are in a prime position to join the federal workforce and strengthen the government with their expert language capabilities.