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TITLE            "What's the Buzz?" Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and
                 Literacy Education Professional Development
                 Newsletter. Final Report.
INSTITUTION      Adult Education Linkage Services, Troy, PA.
SPONS AGENCY     Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg.
                 Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.
PUB DATE         95
CONTRACT         099-5010
NOTE             159p.
PUB TYPE         Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Collected Works -
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JOURNAL CIT      What's the Buzz? v14 n1-10 Sep 1994-Jun 1995

EDRS PRICE       MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS      *Adult Basic Education; Adult Educators; Adult
                 Learning; Adult Literacy; Adult Students; Computer
                 Assisted Instruction; Educational Quality; Education
                 Work Relationship; English (Second Language); High
                 School Equivalency Programs; Homeless People; Limited
                 English Speaking; *Literacy Education; Multicultural
                 Education; *Newsletters; Professional Development;
                 School Community Relationship; *Special Needs
                 Students; Student Characteristics; Student
                 Recruitment; *Workplace Literacy
IDENTIFIERS      353 Project

ABSTRACT
         The main objective of the "What's the Buzz?"
newsletter project was to meet the professional development needs of
adult basic and literacy educators in Pennsylvania, including
teachers, tutors, counselors, and administrators. The project
prepared and disseminated monthly, 10 issues of a 12-14 page
newsletter. It was mailed to more than 4,200 adult educators in
Pennsylvania and over 300 in other states. The newsletters included
information from a variety of sources, including the following:
research literature, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Adult Basic and
Literacy Education, professional organizations, conferences and
workshops, and practitioners in the field of adult basic and literacy
education. Among the topics covered in the newsletters were the
following: characteristics of adult learners; suggestions for working
with special needs students; student recruitment; educational
quality; integration of human services; workplace literacy;
marketable skills; special learning needs; assisting the limited
English proficient nonreader; English as a Second Language;
instructional strategies and assessment; multicultural adult
education; adult literacy for the homeless; computer-assisted
instruction; literacy testing; and community linkages. (YLB)

# FINAL REPORT

"What's the Buzz?"
Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education
Professional Development Newsletter

Submitted by:

Adult Education Linkage Services
Box 214, Troy, PA 16947
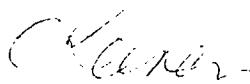
David W. Fluke, Project Director

Project # 099-5010
1994-1995

**BEST COPY AVAILABLE**

TITLE PAGE

"What's The Buzz: Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education

Professional Development Newsletter."

David W. Fluke, project director and editor. Adult Education Linkage
Services, Box 214, Troy, PA 16947. (717) 596-3474

1994-95

Amount of Grant: $91,042

Project #: 099-5010

Adult Education Linkage Services is a community-based, non-profit
organization which provides technical services and support to adult
education programs.

Adult Education Linkage Services is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Submitted: August 20, 1995

## ABSTRACT PAGE

Title: "What's the Buzz?"--Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter.

Project No.: 099-5010    Funding: $91, 042

Project Director: David W. Fluke    Phone No. (717) 596-3474

Contact Person: David W. Fluke    Phone No. (717) 596-3474

Purpos̲  This project was designed to provide information which was relevant and informative to adult basic and literacy education practitioners in Pennsylvania.

Procedures: The project prepared and disseminated a 12-14 page newsletter for 10 months (September, 1994 through June, 1995). The newsletter included information from a variety of sources including research literature, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, professional organizations, conferences and workshops and practitioners in the field of adult basic and literacy education. The newsletter was mailed to 4,200 + adult educators in Pennsylvania and 300+ in other states.

Summary of Findings: The adult education newsletter is a viable vehicle for the dissemination of professional development oriented information. In terms of numbers of adult educators reached and cost effectiveness it exceeds any other other dissemination tool.

Comments: This newsletter was extremely effective in disseminating important professional development information to large numbers of adult educators in Pennsylvania.

Products: 10 issues of a 14 page newsletter.

Descriptors:

# CONTENTS

Addenda

Evaluation tabulation by Sherry Spencer.

Reader Survey results.

## Introduction

With the increased emphasis upon Staff Development in Adult Basic and Literacy Education has come a parallel need to disseminate information relevant to professional development in adult education to as broad an audience as possible.

As the numbers of programs and adult educators has grown throughout the state so has the remoteness which many of these counselors, instructors, tutors and administators feel sets them apart from their colleagues in other programs.

The need to communicate information and establish a networking tool for adult educators in Pennsylvania has produced our newsletter and we are proud to say that it is regarded very highly by our readers in Pennsylvania as well as adult educators in other states.

"What's the Buzz?" has been produced and disseminated for 14 years. The year's activities 1994-95 of which this report is a result saw us mailing the newsletter to more than 4,200 Pennsylvania adult educators- a 1,000% increase over the number of our readers when we began the newsletter.

The newsletter is produced and edited by David W. Fluke, project director and editor and Juliet B. Fluke, associate editor.

Contents of the newsletter are designed to meet the professional development needs of adult basic and literacy educators in Pennsylvania including teachers, tutors, counselors and administators. Copies of all issues of "What's the Buzz?" are available on loan from the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, 12th floor, 333 Markeet Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333 or the state adult literacy resource center at the same address (11th floor).

Statement of the Problem: The need for a statewide communication tool which will disseminate relevant information on a regular basis to adult basic and literacy educators in Penns ania.

 Goals and Objectives

1. To prepare a 12-14 page general newsletter containing information relevant and pertinent to adult basic and literacy education practitioners in Pennsylvania.

2. To include as newsletter content information and articles from the staff of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, adult basic and literacy education programs and program personnel throughout the state, statewide and regional conferences and workshops, the U.S. Division of Adult Education and Literacy, professional organizations such as the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education and the Commission for Adult Basic Education, research sources such as ERIC, AdvancE and other adult basic and literacy education clearinghouses, other adult basic and literacy education newsletters and whichever other sources in the field of adult basic and literacy education that generate news and information of importance to our readers.

3. To prepare the newsletter in a format which encourages recipients to read the articles contained in the newsletter using the latest available printing technology including a variety of fonts and typestyles, two-color printing, quote pull-outs, larger photographs, clip-art, etc.

4. To identify one area of professional concern to adult educators in Pennsylvania for each month's issue and address at least 75% of the pages in that issue to the monthly "theme".

5. To identify six experienced adult educators throughout the state with expertise in their profession and in newsletter production and identify these persons as an "Advisory Committee" to meet periodically and make recommendations to the editor for improvement of the newsletter.

6. To maintain a comprehensive up-to-date mailing list of as many adult basic and literacy educators (program directors, tutors, teachers, volunteers, counselors, etc.) in Pennsylvania as can be identified, such mailing list to be free of duplication.

7. To carry on such activities as are appropriate to adding new names of adult educators to the mailing list, such activities to include soliciting names at fall workshops and other professional events.

8. To disseminate the newsletter by mail to between 3,300 and 3,800 adult educators in Pennsylvania for the months September through June with mailing to take place during the first week of each month

Procedures:Newsgathering and research for the newsletter are ongoing processes which we deal with throughout the year. Content is designed to keep our readers informed as to current happenings and developments in adult education as well as providing relevant information which they can use to improve the quality of their adult education services and meet the requirements of their students, communities and state and federal adult education regulations.

Editing the newsletter demands a great deal of time in writing, re-writing and working with the information and materials so it fits the mold of a newsletter for adult educators. A not insignificant consideration in this regard is to produce information that is read in a format that attracts adult educators.

The final consideration is dissemination of the newsletter. As we have developed an extensive mailing list from 400 when we began to now more than 4,200 adult educators, logistical problems connnected with printing and mailing have arisen. We have established a mailing deadline of the 1st week of each month for the 10 months we publish and this requires careful monitoring of our activities and time as well as those of our printer.

Each of our goals and objectives have been met and some exceeded. We prepared and distributed 10 copies of a 14-page newsletter to, eventually, more than 4,200 adult educators in Pennsylvania for the months of September, 1994 through June, 1995. The best witness, we feel, to the success of our format and information are the comments of our readers (see Appendix) and the 13% increase in readership over the year. Nearly all of these additional new readers were adult educators who had seen or heard of the newsletter and wrote us to have their names added to our mailing list.

Negative Results: Despite our positive feedback from our readers, our project has been decimated from the 1,400 pages produced in 1994-95 to 40 pages for 1995-96 (10 issues of 14 pages each to 5 issues of 8 pages each). Although we have been effective in meeting the needs of the adult educators in the field, we have been ineffective in convincing the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education that "What's the Buzz?" is the most cost effective, broad-based information dissemination vehicle for adult education information in Pennsylvania.

## Evaluation

In addition to our usual evaluation which consists of a mail-back postcard inserted in copies of our May issue and tabulated by a third-party (see Appendix) we conducted a survey of a representative sample of adult educators who read our publication. We also compile and tabulate comments received from readers throughout the year.

In the postcard evaluation:

> 85% say they read the Buzz every month.
>
> 97% say they read "all" or "some" of the Buzz
>
> 97% say the contents of the Buzz are useful
>
> 84% say The Buzz is an important part of their professional
>
> development as an adult educator.

## Comments Received from Postcard Evaluation

"The Buzz will keep you buzzing about what's happening in adult education."

"Keep up the good work."

"I have sent for <u>many</u> things I have read in 'Buzz,' this is a big help."

"The Buzz is an excellent newsletter which keeps us posted of issues and activities."

"Excellent magazine--thank you for delivering it to us."

"I mainly think of The Buzz as informing me about activities across the state and at PDE."

"Important--yes indeed!'

"I am a volunteer tutor and have found it useful."

"I thought the paper got better this year."

## Comments Received from Reader Survey

"I use this every month."

"You deserve a medal for all you've done and keep doing for this field."

"Just a note to say I'm sorry to hear about the cut to the Buzz. I remember very cledarly how I felt I had found an island in the adult education sea the first time I found a Buzz eleven years ago. it was truly a lifeline to me in my early years. Since then, the Buzz has been a constant and an important resource for all adult educators in the state."

"I am very disappointed to learn that funding has been cut for <u>The Buzz</u>. Your publication is filled with useful information which we use on a monthly basis."

"You provide so much clear and concrete information to teachers and tutors in the field!"

"Jt has been an excellent magazine, and I hate see this cut happen."

"It truly is what keeps us in touch with each other."

Addendum to Section 353 project application:

"What's the Buzz?"--Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and

Literacy Education Dissemination Newsletter

Original copies of the following memos, notes and letters have been included with the original copy of the proposal:

"Dave: Thanks for your great newsletter."-Jeff Woodyard.

"I must commend you on the fine job you're doing in disseminating information on adult education matters in Pennsylvania. "What's the Buzz?" is consistently the best newsletter of its type I've seen."-Mark A. Boone, Editorial Director, Adult Education Division, Contemporary Books, Inc.

"Everyone of us enjoys reading the Buzz and I know the instructors will ap.reciate having their own copy instead of sharing. Thanks for keeping us so well informed."-Gail G. Campbell, Supervisor, Adult Education Program, Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc.

"I save every copy of What's the Buzz?. You provide me with an important source of information on people and happenings across the state."-Pam Weinberg, adult education author, Pittsburgh.

"I'd like all of my staff to receive "Buzz".-comment from evaluation.

"Just received the first copy of Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Dissemination Newsletter. It's great and we thank you."-Eve Robins, National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center.

"Enjoyed your article on the Indicators Summer Institute. Good thoughts."-Ella Morin, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.

"The current issue of WHAT'S THE BUZZ is especially informative. Thanks again for continued good work in adult education in Pennsylvania."-Marlowe Froke; Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education Board member.

"Everyone at the agency enjoys reading THE Buzz. Thank you for doing such a great job of keeping us well informed."-Vicki Zeitner, VISTA Volunteer, Pittsburgh Literacy Initiative of Goodwill Industries.

"Please put me on your mailing list. I am anxious to hear from concerning your excellent publication."-Lauren B. Haag, Even Start Coordinator, Central IU, West Decatur.

"I very much look forward to continued receipt of your Newsletter and want to take this opportunity to thank you for your useful and informative publication. Keep up the good work."-Gail Spangenberg, Vice President and Operating Head of the Business Council for Effective Literacy, Inc.

"For a long while, I have been meaning to let you know how very helpful What's the Buzz? is to adult educators in small literacy programs. It can be very isolating working in a small program and month after month, year after year, What's the Buzz arrives in the mail with all of its accumulated wisdom just waiting to be accessed at a time convenient to us. I slip mine under the phone and read it when I am put on 'hold'. I appreciate your considerable efforts on behalf of Pennsylvania literacy."-Meliza Jackson, Coordinator, Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic Project Literacy.

"What's the Buzz?' is distributed without charge to every adult educator in Pennsylvania who can be identified. At present this includes more than 4,200 professionals.

In addition, copies are distributed to each of the regional staff development centers and each of the adult literacy resource centers.

## Recommendations

Although it is in our best interests to make these recommendations, we feel they must be noted. From all comments of the adult educators throughout Pennsylvania who read our publication it is effective and informative. There is no other vehicle, including the state literacy resource centers, the regional staff development centers and the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education all combined that disseminates so much information to as many adult educators throughout Pennsylvania. In 1994-95 this added up to a total of 588,000 pages of materials for adult educators' professional development.

We feel that to decimate this excellent newsletter to the extent recommended by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education is to ignore the needs of the persons in the field the Bureau is supposed to meet.

If this was solely our opinion a case would be made for our vested interest; however, our readers are the very professionals that should be served and whose comments are the best case for continuing an expanded Buzz.

ADDENDA

# BRADFORD-WYOMING COUNTY LITERACY PROGRAM

*Each One Teach One*

To:      Dave Fluke, Editor
         What's the Buzz

From:    Sherry Spencer

Date:    July 5, 1995

RE:      What's the Buzz evaluation


41 postcards received


A.   I read The Buzz

     every month:          33
     usually:               4
     sometimes:             2
     never:

B.   I read  (of The Buzz)

     all:                  14
     some:                 23
     hardly any:            1

C.   I find the contents of The Buzz

     useful:               23
     sometimes useful:     15
     not very useful:       1

D.   The  "Spotlight" Section is informative

     always:                9
     usually:              19
     sometimes:             8
     never:

E:   The Buzz is an  (part of my professional development as
     an adult educator)

     important:            32
     not important:         6

Comments:

The Buzz will keep you buzzing about what's happening in adult education.

Keep up the good work.

I'm a librarian not directly involved with literacy but interested.

I have sent for <u>many</u> things I have read in "Buzz," this is a big help.

The Buzz is an excellent newsletter which keeps us posted of issues & activities!

It is not extremely important in my role as a public relations/development director for adult literacy.

I am not in literacy education.

At times, layout makes it very difficult to read- pages are "too busy"- more white space.

Excellent magazine- thank you for delivering it to us.

I mainly think of The Buzz as informing me about activities accross the state and at PDE.

Important- yes indeed!

More emphasis should be placed on how the literacy groups can come together to affect federal policies.
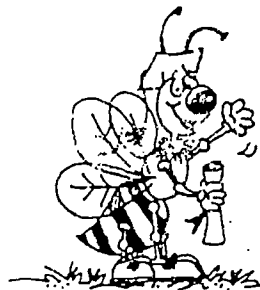
I am a volunteer tutor and have found it useful.

I thought the paper got better this year.

The articles on "Action Research" sound like educational jargon and research with mirrors. Grants of up to $300 are laughable. Bring back the Buzz of olde- acerbic insights, educational/political support for the troops.

## READER SURVEY

When we were told to limit our 1995-96 publication of "What's the Buzz?" to 5 issues of 8 pages each (rather than the 10 issues of 14 pages as in 1994-95) we felt it necessary to get some feedback from our readers which would give us some guidance as to the features, types of articles, information, etc. they found most valuable. In this way we could give priority in the 40 pages throughout the year to those areas of information most of interest to adult educators in Pennsylvania.

We contacted 40 adult educators throughout the state including a representative sample of professionals from large programs, small programs, urban, suburban and rural programs, ESL, GED, ABE, Literacy programs, etc. We also included each of the nine Regional Staff Development Center Coordinators and a member of the ABLE Bureau staff.

The tabulation below shows the results of the survey from which we received 21 (53%) return.

We structured the survey to center around the March and April issues of 1995. These issues were, in our opinion, typical of the content and features of the newsletter. We provided copies of each issue along with the survey and asked respondents to consult the issues as they made their responses and to be frank about what they felt was worthwhile and what was not.

| NEWS ABOUT EVENTS: | Percentage | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Forget it! | Suitable | Excellent |
| * The ABLE Bureau Administrative Workshops | 33 | 56 | 1 |
| * PDE Update at the Midwinter | 29 | 48 | 24 |
| * The 30th Midwinter Conference | 19 | 48 | 33 |
| * Awards at the Midwinter | 14 | 38 | 48 |
| * Legislative news from PAACE | 10 | 52 | 29 |
| **ARTICLES ABOUT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOPICS:** | | | |
| * Multicultural Adult Education | 10 | 67 | 24 |
| * Tutor-training | 14 | 67 | 14 |
| * Adult Education for the Homeless | 19 | 52 | 29 |
| * Articles about ABLE Programs | 5 | 71 | 24 |
| * Introduction to Evaluation (program, learners) | 14 | 57 | 29 |
| * Book Reviews | 38 | 38 | 24 |
| * Assessment and Lesson Planning | 10 | 48 | 43 |
| * Bibliography (on Instructional Strategies) | 33 | 29 | 38 |
| **MONTHLY FEATURES:** | | | |
| * Technology | 14 | 50 | 33 |
| * Newsletter Roundup | 29 | 53 | 38 |
| * People and Programs in PA ABLE | 19 | 29 | 52 |
| * It's a Date! | 10 | 43 | 50 |
| * From the Marketplace | 24 | 48 | 29 |
| * Letters from Readers | 14 | 57 | 28 |

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READER SURVEY
"WHAT's THE BUZZ?"

## Comments Relating to Page 1 Items

The Midwinter Conference: "A paragraph only; covered in the PAACE News."
"Important. How else will we disseminate in-
formation on our major state event?"
"Consult with Tana Reiff about leaving this topic
to the PAACE News."
"Only if new information."
"Short comment."

PDE State Update: "Only new information."
"A paragraph only; covered in the PAACE News."

The ABLE Bureau Administrative Workshops: "A paragraph only; covered in the
PAACE News."

The Spotlight Section: "Good, but not for 353's; leave to Focus and SLRC's."
"Duplicate Focus newsletters."
"Newsy articles seem most appropriate."
"Excellent."
"I have to say I read less of the Spotlights than
anything else."

Technology: "Need this to further use of Technology."
"Good because of continuity of series."

People and Programs in PA ABLE: "If directed to the Buzz."
"Keep People and Programs--that's what it's
all about!"

Newsletter Roundup: "I use this every month."
"Newsletter info very helpful resource to educators in
the field who may not have access to these publications."

Legislative News from PAACE: "Very important."

It's a Date!": "More a calendar; not list."
"Eliminate regional information."
"Sometimes redundant of what we have in Regional newsletters."

READER SURVEY--"What's the Buzz?"

## Comments Relating to topics on Page 2

Information about activities in the ABLE Bureau:

"If you can figure out what they're doing--by all means, write about it!"
"Vital Information."
"Quarterly, not every month."
"Limit to funding issues or major changes."
"If info goes out in another way, just a short list of info is needed."
"Not very necessary."
"Important to know."
"Useful but seek only actual information, much is 'propaganda' and is filler."
" Please: communicate to us policy changes that affect local programs. Don't bother to report regular, annual activities that show no change in policy."
"Short ones are OK. Most educators don't care all that much."
"Very important for educators in the field--especially teachers and tutors who are not likely to receive this info from any other source."
"Important."
"Need to know what they're doing."
"I think these articles are very important. It gives the Bureau a chance to update the state programs."
"Important."
"Generally information with enough gumption."

Short articles reviewing research reports on adult ed topics:

"If short (2 columns) very up to date until handbooks come out."
"Only if you can differentiate your role from MOSAIC and NCAL publications."
"Important, but can be sacrificed. Maybe a short blurb on where to find these articles in other vehicles."
"Very short--I don't think people use this info--they do it the way they do because that's the way they do it!"
"Yes! Keep these--how else will practitioners know what's out there and how to obtain copies of reports."
"I think these are some of the best. Have a good bibliography so those interested can look further."
"Yes, show us the relevance to everyday practice for our staff."
"Very useful. We need to know about new findings."
"Good idea; wish I took more time to read such articles."
"Short ones valuable--long ones I'm not sure."
"We need constant update."
"Spotlight occassionally."
"Especially if done by PA writers."

Reviews of Section 353 projects:

"No--these are just gifts to the favored few to help themselves. Not of much interest or use to anyone else."

"Yes--need this dissemination vehicle--although not for new projects since there are so few."

"Very informative in conjunction with feature/spotlight, but not if running parallel to FOCUS issues and only if by SLRC's or those directly interested."

"No. Focus does this."

"Very important to The Buzz."

"Maybe not necessary, if Sherry Royce reviews them in FOCUS--but do include lists of 353's and order numbers."

"Yes. These are helpful but with limited space they would be repeating what FOCUS does."

"Don't dupliate FOCUS newsletter and other publications."

"Very useful."

"Useful."

"Excellent."

"Need these."

"Limit features to several special demonstration projects, staff development projects and mini-grant projects per year."

"Helpful."

"Duplicates FOCUS."

"Some aren't that great and makes us wonder why we didn't get ours!"


Extensive articles reviewing research topics on adult ed topics:

"Too long."

"Necessary."

"Not interesting."

"Eliminate or condense to one page."

"Shorter articles with highlights."

"Not the place; send to Journal of Lifelong Learning."

"I guess this should be AdvancE"s job, and provider's responsibility."

"Just give me the reference and I will look it up. I would not be able to read extensive articles of this type."

"Most people don't read them."

"I'd rather see short ones--those interested can order the whole thing."

"No!--these can be referenced."

"No--you don't have the space. Whet your readers' appetite."

"No--referrals to source, with an abstract is sufficient. Let SLRC's and subject experts summarize where research is focus."

Information on activities at the Regional Staff Development Centers:

"Included on 'It's A Date!'"
"Not interested."
"Helpful."
"Eliminate--eac? RSDC has several Regional Areas which publish this regional specific information."
"What is needed should be relayed."
"Not needed (duplication of effort)."
"Helpful."
"--dubious.  These become 'brag sessions.'  The upcoming are of value and only those which are 'new'."
"Each center has its own newsletter.  So only share info that is needed."
"Brief as the Centers do a lot of this."
"Yes--but could devote less space to this if the Centers continue their monthly newsletters."
"Some."
"They tell us what they're doing with their own newsletters.  The Directors can share ideas with each other."
"Very important!"
"No--leave it within regions--Across regions is unnecessary."
"Glad to see elimination of date reports.  Useful if RSDC has state impact, not regional--remember your audience."

Information about materials at the two Adult Literacy Resource Centers:

"Brief bullets."
"Important but scale down amount of text."
"All I can say is--I don't care."
"Why?"
"Good to have this for teachers and tutors who may not get any other communications from Cheryl and Chris."
"Not necessary.  C. Kemp's articles were interesting."
"Share only what relates closely to topics of feature articles e.g. homeless resources at WPALRC (April, p. 8)."
"I think AdvancE should do this."
"I don't use that much from these."
"Excellent."
"If applicable, use it."
"Limit to an ongoing referral."
"Interesting."
"Good."
"Sometimes can get too long."

Information about "exemplary" adult ed programs in Pennsylvania:

"What's 'exemplary'?"
"Sometimes."
"Good."
"Keep."
"Whatever we can use as a model is helpful."
"Excellent."
" Yes, role models are helpful."
"Yes--very useful."
"One or two per issue would be good--April has 5 or 6."
"Again brief.  Lots of short arricles and info seems best."
"Yes...and how about invitations to visit.  There is not enough sharing of
 good practices.'
"Yes.  Important."
"Interesting."
"Very important."
"Brief--good for networking."
"Dave--skip this--it's already done in FOCUS--don't repeat."

Information about conferences and workshops:

"Remember that sponsors of conference does extensive coverage and has already
 reached target audience.  Your review should be cursory at most."
"Include dates, not reviews.'
"Very important!"
"Yes--brief."
"Yes, important!"
"State conference--yes--but no need for you to reiterate the RSDC monthly
 schedules--should be in their newsletters."
"Brief."
"This can largely be responsibility of the nine RSDC's."
"Absolutely needed."
"Yes as long as they're timely."
"Okay."
"Limit this."
"Keep in It's A Date!."
"Good info."
"Good."
"Yes."

Information about publications in adult education:

"Short items."
"Good."
"Helpful."
"Limit scope to condensed version."
"Needed but keep it short."
"Excellent."
"Not so important as other info."
"Very useful."
"Only if they relate to classroom teaching and administration."
"Very good."
"Very useful to busy practitioners who do not know what is out there!"
"Yes."
"Important if person is from PA.'
"If no other resource does it."
"Good if outstanding and cutting edge and available to the average reader."

## General Comments

"Dave, upcoming events, useful new findings, books, courses and opinion pieces should be the basic content of the reduced Buzz, in my view. AdvancE should probably do more to publicize. Finally, you deserve a medal for all you've done and keep doing for this field. Thank you, Dave.

"The important question is in what niche is 'What's the Buzz?'? What does it do that no other newsletter does. It's clear that Department updates/priorities are important. Research to practice: brief reviews/resources. Highlight great things happening in the state to help adult educators network."

'You have multiple audiences, but I think any focus should be on average teacher or tutor who depends on the Buzz for news and who might not read it elsewhere. It would be helpful to state your mission/purpose in early issue."

We asked survey respondents to comment on 'anything':

"Just a note to say I'm sorry to hear about the cut to the Buzz. I remember very clearly how I felt I had found an island in the adult education sea the first time I found a Buzz eleven years ago. It was truly a lifeline to me in my early years. Since then, the Buzz has been a constant and an important resource for all adult educators in the state."

"We'll look forward to the new, abbreviated Buzz as always."

"I am very disappointed to learn that funding has been cut for the Buzz. Your publication is filled with useful information which we use on a monthly basis. Our RSDC newsletters are limited in scope, and you prov: so much clear and concrete information to teachers and tutors in the field! Please let me know if I can do anything to support you."

"I enjoyed your theme newsletters. Most teachers I know rely on the Buzz. The Buzz is really an important tool as it serves the State and educators look forward to it. We are very glad you are still in business."

"Good luck with your 'budget' cut."

"It has been an excellent magazine, and I hate to see this happen. It truly is what keeps us in touch with each other. Have you thought about having readers pay?"

"I feel that the articles that are the most interesting and useful are exemplary 353 projects and articles written by practitioners on specific programs."

"Spotlight areas work well."

"I am most interested in what adult ed people are doing and saying. I am not interested in more research or lists of things at AdvancE. Tech articles that give useful info that can be passed on to tutors is greatly appreciated (March, p. 10)."

"I think the Buzz should highlight what PA is doing. This means in terms of staff development, conferences, the Bureau, exemplary programs, and highlighted activities. I love the People and Programs in PA ABLE section and It's a Date!."

**Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education**

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June 27, 1995

David Fluke
"What's the Buzz?"
Adult Education Linkage Services
PO Box 214
Troy PA 16947

Dear David:

In our most recent issue of "What's the Buzz?", there was a card that indicated that all out-of-state subscriptions would be cut and that it would be our last copy. Please say it isn't so and that we can continue to receive it!

"What's the Buzz?" helps us identify current literature in the field and we frequently order materials mentioned in it for possible inclusion in the database. Also, we do contribute to the newsletter--note a front page article in the June 1995 issue.

Again, please keep us on your mailing list. We would greatly appreciate it!

Thanks much.

Cordially,

Judith O. Wagner
Associate Director
for Dissemination
wagner.6@osu.edu

## As We Begin Another Adult Education Year . . . "Welcome Back!"

We know this message will be spoken throughout your adult basic and literacy education programs as we return to our classrooms, our adult learners and our colleagues.

We hope every teacher, tutor, counselor and administrator returns with an enthusiasm and commitment equal to that of our students.

It has been a tradition with "What's the Buzz?" to introduce the first issue with some thoughts from adult educators which may provide some help in adjusting and developing routines and positive attitudes for the first class meeting that will carry throughout the year.

### What I Wish They Had Told Me

Some ABE/GED/ESL/Literacy teachers were asked to consider what they had learned during their years in adult education that they wished they had known before they started. Here are some of their answers:

**Attendance:** "Don't take the poor attendance of an adult as a negative reflection on yourself. Adults have many other priorities in their lives."

"Don't be upset if students drop out."

"Don't be upset with enrollment; teach those who come. Try to reach out to those who don't."

"Don't make the mistake of planning for months ahead because students will not be there that long."

Teachers suggest that you discuss attendance with adult students early on, negotiate the issue, be open about how you feel when your students do not come, talk about how they can deal with factors which interfere with attendance and above all, "do not take absences and dropouts personally."

**Adults' Sensitivity:** "Adults get discouraged quite easily."

"Adults are so insecure; they hope to learn, but expect to fail."

**Suggestions:** Experienced teachers and administrators suggest that you set short term goals and impress on adults at the end of each session that they have learned something. In addition, manipulate learning in such a way that adult students will be faced with constant evidence of their success. For example, if they have learned the letter f and its related sound association, suggest that they look for words with f in their environment (signs, etc.).

**Student Goals:** "Some students want their needs met now; these may not relate to your curriculum. If your student wants to learn to read the Bible, start with that. Students will work harder if they are reading something important to themselves."

It was also pointed out that adults may know their own strengths and weaknesses better than tests can assess them, so discuss things with your adult learners.

**Methods and Materials:** "I wish someone had given me lots and lots of ideas and materials to use, especially for the handicapped."

"I wish someone had told me that I didn't have to know about all the materials to do a good job with some of them. I spent too much time studying materials."

"I thought phonics was the answer to everything; I became frustrated when students were not progressing and was tempted to think they were not trying as hard as possible."

**Suggestions:** Experienced teachers and administrators suggest responding to adult learners by using materials related to adults' life experiences. A preferred method is the language experience approach, perhaps because it draws on a student's personal experience, gives credence to student knowledge, and promotes meeting adults' own learning goals.

*– Excerpted from Virginia's ABE Newsletter*

# The State Adult Literacy Resource Centers

Pennsylvania is and has been a leader in staff development activities in adult basic and literacy education. We are fortunate to have the services of two Adult Literacy Resource Centers: Western Pennsylvania, 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216, located in Gibsonia; and Harrisburg, call 1-800-992-2283. Both centers have extensive collections of publications, multi-media and other materials available on a free loan basis.

We also have nine **REGIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.** Each center is staffed by a professional adult educator and support staff to provide staff development materials and activities to persons throughout the state involved with adult basic and literacy education.

Each regional staff development center maintains a mailing list to inform adult educators in the counties served by the center of materials available, staff development workshops available, etc. We **strongly** recommend you call your Staff Development Center and make sure your name is on the mailing list.

## AdvancE
### by Cheryl Harmon, Adult Literacy Resource Specialist

Adult educators in Pennsylvania have many opportunities to examine recently acquired resources for use with students or for professional development. The AdvancE Literacy Resource Center has purchased some exciting new titles, in various media, to reach our diverse adult learner population. The following titles/sets are available for loan for four weeks by calling 1-800-992-2283.

Resources for ABLE and high level ESL readers to improve English language usage include **In The News: TIME** and **Talk Radio.** These are audio cassette units with paperback texts of current events. *News* contains spoken magazine articles; radio broadcasts are captured as recorded. Used with *Section 353* vocabulary builders or writing skills projects, such as *What Does That Mean? Taking the Language Home* or *Newsletter Promoting Student Learning.* English language usage can be promoted through contextual learning.

Two copies of the popular **Read to Me** videotape by Educational Productions are here, with a companion piece, **Oh, Say Can You See.** These two items can be used in family literacy programs because both demonstrate techniques for teaching parents how to encourage reading and language development in their children, as well as in themselves. Related Section 353 projects include *Second Time Around, Cooperative Family Literacy Project* and *Jump into Reading.*

Any program which has taken advantage of the Section 353 series produced by the Western Pennsylvania Center for the Deaf will appreciate our special populations videotapes, **Sign Language and Using Your TTY** to en-courage teachers and tutors of hearing impaired students to learn to communicate better with them. **American Freedom Speeches** are videotapes of culturally diverse signers who translate several well-known speeches by leading Americans. These tapes would work well with a *Study Guide .. for the .. Citizenship Examination* or with *National Issues Forums,* if students understand signing. The full text of each speech is provided in a teacher's manual for use with any student.

The AdvancE collection on pedagogy and professional development has been strengthened to include texts on theory and research. **Redesigning Education** is a book devoted to "developing human greatness" by challenging traditional approaches to education. In 1994, Thomas Sticht published a "compendium of quantitative data" about **Adult Literacy in the United States.** Administrators, researchers and policy makers might be interested in this report which addresses the need for information about methods that have been and are being used to assess adult literacy skills and programs.

AdvancE also has multiple copies of the revised *How Adults Read* (condensed to two books), *The 1994 ABLE Curriculum Guide* and *The 1994 ESL Curriculum Guide* are now available in limited quantity.

Future issues of the Buzz will include a review of workplace literacy media, literature collections and administrative resources to address current issues in adult basic and literacy education. ■  27

## WPALRC | A Family Affair
### by Chris Kemp, Western PA Adult Literacy Resource Center Specialist

Adult learners balance a variety of roles and responsibilities in their pursuit of knowledge. Research has shown that student retention and academic achievement improve when family support services are available. While many programs cannot offer direct support, transportation or child care, they try to provide information and referral. Recognizing that life issues affect all aspects of learning is important to any program, but is especially important to family literacy.

Family literacy programs are as diverse as the families they serve. *Second Time Around: Family Literacy Project* (AE 3025-907) provided one-on-one tutoring to elementary school children plus basic skills training and special interest workshops to their caregivers, including grandparents. *Demonstration Project: A Cooperative Family Literacy Project* (AE 3025-856) focused on families of junior high school students. *Family Literacy for Parents in Bridge Housing* (AE 3025-865) took literacy services to transitional housing sites where homeless parents and young children resided. Reports of these projects are available from AdvancE and WPALRC.

*Self-esteem for Parenting* (AE 30125-789) provides positive learning experiences for parents to share with their children. Classes may include information about child development, safety, nutrition or discipline as part of an active parenting program. A particularly good video series, produced by Curriculum Associates, includes *Reading to Your Children, Supporting Your Beginning Reader* and *Reading and Study Skills at Home.* Excellent videos also address serious life issues, for example: single parenting, violence, or addiction, which confront many families.

Family literacy programs address a wide range of problems while providing literacy services, usually with small budgets and scarce resources. To support these programs, new materials have been added to the WPALRC shelf collections. Call 1-800-446-5607 ext. 216 for a listing of Family Literacy and Life Issues materials. ■

# From the Bureau ...

## THE BUREAU OF ADULT BASIC AND LITERACY EDUCATION (ABLE)

12th floor, 333 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333 ● (717) 787-5532

## "Welcome Back!"

From the Bureau Director, Cheryl Keenan

A hearty "Welcome Back" greeting from the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education to everyone as we begin a new year of teaching and learning. This year will mark the beginning of a number of new initiatives designed to improve the quality of the services we provide to adult learners in the Commonwealth. One of the initiatives you may have already noted is the new appearance of the Buzz. I have received much positive feedback on the Buzz -- its articles keep everybody well-informed and abreast of issues, concerns, and changes throughout Pennsylvania. We have undertaken, however, to expand its content, improve the format, and expand the distribution of this excellent publication.

Nine Regional Staff Development Centers (RSDC) have again been funded to provide relevant training and technical assistance to each region. This year, the RSDC's will be providing workshops in place of the fall workshops traditionally delivered by the Bureau of ABLE Staff. Training initiatives will emphasize more on-site technical assistance and teacher-initiated action research.

The Bureau has received a United States Department of Education grant to continue funding State Literacy Resource Centers. AdvancE and Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (WPALRC) will continue to provide consultation and technical assistance and access to resources and information for program needs. Additionally, the Bureau will utilize teleconferencing facilities this year at WPALRC to improve information sharing about key initiatives.

Now that ABLE has a full complement of advisors, we ask that you fully utilize their expertise in providing technical, administrative, and general assistance in helping with your program, budget, and educational needs, questions, and concerns.

The Bureau of ABLE will continue to move towards improving the application, evaluation and program performance systems. The 1994-1995 year will mark the first year's activities in developing a performance-based system which links program evaluation, program standards, and technical assistance. The project will be in progression for approximately three years.

As the re-authorization of the National Adult Education Act approaches, ABLE will continue to work with state and national groups in expressing a strong and unified voice on behalf of adult educators.

Future activities will include developing

## Self-esteem and Education

by Abbel Brawley, ABLE Bureau Southwest Region Advisor

The word "self" is defined in many ways. For example, one definition states self as "having a single character or quality". Other definitions include . . . "the entire person of an individual . . ." and . . . "a person in his best condition . . .". In examining the word, we find that it can be used both as a prefix, as in "self-help . . . self-esteem" and as a suffix, as in "yourself". Thus, in exploring the significance of self-esteem, we can see that literally the connection is there. Self-esteem is a term that has been in the limelight more so recently than in the past. It indicates a confidence or a satisfaction in oneself. Self-esteem isn't something that can be found, nor can it be bought. It must be built. Who is responsible for achieving self-esteem? An individual is. How does one acquire self-esteem? In many ways. Self-worth is the key to self-esteem. An inner confidence in oneself comes from loving oneself, believing in oneself, and treating oneself in a special way.

One guaranteed instrument to unlocking the floodgates of self-esteem is through education. Basketfuls of encouragement and positive reinforcement work miracles. Add some patience, humor, and flexibility -- you have the formula for success.

Everyone is capable of absorbing the flow of unending information. I considered myself to be teacher and student. As I taught, I learned. The bond that was formed between my students and me was impenetrable. I listened. I probed. I inspired. I·motivated. I approved. I encouraged different, rational points of view. And they succeeded.

The rewards of teaching were, for me, not monetary. The rewards lay in the wealth I acquired as a result of imparting not only academic skills but life and social skills, as well. The permanent outcome of self-satisfaction far outweighs temporary monetary value. You can be successful as well. Make this an unforgettable year. ■

## He's Back! – Welcome back to William Murphy, ABLE Bureau Research and Evaluation Chief

After an absence of three and a half years, I have returned to Adult Ed. I spent that time harassing school administrators instead of adult educators. Now I am again ready for the big leagues. Meanwhile the new administration of the Bureau has made it very clear that they want something done to diminish the pain, agony, and sheer drudgery involved in completing and submitting student forms. Accordingly I would like to convene a conference in Harrisburg of interested program directors and/or office staff to discuss how to develop a reporting system that provides accountability without interfering with service to and instruction of adult students.

Meanwhile we are proceeding in the following efforts:

1. We are again going to fund the development of a student data base on personal computer. This time we hope to provide better support in its implementation by participating programs.

2. We are going to develop a system for carrying over student records for those who continue past the end of a program year. This will eliminate the need for a new Copy 1 enrollment form each July. Instead a "progress" form would be submitted so that we could record interim progress and hours of instruction for the program year.

3. We are already using an automated method to fill in missing fields. This is advantageous to us because it eliminates hand corrections. On the other hand, directors should be aware that their count may be affected if the computer adjusts a contract number which has missing digits.

4. We shall continue to advance the date for mailing forms to programs that are likely to be funded. Directors should never think that the receipt of student forms is a sign that funding has been officially approved.

5. Of course we would like to eliminate any items that contribute to difficulty in completing the form. However, be advised that most of the items are mandated by the federal government.

If you are interested in participating in a conference on the student data collection system, please write me and I will include you when we send out announcements. I would prefer to have staff who actually work on the forms because they obviously have the insights we need. I look forward to getting together with everyone at our various meetings. After sampling the K to 12 world, I am more convinced than ever that adult educators have more fun. ■

plans for increased use of technology across instructional and staff development areas and local information management systems. ABLE will continue to work within state government to increase coordination of services at the state and local levels.

Again, welcome back! We anticipate an exciting year ahead. We continue to strive to improve services to adult learners throughout the state. Have a good year. ■

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As most of us enter another series of classroom/tutoring/support/administration experiences in our local adult education programs, it serves us well to take a moment out from our book ordering and preparing objectives to stop and think about the reason for it all - - the Adult Learner. We feel it appropriate to emphasize the topic *Characteristics of the Adult Learner* as we enter this 1994-95 instructional year, and, despite the articles, book reviews, action research, etc. that we have put together in this issue of "*What's the Buzz?*" we also issue the caveat that "No adult is the same as any other adult, because each has a unique past and a unique perception of that past." (J.A. Krupp, 1982, "The adult learner: A unique entity)

In preparing this "*Spotlight*" section we knew from the outset we could never review every book, article, etc. dealing with the *Characteristics of Adult Learners*. However, we have come into contact with enough sources to realize the tremendous amount of repetition which exists from author to author, researcher to researcher.

We have selected some of the more representative pieces of writing which are generally available (many from either of the two adult literacy resource centers -- Western Pennsylvania (800) 446-5607, ext. 216; Harrisburg  (800) 992-2283).

We would also suggest adult educators take some time to write down those *Characteristics of Adult Learners* of which they have firsthand knowledge from their work in adult education. An interesting, informative staff development exercise might be to discuss some of these *Characteristics* in a small group, comparing lists and discussing experiences which produced the awarenesses. We are sure there will be many similarities from list to list just as there are similarities from publication to publication.

## MASTERING THE TEACHING OF ADULTS
### From a book by Jerold W. Apps

Dr. Apps has more than 25 years of experience working with adult learners in the United States (primarily in Wisconsin) and in Canada. His book emphasizes information which he feels is important to adult educators as they develop and improve their awarenesses and skills in adult education. The first section provides some interesting suggestions to both beginning and experienced teachers including chapters for self-evaluation: "You Know More Than You Think" and "Taking Charge of Your Teaching".

Information relevant to **Characteristics of Adult Learners** is interwoven with other information about adult teaching throughout the book, and it is interesting to note that only a small section is devoted to some of the qualities of adult learners which adult educators should use to develop the curricula, teaching strategies and goals of their adult basic and literacy education program.

### LEARNING STYLES

Dr. Apps refers to the research in adult learning styles and notes Robert Smith's ("Learning How to Learn" - 1982) definition of learning style as: "the individual's characteristic ways of processing information, feeling, and behaving in learning situations".

These "characteristics" are really preferences (many times subconscious) which adult learners bring to the classroom. Their range from "hands-on" to "learning intuitively" brings us right back to the importance of providing a variety of learning situations based upon individual needs of the learners involved in your program.

Despite the range, however, we re-emphasize a point made throughout our coverage of the **Characteristics of Adult Learn-**ers by noting the importance which teachers and other adult educators must place upon a "base line" of learning styles and other learner characteristics as they build and prepare their program goals and procedures.

### SOCIAL SETTING

of the adults in your program seems to be the most important factor in understanding what makes adult learners tick. For years high school counselors have emphasized the importance of one's career in determining income, social contacts, family life and other aspects of an adult's social setting. Apps' book, along with most others in the field, emphasizes the importance of and awareness that the multi-impact social forces which adult learners bring to the classroom strongly affect their work in their classroom. Family, work, social responsibilities, etc. are certainly more pervasive and usually more important to adults than learning. An increased awareness of the importance of these "out-of-school" forces on the learning of adults has produced increased emphases upon community-based and workplace-based adult education programs.

### MOTIVATION

of adult learners is also interwoven in the writings of most adult education researchers and Dr. Apps notes the research of Carol Alsanian and Henry Bricknell (1980) which restates a point experienced by many adult educators that adult participation in learning (enrollment in classes, etc.) usually is caused or coincides with some "trigger" event such as a divorce, a new job, a lost job, a new baby, a family death, retirement, etc. They emphasize the concept of a "teachable moment".

Apps goes on to state the majority of adults participate in adult education because of a relationship to a vocation. Although not the case with many older adults (senior citizens, retired persons, etc.), the importance of vocation as considered by the average "young adult" (the age of most learners in most programs) emphasizes the importance of teachers and other program personnel making a strong effort to relate instruction to vocational goals.

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From a Guest Writer: Dr. Robert Lesniak, The Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg/Middletown Campus

# THE I.E.P. AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADULT LEARNER

The learners with whom we are working in an adult literacy program range from what has typically been thought of as the undereducationed adult, who may have severe personal, social and economic problems, to adults who are successful personally, socially and economically (Richardson, 1993). Some students have fragile egos and others have egos which have been toughened by life experiences. General characteristics describing adult learners in general is interesting but often not very productive for the practitioner who may face a student group that is not typical. For example, a young lady of seventeen may seek entry into the program. She dropped out of school at age 16 years, and nine months later delivered a seven pound baby girl. The question is, does she qualify as an adult? She is now 17 years old, too young to vote, and too young to legally drink alcoholic beverages. But in terms of caring for her child as a functioning mother, she surely qualifies as an adult (Shaw, 1994).

The point is that by looking at the general characteristics of the adult learner provided by a list such as Krupp's (1987) or any other researcher we may not learn much about the individual with whom we are about to enter a program. By using an individual education plan (I.E.P.), as an instrument for the adult education facilitator and the learner to develop a program for learning, the focus can be on a specific student's characteristics. An I.E.P. format which is well designed and completed in a collaborative fashion between the learner and facilitator can accomplish a number of objectives.

First, if an environment of mutual respect and trust is established between the learner and the facilitator, then the planning steps will be on a firm foundation. Notice that the terms learner and facilitator have been used purposely to avoid the traditional (I'm the teacher, I'm in charge and I know what's good for you) orientation. Kazemek and Riggs (1985) identified this as one of the major problems for failure to retain students in literacy programs. Brookfield's (1986) first principle of effective practice is that adults must realize benefit from their participation since they are voluntary participants.

The next step with an I.E.P. is to determine what the learner's goals are for the program. Is it to develop encoding skills, computer skills, writing skills or to improve comprehension as examples? Other goals which may not be as skill oriented are also appropriate. When establishing goals and objectives it might also be appropriate to discuss the motivation for developing a program. The motivation may be external in the form of needed skills for job survival or to obtain a job. Motivation might also be informal in that a learner is successful, but interested in completing the G.E.D. Once the goal has been established then objectives may be determined as steps to complete the goal. A program should include some objectives which are



Coordinators of the Summer Institute on "Adult Development and Learning: Implications for Practice", Drs. Robert J. Lesniak and Margaret Shaw at the Penn State Harrisburg Campus.

easily attainable to provide success and objectives which are moderately difficult and achievable so that the learner is provided challenge. Learners should be also recognized when objectives are completed. Often the gifted learner is overlooked because success is expected and learners having difficulty are recognized. The gifted learner also appreciates occasional recognition.

After the goals and objectives are developed then the discussion might move to how the learner best learns. What activities such as role play, case studies or group discussions are most effective? Is learning more effective as a member of a large or a small group or in independent study? Does the learner require high structure, medium structure or minimum structure? A number of instruments such as those developed by Kolb (1976), Galbraith (1987) and others discussed by Price (1983) may be used for formal assessment, but a more direct way is to ask the student and later to observe.

Heron (1989) states that a facilitator operates in three different modes depending on the objectives and needs of the group or individual. The three modes are:

1. . . . . The hierarchal mode . . . You take full responsibility, in charge of all major decisions on all dimensions of the learning process.

2. . . . .The cooperative mode . . . You collaborate with members of the group in devising the learning process: your facilitation is cooperative.

3. The autonomous mode. Here you respect the total autonomy of the group. You do not do things for them, or with them, but give them freedom to find their own way, exercising their own judgment without any intervention on your part.

A problem is which mode of facilitator do we operate in for which students. Hunt and Sullivan (1974) provide a theory of development based on conceptual levels in which they identified the levels as:

1. Stage A, Unsocialized. Exhibits the following behaviors: concrete, impulsive, and shows poor tolerance for frustration. Requires a highly structure environment.

2. State B, Socialized. Exhibits the following behaviors: concerned with rules, dependent on authority, and categorical thinking. Requires moderately structured environment.

3. Stage C, Independent. Exhibits the following behaviors: inquiring, self assertive, questioning and have more alternatives available. Requires low structured environment.

There are still two points to be made about the I.E.P. One is that the content used in the instruction or the activities should be related to learner's interests and secondly evaluation should reflect the objectives. An outcome based evaluation in which
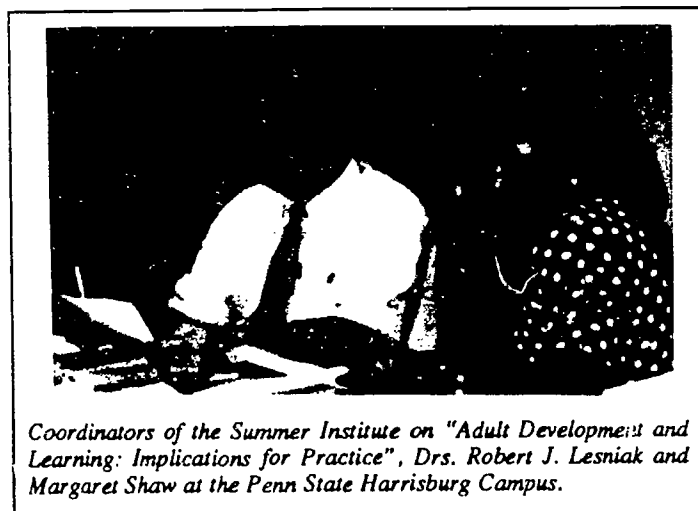
30

## I.E.P., Characteristics, cont.

the learner is able to demonstrate what has been learned is preferable to a testing approach. In cases where the learning is in some form of information or knowledge, a written test may be appropriate.

As to the question about the use of learning theory in an application using an individual education plan, there has been a flirting with an eclectic approach to learning theory with the major emphasis on humanistic and cognitive theories. However, a sense of behavioristic and social learning theories must also be included.

A summary of learning theories for the practitioner may be found in chapter seven of **Learning in Adulthood** by Sharon B. Merriam and Rosemary S. Caffarella (1991) Rossey-Bass Publishers.

The question of whether transfer of learning theory can occur between persons who teach in elementary or secondary schools to adult learners is similar to a question asked in the 1960's about whether successful teachers in urban schools could teach in the suburbs. A number of studies favored the urban teachers.

If the instructor develops an individual needs assessment (I.E.P.), respects the learner, is able to work with the learner in a collaborative manner, and exhibits curriculum development procedures with the learner's interests and if this individual also shows the ability to develop objectives and activities varying from easy to moderately difficult, recognizes completion of those activities and uses effective evaluation procedures then there should not be a problem. In other words, we're saying that learning theory alone is not the answer, but practices by individuals implementing concepts of learning theory are more important.

*About the author: Dr. Robert Lesniak is well-known in Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Education. He is a member of the Adult Education State Plan Task Force and is the evaluator for the Staff Development Center in his region. Presently, he is a member of the faculty of Penn State University's School of Behavioral Sciences and Education and is chairperson of the Master of Education in Training and Development Program at the Penn State - Harrisburg Campus.* ■

## PRISON LITERACY

# PRISON LITERACY PROGRAMS MUST UNDERSTAND THEIR ADULT LEARNERS

"Prison illiteracy is a problem of tremendous proportions with ramifications for the entire nation. According to some calculations, illiteracy in American prisons is as high as 75%, about three times higher than the illiteracy level of the general population. Most educators do not know about it, and most corrections professionals are unprepared to deal with it. Most politicians do not acknowledge that prison illiteracy is a problem, and most taxpayers resent having to pay for prison education programs. Research studies have shown, however, that addressing this problem is a proven and cost-effective way of slowing the rising tide of crime in the United States.

"Since there is a strong correlation between criminal behavior and educational insufficiency, greater literacy can be one way out of criminality. The "right" kind of education in prison has been statistically shown to reduce recidivism. This suggests that participation in PRISON LITERACY PROGRAMS increases inmates' chances of staying on the "outside" and living a more satisfying, profitable life after they have been released, thus cutting back on the tremendous waste of human potential fostered by our current prison system. By reducing the inmate population (now well over one million in federal and state prisons and jails), prison literacy programs can reduce long-term prison costs, thus lightening the taxpayers' financial load and building a stronger tax base."

This is the introduction to an excellent review of Prison Literacy which appeared in the June, 1994 issue of NCAL Connections, the newsletter of the National Center on Adult Literacy in Philadelphia.

The article, which is drawn from the Executive Summary of an NCAL Technical Report TR93-01, identifies some of the characteristics of adult learners in prison settings and suggests some instructional, and administrative strategies for making prison literacy programs more effective. We will deal with some of the instructional strategies effective in prison literacy in next month's **Buzz**, but list here some adult learner characteristics noted in the article:

1. **A direct relationship exists between insufficient literacy and unsocial, often criminal, behavior.**
2. **Studies show a correlation between greater education and lower recidivism.**
3. **Instruction is especially effective with juvenile inmates.**
4. **How the offender thinks is associated with his criminal behavior and thus with his rehabilitation.**
5. **Better educated inmates tend to be more tractable**
6. **Inmates need skills and information which are integrated with life skills development.**
7. **Inmates need instruction geared to adults, not children.**
8. **Inmates favor a more intense hands-on learning style, rather than the more passive, traditional lecture style.**
9. **Inmates can best profit from the social interaction with their human teachers, thus working on needed social and academic skills simultaneously.**
10. **Inmate participants often have an idea of the kinds of skills that would be in demand after their release; they readily drop out of programs that load them down with useless or trivial information and so-called skills.**

"Prison Literacy: Implications for Program and Assessment Policy" is a 204 page technical report (TR93-01) prepared by Anabel Newman, professor of language education at Indiana University, Bloomington and director of the NCAL Project on Prison Literacy, Warren Lewis, Director of Publications at the Educational Resources Information Center, the Clearinghouse for Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) at Indiana University and Caroline Beverstock, a learning skills expert, literacy researcher and independent consultant. The complete technical report costs $12 and may be purchased by sending a check made payable to "Kinko's Copy Center" and mailing it to NCAL Dissemination, 3910 Chestnut Street, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111.

The NCAL newsletter Connections is available as a free subscription by writing the same address or calling (215) 898-2100. ■

# A Book Review . . .

# "THE ADULT LEARNER – – A UNIQUE ENTITY"
## by Judy-Arin Krupp

Dr. Krupp is the author of "Adult Development: Implications for Staff Development" (1981) and co-author of "When Parents Face the Schools" (1984). She has presented workshops for a number of national professional organizations, has served on the faculty of several colleges, was director of an adult development center and has broad experience in the field of adult education.

In this 234 page book Dr. Krupp presents 34 characteristics affecting adult learners and for each characteristic she uses the research from the field of adult education and practical examples to establish the accuracy of the characteristic. Each section closes with an "Application" section with practical examples for adult educators to use as they develop their individual philosophies and procedures for working with adult learners.

*The design of this program is such that it can be adopted as a total program or in segments . . .*

The 34 characteristics identified by Dr. Krupp are divided into seven chapters:

## CHAPTER I: EXPERIENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. The adult is the summation of past experiences, but similar experience(s) may produce different sums and thus evoke different responses to the same experience.
2. No adult is the same as any other adult, because each has a unique past and a unique perception of that past.
3. An adult's self-concept is the product of past experiences and ability to interpret those experiences. The self-concept can be rigid or tentative, and positive or negative in a given situation.
4. Through experience and past decisions adults narrow the possibilities open to them in the future.

## CHAPTER II: PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

5. The adult body has entered a catabolic (breaking down) process.
6. Adults have habit needs.

## CHAPTER III: ROLE AND RELATIONSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

7. Adults belong to many groups and play many roles during a single day and during a lifetime.
8. The motivational needs of adults change in different roles with different developmental tasks, and in different ego and morality states. These needs affect relationships.
9. Adults have relationship preferences that influence their sense of self and that affect decisions and actions.
10. Adults respond to significant others in their lives by fixed or tentative concepts.

## CHAPTER IV: PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

11. An adult has a defined personality composed of a stable core and a periphery that modifies with experience.
12. Adults have strengths and weaknesses that may or may not modify as they interact with the environment and go through life's natural processes. Satisfaction is greatest when the strengths of the adult are used and acknowledged.
13. Flexible adults function cooperatively more often than rigid adults.
14. Adults need a positive sense of personal worth.
15. Adults have biases and mind sets that preclude complete openness and flexibility.
16. Adults give clues to their conscious but unspoken, and their unconscious thoughts and feelings.
17. Needs, interests and values, create an affective and cognitive base for an adult's goals.
18. Adults behave in terms of what is real to them at the moment.
19. Adults are located along numerous continua and are constantly affected by the satisfaction of their basic needs in relation to their current location on each continuum.
20. Stress is an integral part of human existence.

## CHAPTER V: DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

21. Adult development is a lifelong search for identity.
22. Adults continuously move from self to others.
23. Market events, transitions, and crises create times of unrest, reappraisal, or explosion that lead to some form of adaptation.
24. The relation of load to power changes as we age.
25. As adults, ability does not appreciably decline, although time needed for a response increases and new material may be harder to learn.
26. Across the lifespan, time perception changes and affects functioning.

## CHAPTER VI: ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

27. Adults are continuously faced with dualities they can ignore, balance, or attempt to transcend.
28. Adults are consciously and unconsciously affected by the geographic and physical space around them as we l as the attitudes and values of the times in which they live.
29. Adults use a phenomenological approach when evaluating daily occurrences.

## CHAPTER VII: LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS

30. Adults are continuously growing and learning.
31. Adult learning is often self-initiated and aimed toward an immediate goal.
32. Adults learn and process materials through multitudinous means.
33. People have subject matter or skills about which they prefer to learn.
34. Adults use only part of their intellectual potential during their lives.

In her closing section, "Afterword", Dr. Krupp makes the important point that persons working with adult learners must "seek and respond to the individuality of each learner," even if some of the instructional content must be sacrificed. She notes that adult educators have an obligation to each adult learner that supercedes our particular area of expertise and that "awareness of the characteristics of adults increases understanding of self and others, an understanding essential to task accomplishment."

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# New Readers Press Literacy Resource Book Is Excellent!

As we prepared the material for this Spotlight on Characteristics of Adult Learners, we were fortunate enough to receive a copy of a brand new publication from New Readers Press, the publishing arm of Laubach Literacy Action (LLA). Titled "Teaching Adults: A Literacy Resource Book", the 176-page resource contains 69 activities arranged by instructional areas (Spelling, Free Writing: Mapping, Letter Formation, etc.), nine appendices (Common Phonics Elements and Principles in English, 300 Most Frequently Used Words, Sample Criteria for Evaluating Materials, etc.), and enough basic information about adult learners to serve as an excellent orientation/staff development tool for any adult basic and literacy education program.

We have re-printed some of the **Teaching Adults** material which pertains to our Spotlight topic and strongly recommend the purchase of this excellent resource book by every program.

## THINKING ABOUT ADULTS AS LEARNERS

Literacy volunteers teach people, not books or skills. When you teach adults, you need to consider the following:
• characteristics and needs of adult learners in general and new readers in particular   • special needs   • individual learning styles

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF ADULT LEARNERS

Learning as an adult is different in many ways from learning as a child. To be an effective tutor or teacher, you'll need to understand what adults are like and what they need and want in a learning situation. The chart below sums up some important characteristics of adult learners (not just new readers) and the implications for teaching:

| Adult learners | As a tutor or teacher, you should |
|---|---|
| want and deserve respect | give frequent praise and support, emphasize the skills and strengths the learner already has |
| | design lessons so that the learner experiences success |
| | believe in the learner and his or her ability to learn, treat tutoring as a partnership between equals |
| | use the learner's first name only if you invite the learner to use your first name and he or she is comfortable doing so |
| are used to making decisions | involve the learner in setting goals and objectives, offer choices of activities and materials |
| | ask the learner to evaluate the lessons, respect the learner's priorities and opinions |
| are busy people | develop lesson plans that address priority needs, use the tutoring time carefully |
| | be flexible in assigning homework, help the learner schedule homework time |
| have to deal with emergencies | make an agreement to call if either you or the learner cannot make it to a session |
| and unexpected situations | have alternative activities ready in case the learner did not have time to prepare |
| have a wealth of life experience | build self-esteem by emphasizing how much the learner already knows or can do |
| | be open to what the learner can teach you |
| | design instructional activities around the learner's work, community, family, politics, hobbies, friends, or current interests |
| sometimes feel insecure about | provide plenty of opportunities to practice new skills |
| using new skills on their own | practice an exercise with the learner before asking the learner to do it alone or for homework |
| | provide support, such as audio tapes of a reading assignment |
| | encourage the learner to use computer programs (where available) to reinforce skills |
| | emphasize the learner's progress, don't ask something you know the learner doesn't know |
| have their own values and beliefs | respect the learner's values and don't try to change them, don't judge |
| may have special physical needs | be sensitive to possible sight or hearing problems |
| | provide adequate lighting, speak clearly |
| | meet in a place that is comfortable and accessible to the learner |
| | provide adequate break time |
| want to apply what they learn | find out what the learner's needs are |
| to their present lives | show how a skill or lesson helps the learner move closer to meeting those needs |

Adult new readers share the characteristics of all adult learners. Adult new readers might also have some of the needs or characteristics listed in the chart below.

| Adult new readers | As a tutor or teacher, you should |
|---|---|
| may fear school | find out what school experiences were unpleasant for the learner and avoid re-creating them |
| | stress what the learner has done right, avoid criticizing or ridiculing the learner |
| | sit next to, rather than stand over, the learner, de-emphasize formal testing |
| may have problems meeting basic needs because of unemployment or poverty | refer the learner to an appropriate source of assistance if the learner wants help |
| may find planning for the future difficult | help the learner set goals for reading and writing |
| | be prepared to develop supplemental lessons that speak to special needs or interests, such as how to obtain job training or write a résumé |
| may be embarrassed or ashamed about being unable to read and write | reassure the learner that many adults are in the same situation |
| | encourage the learner to attend a student support group, if your program has one |
| | be supportive and let the learner know there is nothing wrong with him or her |
| | find a private place for lessons if the learner is uncomfortable working in a public area |

# HOW ADULTS READ
## A Staff Development Curriculum

The Textbook and accompanying Sourcebook titled "How Adults Read" have just been released by New Educational Projects, Inc. in Lancaster. The books were prepared with funding from a Section 353 grant by Dr. Judith Rance-Roney, Director of English as a Second Language at Lehigh University and Jane Ditmars, Coordinator of the Tri-Valley Literacy Regional Staff Development Center. Tana Reiff of New Educational Project, Inc. served as editor and project manager.

How Adults Read provides a background, both theoretical and practical, for the teacher or tutor wishing to provide a sound, re-search based program of lit-eracy instruction to adult students. The design of the program is such that it can be adopted as a total program or in seg-ments to complement/supplement instructional programs already in place in adult basic and literacy education.

> "Adult learners want to be exposed to instruction which is of immediate concern in life."

Although we will bring Buzz read-ers additional information from this ex-cellent resource in our March, 1995 Spotlight on Instructional Strategies and Assessment, we are noting here some Characteristics of Adult Learners which Dr. Rance-Roney and Ms. Ditmars identify:

1. Many adults enter our literacy pro-grams because they have not suc-ceeded in "traditional" school-based programs.

2. Adult students often carry along with them the perception of failure.

3. Adults often seek adult education at a time of change in their lives.

4. Adults who seek literacy education many times have low self-esteem, negative attitudes toward education, a fear of failure, and a desire to avoid social disapproval for their participa-tion.

5. Many of the adults who enter your programs feel they have little control over their environment and what happens in the classroom.

6. Adult readers seem able to accept the classroom activities when working with difficult materials, but many times will leave the program if the material is perceived as too easy.

7. Adult learners want to be exposed to instruction which is of immediate concern in life.

8. Adult readers have different instruc-tional needs at different reading lev-els.

9. Adult beginning readers do not al-ways seek meaning in what they read.

10. Many adults who come to literacy programs differ significantly from the majority of students who learned to read in a regular elementary school program.

11. Adult learners who feel that their teachers consider what they want to learn and also how they want to learn are more likely to stay in a program.

There are many, many more Char-acteristics of Adult Learners, especially as they relate to learning to read, in How Adults Read. Copies are available through the Regional Staff Development Centers and on free loan from either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Cen-ters: Western Pennsylvania (1-800-446-5607, ext. 216) or AdvancE in Harrisburg (1-800-992-2283). ■

The Metropolitan Career Center (MCC) in Philadelphia recently held its annual Gala/ Benefit. Recognized for contributions to the Philadelphia community as well as for per-sonal, educational and professional achievement were: from left to right, Sinoba McKelvey, Supervisor -- US WATS; Andre L. Dennis, Attorney; Evalind R. Minor, EMSCO President; and Davida Thompson, Clerk/Typist for Independence Blue Cross. (photo and caption courtesy of Germaine Edwards, MCC)

## Now What? So What? Use What You Have Learned . . .

Just as relevance is primary to effec-tive adult learning in adult basic and lit-eracy education, so is it primary to your Professional Development as an adult educator and a reader of "What's the Buzz?"

We hope the information we have brought you relating to the Characteris-tics of the Adult Learner is relevant to you. Application and Usability are the keys. We know you read our newsletter because our format fits into the structure of your daily and nightly schedules. We hope you will apply some of what you have read in this issue to your work as a teacher, tutor, counselor or administrator in an adult basic and literacy education program. To help in this regard we have summarized the information relating to the Characteristics of Adult Learners into a series of questions:

1. Are your program's curriculum, in-struction and operating philosophy based upon the needs and goals of your adult students?

2. Does your program provide opportu-nities for every adult enrolled in your program to succeed?

3. Is the instruction taking place in every classroom, group and with every indi-vidual based upon each individual's needs and learning style and developed with input from the students?

4. Are there procedures in place to effec-tively measure the extent to which your program is successful in numbers 1, 2 and 3?

A Staff Development Exercise: Survey each of your staff members (in-cluding yourself). Have each adult edu-cator rate the program effectiveness on each of the questions 1 through 4, on a 10 point basis; then have each educator rate their individual professional effec-tiveness on each question using the same scale. For the brave, sensitive and non-threatened adult educators, have a dis-cussion of the ratings. For others, think of your ratings and how you might want to use some of the information relating to the Characteristics of Adult Learners in this issue to improve the quality of your work with adult students.

USE what you learn.

## Here's Your Chance to Blow Your Own Horn . . .

Help Inform Your Colleagues
Tell What's Happening in Your Program
Explain That Research Project
Etc., Etc., Etc.

The Second Call for Papers for the 30th Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference is going out and Buzz readers have until September 23rd to contact Conference Chair Dehra Shafer and tell her the topic of your presentation to the Conference.

The Conference theme is: "The Question of Quality: Looking to the Future" and all of you having quality programs, ideas, instructional techniques, etc. should consider answering the call.

For more information contact Dehra Shafer at the Office of Program Planning, Penn State Continuing and Distance Education, 2766 W. College Avenue, University Park, PA 16801-2647 (814) 865-7679; e-mail: D3S@PSUVM.PSU.EDU.

## Outstanding Adult Educator Nomination Forms Available

Each year the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) recognizes an individual who, in the judgement of the Selection Committee, has made an outstanding contribution to the development of adult education. The individual selected is recognized at the Midwinter Adult Education Conference.

Buzz readers are encouraged to nominate a person who they feel meets the selection criteria. Nomination forms with additional information are available from PAACE Awards Committee Chair Dr. Alan Quigley, Penn State Monroeville, 4518 Northern Pike, Monroeville, PA 15146-2915.

## The Answer Corner –

is something new we're going to try at "What's the Buzz?" to (we hope) answer some questions about adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) in Pennsylvania for which you are unable to find a suitable answer yourself.

If you have a question about any matter, please write to us at Box 214, Troy, PA 16947 (FAX 717-596-4222) and we will refer your question (anonymously) to someone in Pennsylvania adult education who might have the answer.

The questions and answers with the most widespread concern will be printed in The Buzz, but every question will be answered.

And remember . . . "There are no dumb questions, only dumb answers."

# Attention GED Instructors
### by Larry Goodwin, State GED Administrator

In the April 4, 1994 issue of the Journal of Learning Disabilities, Susan J. Westbury addresses the struggle many adults have in obtaining a high school equivalency diploma. These adults are among the 43 million Americans with disabilities. Also, Jean Lowe, the Director of the General Education Development Testing Service has expressed concern that the GED community of examiners and teachers may be underserving this group of deserving adults.

The GED Testing Service and the United States Department of Education are working together to identify ways to coordinate educational services for the candidates with learning and physical disabilities. Meanwhile Ms. Lowe believes that "adult education programs are not taking advantage of current GED requirements that Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) and physical disabilities be documented in order for candidates to receive special accommodations during testing."

As the State GED Administrator, I have found that many requests for special accommodations are submitted after the instructional program has ended and the candidate is ready to test. The time required to process the request and make the arrangements for special accommodations prevents the adult learner from testing when he or she is best prepared, both emotionally and mentally for the test. A better scenario would be to request the special accommodation earlier so that the testing could occur immediately following the completion of the education program.

To remedy this problem it is recommended that the GED instructor identify the student with disabilities early in the learning program, and refer him or her for evaluation to a professional who can diagnose disabilities. This diagnosis can be used to select appropriate teaching techniques as well as determining special testing conditions. The local GED Chief Examiner should then be contacted for assistance in completing the request for special accommodations. The accommodations can be significant in providing the candidate an equal chance in passing the GED. They include audiocassette, braille, scribe, calculator, extra time, private room, etc. These are identified in the GED Examiner's Manual and are available according to the specific disability. The request must be documented and thoroughly reviewed to ensure it not only supports the candidate but also precludes an unfair advantage. All special accommodations must be approved by the State GED Administrator and the GED Testing Service.

During the past three months the number of requests for special accommodations has increased significantly and is expected to continue to rise. To support our adult learners with special needs we must be aware of the accommodations available to them and coordinate the necessary diagnosis and documentation. All Pennsylvania Chief Examiners have been provided the article by Susan Westbury and are prepared to coordinate with the education provider. A team approach will overcome the apparent shortfall in the GED education and testing effort and ensure that our students will be better served.

Any questions concerning special accommodations should be directed to the local GED Chief Test Examiner or to the State GED Office, (717) 787-6747.

## National NAASLN Conference to be held in Philadelphia

The 4th Annual Conference of the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN) will be held in Philadelphia this year and Pennsylvania adult educators will join their peers from throughout the country for a wide variety of presentations and workshops addressing the Conference Theme of "Lifelong Learning for Adults with Special Learning Needs: Building Coalitions and Creating Change."

Pre-Conference Professional Development Day will be September 28 with the Conference being held September 29, 30 and October 1. The Professional Development Day will make available to early arrivals full and half day sessions conducted by national experts presenting workshops on Teaching/ Assessing Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD).

The Program is crammed full and we do not have sufficient space to describe the 70+ concurrent and action sessions which will fill up the 3-day conference. Some of those which will be of interest to Buzz readers include a number of sessions designed to give information about the General Educational Development (GED) Test and special needs adults (including a presentation by Cheryl Keenan, director of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education) and a number of skills development presentations.

There will also be a Technology Expo and Exhibitors' Hall, some Scheduled Trips, and the kickoff of a National Public Awareness Campaign about lifelong learning of adults with special learning needs.

Co-sponsors of the Confer ace include the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE), the Philadelphia Mayor's Commission on Literacy, the Center for Alternative Learning in Bryn Mawr, Elwyn, Inc., the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State, the International Association of Jewish Vocational Services in Philadelphia, and the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE).

For registration and conference information contact: NAASLN, PO Box 716, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 (610) 525-8336. ∎

## People and Programs in Pennsylvania A.B.L.E.

✳ Carol Goertzel, who was with the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program for many years and then joined the Philadelphia Housing Authority, has a new job as Executive Director of the Women's Association of Women's Alternatives, Inc. based in Wawa, PA (near Media in Delaware County). Note the initials of the Association.

✳ Thanks to George and Victoria Rutledge of Project ABE in York for sending us a copy of an advertisement from Canada for "J.W. Dundee's Original Honey Brown Lager". The ad is headed by the question, "What's the Buzz?" (it's brewed with honey). It's nice to know our readers are doing their research, even when they're on vacation.

✳ Linda Herr is the incoming Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC) president. TLC is one of the five program divisions of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) and its impressive activities give each of the other divisions something to shoot for.

✳ Welcome to Margaret (Meg) Keeley of Keytec Consultants in Bensalem and Annette ⌐remo, an independent management consultant from Mechanicsburg, as new co-chairs of another PAACE Program Division - - Business and Industry. Meg and Annette replace Jim Imler who has helped keep the Division going over the past few years.

✳ Congratulations to Dr. Eunice (Nikki) Askov, Director of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State. Nikki was just elected for the next three years as Director of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education's (AAACE) Commission of Business, Industry and Labor. Our state professional organization, PAACE, is an affiliate of AAACE. AAACE will hold their 1994 National Adult Education Conference in Nashville, Tennessee November 1-4.

✳ Diane Resides, counselor at the adult center on the main campus of Penn State has joined the Legislation Committee of PAACE. Jean Henry, who is with the Lebanon County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, chairs the Committee. Diane will specialize in legislative matters dealing with Higher Education.

## 1994-95 Buzz to Spotlight ABLE Concerns

You will notice this month's "What's the Buzz?" is twelve pages. In previous years we sometimes went to twelve pages when we had sufficient copy, but this year every issue will be twelve pages with the center pages relating to a "critical" issue of concern in Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education (we place this information on the center pages to facilitate copying).

This month our "Spotlight" is on Characteristics of Adult Learners; in October we will feature Recruitment and Retention; in November Workforce/Workplace Adult Basic and Literacy Education; in December our feature will be on Family Literacy; in January, 1995 Special Learning Needs of Adults; in February English as a Second Language; March Instructional Strategies and Assessment; April will feature Adult Basic and Literacy Education for the Homeless; May Technology in Adult Education; and in June Community Linkages.

WE NEED YOUR HELP. To make our feature more meaningful and the information more usable by our readers, we would like to use as resources those action research, programs, materials and techniques adult basic and literacy educators in Pennsylvania have found effective. If you have any information about programs, resource persons, etc. which would impact upon our reporting on the topics named above, please contact us at Box 214, Troy, PA 16947 (FAX-717-596-4222).

We really hope you will take some time to think about those resources you use or are aware of and let us know about them. Thanks in advance. ∎

✳ Adult educators throughout the state sadly note the passing of Floyd Fisher, Pennsylvania State University Vice-president Emeritus of Continuing Education and a strong participant and advocate of adult education in Pennsylvania.

✳ ABLE Bureau Director Cheryl Keenan tells us as of August 16 100% of State Literacy Act 143 proposals and 53% of federal project proposals were processed and sent from the Bureau to the next step in the state approval process.

The Western and Northwestern region proposals were nearly all finished. ∎

# IT's A DATE!

## SEPTEMBER
### LITERACY MONTH IN PENNSYLVANIA
**LIBRARY CARD SIGN-UP MONTH**; Contact American Library Association (ALA) Information Center; 50 East Huron Street, Chicago. (800) 545-2433, ext. 2153.

**8: International Literacy Day**; Contact UNESCO, (212) 963-5995. Special two-hour Literacy Teleconference, Noon to 2 p.m. Satellite G7 (C-band) transponder 16.

**21-23: 14th Annual National Rural Families Conference**; Kansas State Univ., Manhattan, KS. Contact Kansas State University, 241 College Court Bldg., Manhattan, KS 66506.

**24-October 1: Banned Books Week**; contact ALA (800) 545-2433, ext. 2153.

**28-30: ASTD Conference**; American Society for Training and Development National Conference on Technical and Skills Training; Indianapolis; Contact ASTD (703) 683-8100.

**29, 30, October 1: 1994 National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs Conference**; Philadelphia. Contact Dr. Richard Cooper, P.O. Box 716, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.

## OCTOBER
**5-9: Association for Volunteer Administration Annual Conference**; Anaheim, CA. Contact Sue Mallory (303) 541-0238.

**6 and 7: 25th Anniversary CAEO Symposium** of The Coalition of Adult Education Organizations; Roslyn, VA. Contact AAACE, 1200 19th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

**7: Conference: "The Rural Elderly;** Improving Life Quality Through Nutrition." At the new Penn State Scanticon Conference Center Hotel; Contact Penn State Continuing and Distance Education Conferences and Institutes; 225 Penn State Scanticon, University Park, PA 16802-7002.

**8: Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Education Research Conference**; cosponsored by Penn State and Indiana University of Pennsylvania; To be held at the Penn State Center for Continuing and Graduate Education, Monroeville. Purpose: To promote the development and use of research in adult and continuing education in Pennsylvania. Contact Anne Rockwell or Drucie Weirauch (412) 372-4095.

**14: Regions 1 and 4 (western part of the state) Vendor's Fair:** Troggiols Restaurant, New Castle, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Open house format to meet publishers' representatives, get free samples, etc. Contact Bootsie Barbour (814) 454-4474 or Rachel Zilcosky (412) 661-7323.

**14-15: The Greater Philadelphia Branch of The Orton Dyslexia Society 17th Annual Fall Conference**; "Charting a Path for Dyslexics"; at the Shipley School, Bryn Mawr; Contact Gee Gee White (215) 844-8016.

**20: Newspapers in Correctional Education Teleconference Series**; Contact Public Broadcasting System (PBS) Learning Satellite System (800) 257-2578 and your regional staff development center.

**20-21: The Portfolio Process in Assessment and Instruction Institute**; Atlantic City, NJ. Designing and implementing a portfolio assessment and instruction program. Contact Ruth Culham or Vicki Spandel (800) 547-6339, ext 564.

**23-26: Keystone State Reading Association Conference** at Seven Springs; Contact Theodosia Spewock, RD 4, Box 178, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648 (814) 684-4240.

**September 15:** Start of a free 12-week training session: "Reality Bytes: Introductory Computer Training." 6-8 p.m. Thursday evenings at the YWCA, Pittsburgh. Contact Arlene Cianelli (800) 438-2011 for details.

**September 19-23:** Region 7 Intercultural Community Building Course; Reading, PA; 8 a.m.-5 p.m. For details, contact Tri-Valley Literacy (610) 758-6347.

**September 24:** Region 3 Fall Workshop; at Keystone Junior College, LaPlume. Registration at 8:30 a.m. For more information call region 3 at (717) 961-7834.

**September 24:** Region 4 Workshop: "Using the Internet"; Waynesburg College, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Presenter Jeanne Baugh. Contact Rachel Zilcosky 1-800-438-2011 for details.

**26-28: National Conference on Recruiting and Serving Adult Students**; sponsored by the College Board Office of Adult Learning Services (OALS); Washington, DC. Contact OALS (212) 713-8101.

**27-30: 1st National Literacy Conference sponsored by the Student Coalition (College Students) for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE)**; at The Ohio State University, Columbus. Presenters are solicited for this conference; Contact SCALE, UNC-Chapel Hill, CB #3500, 020 Peabody Hall, Chapel Hill, NC 27599 (919) 962-1542.

**31-November 1: "Doing Business with Business:** Contracting With Employers for Education and Training." Conference sponsored by OALS; Washington, DC. Contact OALS (212) 713-8101.

## NOVEMBER
**1-4: AAACE 1994 ADULT EDUCATION CONFERENCE**; Nashville, TN; Contact AAACE at 1200 19th Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036 (202) 429-5131.

**2-5: Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) Annual Conference**; Town and Country Hotel, San Diego; Contact Peggy May, LVA, 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13215 (315) 445-8000.

**9-12: 45th Annual Conference of the Orton Dyslexia Society:** Los Angeles; Theme: "Lights . . . Camera . . . Literacy." Contact the Orton Dyslexia Society, 8600 LaSalle Road, 382 Chester Bldg., Baltimore, MD 21286.

**10-12: 16th Annual Conference on Learning Disabilities**; San Diego; Contact Council for Learning Disabilities, PO Box 40303, Overland Park, KS 66204.

**14-20: BOOKS FOR EVERYONE/EVERYONE FOR BOOKS!** Theme of Book Week '94. 75th National Observance of National Book Week.

**18-19: 10th Annual Penn-Ohio Conference**; Warren, Ohio. Contact Bootsie Barbour (814) 454-4474.

## DECEMBER
**1: "Adult Numeracy Instruction:** New Approaches." Videoconference; Contact the National Center on Adult Literacy, 3910 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111 (215) 898-2100.

## FEBRUARY, 1995
**8-10: 30th Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference**; Hershey; Contact PAACE, Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

## JUNE, 1995
**22-25: 1995 NorthEast Region Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) Conference**; Penn State. For more information or to volunteer to assist contact Monica Kindig (814) 238-1809.

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recycled paper

# What's the Buzz? ™

| Tell Us What's Happening in Pennsylvania | Literacy | E.S.L. English as a Second Language | | General Educational Development | A.B.E. Adult Basic Education | Be All You Can Be Adult Education Is the Key |

OCTOBER, 1994                                                     VOLUME 14, NUMBER 2

## ABLE Bureau Director Appointed Chair of PSCAL, PDE Literacy Planning Committees

One of the strongest recommendations coming from the historic May 11, 1994 "Call to Action: Mobilizing for Adult Literacy and Learning" Conference was for coordination of literacy services throughout the state.

"Although state government is clearly concerned with adult literacy," says the conference report, "no system exists to coordinate hundreds of existing literacy programs, the five state agencies funding literacy programs, independent data systems used by each funding stream, training, technical assistance and information/research dissemination."

### Maze of Services

The report goes on to say, "Literacy providers receiving funds from a variety of sources have multiple rules and regulations, producing a maze of service delivery. This fragmented service delivery system results in duplication, gaps and splintering of services to adult learners."

### PDE and PSCAL Respond

Both the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy have responded to the Challenge for Coordination and have appointed Cheryl Keenan, Director of the P.D.E.'s Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education to chair groups whose charge will be to improve coordination of literacy services at Department of Education and community levels.

### Literacy Not Only an Education Problem

In her comments to the Pennsylvania Coalition for Adult Literacy, Director Keenan said, "There is a need for coordination at both the state and local levels. Literacy is not an 'education' problem alone. The responsibility for building a literate State crosses social, economic, and environmental issues.

*ABLE Bureau Director, Cheryl Keenan*

"Programs that receive money from the state and plan their programs in isolation from other literacy and human service programs can increase their impact upon learners' outcomes in the community by coordinating services.

"The complexity of adult learners' needs cannot be met by a single agency alone in a community, but rather by a joint effort of diverse community groups. For example, a literacy council may not have the expertise or the resources to offer support to each learner in areas such as counseling, child care, or assistance with housing. The coordination and linkages among literacy providers and providers of other social and human services can be the deciding factor of whether an adult persists with his/her educational program."

Ms. Keenan concluded her remarks to the PSCAL meeting by saying, "We now have documentation that shows people who come to adult literacy programs are more likely to complete their programs if they are provided with three or more services. It certainly is beyond the purview of most small literacy programs to provide all the needed services. The efforts to coordinate services on the local level must be facilitated and supported at the state level." ■

> *"The complexity of adult learners' needs cannot be met by a single agency . . . but rather by a joint effort of diverse community groups."*

# People and Programs in PA ABLE

* If you are not receiving *Mosaic* from the **Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy** you are missing out on some usable, succinct research information which should be of interest to every **Buzz** reader. The April, 1994 issue focuses on Assessment with emphasis upon workplace literacy evaluation, assessment courseware and portfolio assessment. To get on the mailing list of this free newsletter, call the Institute at (814) 863-3777.

* **Margaret Shaw**, former ABLE Bureau staffer and now with Penn State Harrisburg, brought our attention to a new segment of the FOX television network news at 10 p.m. The segment is titled "What's the Buzz?". No, this is not an extension to a multi-media approach for our newsletter.

* **Lancaster/Lebanon LVA** has introduced a new "Picture Brochure" which has been written up in the latest Literacy Volunteers of American (LVA) newsletter. The brochure was developed by the Junior League of Lancaster and is designed to reach potential non-reading students by having pictures put together to form words and a message. Distribution at public transportation terminals, organizations, etc. is being carried out by service organizations.

* The **State Correctional Institution at Smithfield** recently held their 5th Annual Graduation and Awards Ceremony recognizing inmates who successfully passed the requirements for a General Educational Development (GED) Diploma. Eighty inmates and their guests were present for the awards ceremony which was followed by recognition of SCI-Smithfield's literacy program tutors, vocational honors students and postsecondary students. William Love, Superintendent of the SCI-Huntingdon was the Keynote Speaker.

* **Penny Lang**, Family Literacy Specialist for **Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh's Literacy Initiative (GLI)**, recently coordinated GLI's first Western Pennsylvania Family Literacy Conference. More than 100 literacy providers and students participated in presentations ranging from "How to Choose Materials and Methods" to "Who and What We Are Teaching in the Field of Family Literacy".

## CFL/Jo Ann Weinberger Receive Prestigious Award

The U.S. Secretary of Education has announced that one of ten national awards for Outstanding Adult Education and Literacy Programs in 1994 has been given to the Center for Literacy, Inc. in Philadelphia.

Founded in 1968, CFL is the nation's largest and Pennsylvania's oldest community-based adult literacy provider. Its mission is to provide free literacy instruction and a wide range of other literacy services to adults in Philadelphia; the city's population of over 1 million adults over 25 years of age includes nearly 116,000 adults with less than a ninth grade education. In 1993 the Center delivered education services to 2,579 adults in 106 learning sites, offered 18 family literacy, 11 workplace education, six ESL, two homeless, three education for work and two Parole and Probation classes in addition to its community program.

Also in 1993 CFL provided training for 712 volunteer tutors who dedicated nearly 45,000 hours of service.

In addition to praising CFL and Executive Director JoAnn Weinberger for the wide range of literacy and support services being provided, the Secretary's award noted the effective partnerships the Center has formed with government agencies and community organizations including churches, synagogues, County Assistance Office and community centers.

CFL and Ms. Weinberger have received numerous awards over the years including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Community Partnership Award and the National Alliance for Business Non-profit Award.

* Congratulations to **Ellen McDevitt** with the Office of Community Education at Carlow College in Pittsburgh who recently became editor of a new national **math newsletter** for teachers. The newsletter is an outcome of the Conference on Adult Mathematical Literacy held last Spring. ■ 39

## The Regional Staff Development Centers

**Region 1:** 2922 State Street, Erie, PA 16509; (814) 454-4474; Erie, Crawford, Mercer, Lawrence, Warren, Venango, Forest, Clarion, Jefferson, McKean and Elk counties; Director: Dr. Richard Gacka, Northwest Tri-County IU #5; Coordinator: Bootsie Barbour.

**Region 2:** Development Center for Adults, Centre County Vo-Tech School, Pleasant Gap, PA 16823; (814) 359-3069; Potter, Tioga, Lycoming Clinton, Centre, Clearfield, Cameron, Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union counties; Director: Edith Gordon, Central IU #10; Coordinator: Gail Leightley.

**Region 3:** Lackawanna Junior College, 901 Prospect Avenue, Scranton, PA 18505; (717) 961-7834; Bradford, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming counties; Director: Joyce Kerrick; Coordinator: Jan Douiahy.

**Region 4:** Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, 100 Sheridan Square, 4th floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15206; (412) 661-7323; Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington and Westmoreland counties; Director: Donald Block; Coordinator: Rachel Zilcosky.

**Region 5:** Adult Education and Job Training Center, MCIDC Plaza, 1 Belle Avenue, #58, Lewistown, PA 17044; (717) 248-4942; Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntington, Juniata, Mifflin and Somerset counties; Director: Carol Molek, Tuscarora IU #11; Coordinator: Brian Frey.

**Region 6:** 900 North 17th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17103; (717) 232-0568; Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York counties; Director: Beverly Smith, Diocese of Harrisburg, Immigration and Refugee Services of Catholic Charities; Coordinator: Paul Smith.

**Region 7:** 33 Coppee Drive, Bethlehem, PA 18015; (610) 758-6347; Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Monroe, Northampton and Pike counties; Director: Judith Rance-Roney, Lehigh University; Coordinator: Jane Ditmars.

**Region 8:** Cabrini College, 610 King of Prussia Road, Radnor, PA 19067-3699; (215) 971-8518; Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties; Director: Judith Bradley.

**Region 9:** 1500 Walnut Street, 18th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102; (215) 875-6602; Philadelphia County; Director: Donna Cooper, Mayor's Commission on Literacy; Coordinator: Diane C. Inverso.■

## Counseling Issues Summer Institute a Big Success!

Despite the provision for a "counselor" in each program, the administrative duties required by most programs on the individuals hired to counsel effectively removes them from providing the one-on-one or small group contacts basic to the counseling relationship.

The solution: provide teachers and tutors with awarenesses and knowledge necessary to provide direct counseling help to some adult learners and make referrals to others.



Summer Institute Keynote Sam Deep facilitated an interactive presentation: "Dealing with Difficult People".

Counseling Issues for Adult Educators is the title of one of the ABLE Summer Institutes held throughout the state this past summer. The Institute, coordinated by Carol Molek, Director of the TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center in Lewistown, was a hit!

More than 100 ABLE practitioners spent three days at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College listening and interacting with each other and a cadre of knowledgeable presenters in a gathering of what some attendees characterized as "excellent presenters", in a "well organized", "excellent", "incredible" (attendee comments) series of workshops.

The success of the Institute can best be summed up by the comments of two adult educators who attended: "I learned quite a bit. The information was

## Mellon Bank proves corporate responsibility with literacy efforts

The Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) at its latest meeting extended thanks and congratulations from the Coalition for the financial and technical support the Mellon Bank Corporation has extended on behalf of the cause of literacy in Pennsylvania.

In addition to providing literacy tutors from its employees, Mellon officials, led by Kathy Charochak, Community Relations Manager for Mellon Bank West, have paid for materials for literacy programs, sponsored fund raising events, donated computers and copiers and even donated an entire building to Adult Literacy Advance in Beaver County.

Unlike some other business support of literacy, Mellon also makes available its personnel to assist in literacy activities. For example, Richard Torbert, Mellon/PSFS Vice President for Corporate Affairs, as chair of the State Adult Literacy Task Force, assumed a strong participatory role in last May's "Call to Action: Mobilizing for Adult Literacy and Learning" Conference and Ms. Charochak has been elected vice-president of the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy.

According to Ms. Charochak, Mellon's efforts on behalf of literacy have resulted in 163 free newspaper ads, 66 30-second public service announcements, billboards, letters to businesses, posters, brochures, press releases and the participation of 70 cable and television stations and 138 radio stations. ■

excellent, well-presented, and professionally done," and "I was impressed on how well organized the Institute was and how well the presenters were in each session. The organizers took the time to make sure this conference was worth the time and effort to attend." ■

## MIDWINTER '95 Looking to the Future
by Debra Shafer, Conference Chair

Turn the pages of your calendar to February 1995, and mark it now for Pennsylvania's 30th Adult Education Midwinter Conference: **February 8-10, 1995.** Plans are falling into place as you read this for a "better than ever" conference. Special attention has been given to the five Program Divisions of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), (ABE, GED, ESL, Literacy, Continuing Higher Education, and Business and Industry) to ensure that there will be Concurrent Sessions and Special Sessions of interest to all. Also, the PDE Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education is planning two Special Sessions, a panel discussion by several national-level experts in the field and a presentation about Quality Indicators and upcoming training.

Dr. Theodore Hershberg, Professor of Public Policy and History and Director of the Center for Greater Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania, will deliver the keynote address. His topic will be "The Global Economy and Human Capital Development" as it effects all of us in education, from public and adult education, on-the-job training, and higher education.

Our Honorary Chairperson Dr. John Christopher, former Bureau Director, Adult Basic and Literacy Education, has accepted the Board's invitation to serve in that capacity.

Of course, the conference will open with the annual Legislative Luncheon when twenty Outstanding Students from both Adult Basic and Higher Education will be honored for their achievements. Other special programs and events will include the Technology Demonstration Center, "Author, Author," the Graduate Research Forum, and, a favorite for everyone – the Exhibit Hall and Marketplace full of vendors and program demonstrations.

And perhaps the best news of all: the Farmer's Almanac promises "no snow"!

For conference registration information write to PAACE at Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105. ■

## This Looks Like a Job for Superman!

**by Chris Kemp**
**Adult Literacy Resource Specialist**
**Western Pennsylvania Adult**
**Literacy Resource Center**

"Faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, able to leap tall buildings in a single bound . . ." This may be Superman's introduction, but it is also a fairly accurate description of adult education volunteers.

In her book, *Secrets of Motivation: How to Get & Keep Volunteers & Paid Staff!*, Sue Vineyard draws a picture of "Polly do-Gooder", a stereotypical volunteer, with running shoes, who is "unemployed, rich, can do 19 things at once, comes equipped with van, Xerox, computer, endless energy, permanent smile, martyrdom need!". If an organization is looking for volunteers like "Polly", forget it!!! While 50% of American adults volunteer regularly and 98% of adults between the ages of 25 and 40 believe that a great deal of satisfaction is gained by volunteering, the volunteer of the 1990's is no "Polly do-Gooder". In his book, *Recruiting Volunteers for Difficult or Long-Term Assignments,* Steve McCurley describes the "athon volunteer". This person participates in a number of one-time events: walkathon, bikeathon, runathon, readathon, etc. Today's volunteers are usually employed full-time and cite "limited time" as the main reason for not volunteering more.

Adult education is not a one-time, or even short-term, project. Volunteers must commit themselves to intensive time and energy demands. Nancy Macduff uses marketing strategies of profit-making companies to help volunteer organizations research, plan, advertise and promote their programs. Look to her book, *Volunteer Recruiting and Retention: A Marketing Approach* for help in developing needs assessments and market research to identify prospective volunteers.

More information about volunteer recruitment, retention, and management is available through the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, 800-446 ×607 ext. 216. ■

## Penn-Ohio X . . . Crossing Borders (Multiculturally and via Technology)

**by Bootsie Barbour**
**Region 1 Staff Development**
**Center Coordinator**

Ohio will be this year's host for the tenth annual Penn-Ohio Interstate Conference which will be held November 18 and 19 at the Avalon Inn in Warren, Ohio. Penn-Ohio is the longest running interstate literacy conference in the U.S.A. and is the result of the cooperative efforts of the Departments of Education from Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Registration will begin at 1:00 on Friday, November 18. The afternoon sessions will feature a Technology Demonstration which will be facilitated by **Rich Gacka**, Northwest Tri-County I.U. #5 and a Vendor Expo "Spotlights on Products" facilitated by **Mark Leiby.**

At the Friday evening banquet, educators will be introduced to **Cheryl Keenan** and **Jim Bowling,** Pennsylvania and Ohio State Directors of the Bureaus of Adult and Basic Literacy Education. There will be a chance to talk with Ms. Keenan and Mr. Bowling at the Saturday morning carousel, "Meet Your State Directors . . . Up close and personal!"

Other topics to be presented at the Saturday morning carousels include, working with at risk young adults, using computer skills with ABLE students, a computer software demonstration, ESL/multicultural sessions, what's working in workplace literacy, designing a physical science curriculum for post-GED students, and developing literacy programs at a family resource center.

If you are interested in attending Penn-Ohio X and would like more information, contact the Region #1 Staff Development Office at (814) 454-4474. Space is limited. ■

## PAACE/PSCAL Issue Adult Basic Education Legislative Alerts

The Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education and the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy have issued legislative alerts to members and persons in Pennsylvania concerned about the problem of providing funding needed for literacy services for the estimated four million state residents in need of adult basic and literacy education services.

**Federal Adult Education Act Reauthorization:** The present Federal Adult Education Act, which provides $11 million in Federal funds for adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania, expires this year and there is a good possibility the Act's provisions for ABLE will be consolidated with other funding streams and other programs as a part of what will be similar to the present community block grants.

**PA State Adult Literacy Act:** For the past five years the Pennsylvania legislature and the Governor have provided funding from the state budget in the amount of $7.75 million for adult literacy programs.

The Adult Education Task Force of Pennsylvania 2000 (a statewide coalition of business, education and state government leaders committed to education reform and established by the Governor) has recommended a multi-year phase-in of state appropriations for adult literacy in the Commonwealth to reach a total of $60 million in five years.

PAACE is asking members to contact their state legislators to request an increase to $10 million (from the $7.5 million level of the last five years) in adult literacy funds in the next state budget.

Jean Henry, legislative chair for PAACE, recommends concerned adult educators and community members: 1. have adult students benefiting from services write letters to legislators; 2. ask adult student alumni groups to draft position papers concerning the State Literacy Act funding.

For more information contact Jean Henry of PAACE (717) 273-6575 or JoAnn Weinberger of PSCAL (215) 474-1235. ■

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Recruitment and Retention are two "problem" areas with which adult basic and literacy education practitioners have been wrestling for as long as formal programs for adult learners have been in place.

At the top is the frustration that with all the programs we have throughout Pennsylvania and across the nation adult education is reaching only a small (5-10%) of those adults who would benefit from our services - RECRUITMENT.

Once we get over this problem (usually by ignoring it) we are faced with the day-to-day frustration of having adults who come to our programs, who can and do benefit from our services, adult learners who refuse to continue - RETENTION.

When we began to research the sometimes joined, sometimes separated problems/challenges of Recruitment and Retention in Adult Education we were astonished at the terrific amount of research, books, newsletter articles, 353 projects and the like which address these dual areas of concern. And, despite all this information, most, but not all, adult basic and literacy education programs in Pennsylvania are having difficulty Recruiting adults who most need our services (0-4 level) and Retaining many of the adults who begin instruction (as high as 50% drop out of some programs).

So . . . our problem in bringing you information which may be of help in your recruitment and retention efforts has been to synopsize as much of the information available as will fit into our "Spotlight" section while providing some ideas and sources for additional research.

We are dealing with our dilemma in two ways: 1. We are dividing the "Spotlight" topic of Recruitment and Retention into two parts: this month we will work with Recruitment; in November, with Retention; and 2. Rather than print lengthy articles, research findings, etc. we will attempt to identify the kernels of information in our sources and hope they provide our readers with enough information for them to decide if they want to refer to the original source for additional research.

# Student Recruitment: A Guide

It is essential each program interested in contacting adults appropriate to their program of adult education services develop a **"Recruitment Plan"**. To begin to develop the plan first determine who is likely to participate as adult students, why they might want to be part of your program, and what are the best ways to get your message across to them.

**Who Are Your Students?** What kinds of adults are already attending your classes? What are their ages? Socio-economic levels? Motivations in taking the adult education classes? What is their present reading/math level? Why do low-literate adults enroll in your program? How do the students hope your program will help them in their lives?

**Create A Message.** Base your recruitment message upon the motivations of your expected students. If most of your students enroll to improve their self-esteem stress that area; if most want to improve their reading and/or prepare for a job include the appropriate information in your message.

**Don't Promise What You Can't Deliver.** If you promise prospective adult students your program will prepare them for a job or a better job be sure you can help them reach these goals. Adults with unrealistic expectations about the ease of learning and/or the results of learning will produce dissatisfied students – more dropouts – more negative messages in the community – lower enrollment.

**Stress the "You're Not Alone" Aspect.** Emphasize in your message there are many, many (use a researched local number if possible) adults who need adult education; note also there are many adults presently attending your classes.

**Give Specific Details.** Don't give potential adult students the excuse to not enroll because of the lack of information. Detail how and where to enroll; stress classes are free; give class times and locations; tell where they may get additional information.

In the final analysis, the best recruitment tool you have is the quality of the services you provide. No means of advertising is more powerful than **word-of-mouth**, and a satisfied student is probably the best spokesperson for your program.

Many adult students who identify friends or family as referral sources note, when questioned in more detail, they first heard of a program through some other media. A multimedia approach to recruitment is recommended. Keep track of the effectiveness of the various approaches and adjust your strategy accordingly.

*· some of the ideas in this article are contained in the brochure "Student Recruitment: A Guide" distributed by Laubach Literacy Action (LLA), Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.* ■

# DETERRENTS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

Unlike its childhood counterpart, adult education is mainly a voluntary activity. The fact that only some adults engage in educational activities would be of little consequence were it not for the needs and expectations of society. However, changing socioeconomic, cultural and demographic forces as well as the democratic ideal of equal opportunity cause educational nonparticipation among adults to be treated as a social issue.

This *Overview* examines existing models and theories that attempt to explain participatory behavior. Types of barriers or deterrents that hinder participation are described. Finally, general guidelines and specific examples of successful approaches to stimulating participation offer strategies to address deterrents to adult education. In this context, a deterrent to participation is defined as a reason or group of reasons contributing to an adult's decision not to engage in learning activities (Scanlan 1986).

## Theoretical Foundations

Early attempts to explain why adults participate or fail to participate in education considered the potential impact of changes in life circumstances upon participatory behavior. Educational activity was seen as the interplay between personal needs and social structures. When both needs and social structures drive a person toward an educational objective, the likelihood of participation should be high.

Three recent approaches attempt to combine dispositional, situational, and environmental factors into composite models of participation. First, Rubenson's (1977) Recruitment Paradigm emphasizes the perceptual components of the individual's lifespace. That is, actual experiences, needs, and environmental factors are less important in determining behavior than how they are perceived and interpreted by the potential learner. Cross' (1981) Chain-of-Response Model conceives of participation as a result of a complex chain of responses originating within the individual.

The third recent formulation, Darkenwald and Merriam's (1982) Psychosocial Interaction Model, illustrates participatory behavior as determined by a continuum of responses to internal and external stimuli. The degree of probability of participation is affected by such variables as socioeconomic status, perceived value of participation, readiness to participate and barriers to participation.

These theories and models imply that a variety of variables are associated with participatory behavior.

## Categories of Deterrence Factors

However, the research evidence shows that these demographic and nondemographic variables of and by themselves are not deterrents to participation. Instead, these research findings demonstrate that (1) "deterrents" is a multidimensional concept, encompassing clusters of variables; (?) these variables are influenced by prospective learners' perceptions of their magnitude; and (3) the impact of these variables on participation behavior varies according to individual characteristics and life circumstances.

Synthesis of these findings suggests the following categories of deterrence factors (Scanlan 1986):
- Individual, family, or home-related problems
- Cost concerns
- Questionable worth, relevance, or quality of available educational opportunities
- Negative perceptions of the value of education in general
- Lack of motivation or indifference toward learning
- Lack of self-confidence in one's learning abilities
- A general tendency toward nonaffiliation
- Incompatibilities of time and/or place

## Strategies to Address Deterrents

The multiple factors deterring participation and their differential impact mean that a number of different approaches are needed to encourage adult involvement in educational activities.

## Target Groups to Be Recruited

### The Elderly

Among the deterrents most likely to hinder the elderly are personal (particularly health) problems, questionable relevance of programming, cost, accessibility and social nonaffiliation. This requires programming that is (1) direct, establishing linkages with the elderly community; (2) personal, providing a supportive environment attendant to individual need sensitive to physiological and psychological effects of aging; and (3) accessible, paying attention to physical comfort, transportation needs, and scheduling concerns.

### The Educationally Disadvantaged

The predominant barriers hindering the participation of this group are lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem and negative attitudes toward education, compounded by language or literacy problems. Recruitment should focus on community-based strategies, identifying problems important to the community. Personal contact (such as door-to-door and word-of-mouth recruiting) and use of existing social networks can influence these prospective learners' dispositions toward learning.

### Rural Adults

Inaccessibility, lack of support services, cost, and job and family conflicts often deter rural adults from participation. Successful rural adult education must be considered an integral part of overall rural development, providing advisement counseling, and support services appropriate for the surroundings.

This "Overview" and other information relating to "Recruitment" are available from ERIC. Contact one of the two State Adult Literacy Resource Centers. ■

## Region 9 Staff Development Center Holds Recruitment/Retention Workshop

### ... Briefing paper is available

A briefing paper prepared by **Diane Inverso,** Resource Coordinator at the Region 9 Staff Development Center, Mayor's Commission on Literacy, 1500 Walnut Street, 18th floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102, (215) 875-6602, contains lots of good information for programs considering developing recruitment/retention plans.

The paper was developed as the result of a workshop held at the staff development center and gives programs some practical, inexpensive suggestions for initiating a public relations program to enhance recruitment and adopt techniques to retain volunteers and students in their programs.

**Public relations** (some prefer to call it "community awareness") is an activity every program wishes they had, but usually cannot find the time to conduct properly. Some programs have found it effective to recruit a volunteer with some public relations background (perhaps a retiree) to carry on the local program and the suggestions in this briefing paper would serve as an excellent foundation for this type of person.

Although the primary goal of a public relations program in the context of this Spotlight article is increased student recruitment, programs with effective public relations programs have found a number of enhancements to other areas of their programs come with increased community awareness.

Increased community linkages and participation in program activities, improved tutor and volunteer recruitment and an improvement in the self-esteem of adult students are all "spin-off" benefits of a comprehensive public relations program. This is especially true if the program is designed not only to inform the public of the availability of program services, but to develop a community sense of pride and ownership in adult education services provided.

The Regional Staff Development Center 9 briefing paper goes into some detail as to publicity techniques and events, media presentation including the preparation of press releases, and the use of student success stories to provide a "human link" between your program and the community.

*In addition to this resource we should also mention the considerable amount of public relations materials generated by the Statewide Literacy Awareness Campaign conducted last month throughout Pennsylvania. For access to these materials contact your local literacy council or Nancy Woods at the Penn State Beaver Campus (412) 773-7810.* ■

## Word of Mouth Most Frequently Used Recruitment Tool

According to the results of the statewide adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) provider survey recently completed, 75% of the 324 ABLE service providers in the survey use "word of mouth" as a recruitment technique; 69% reported using brochures, fliers and posters; and 61% use "agency interaction" to recruit adult students.

Of the types of organizations relying on **word of mouth** recruitment, 100% of the literacy councils in the survey reported using this technique as did 81% of the school district programs.

As to other recruitment/public relations techniques the most popular are **newspapers/magazines, Public Speakers, Radio, Cable TV, their own newsletter, Broadcast TV** and other newsletters.

## Technology Can Aid in Recruiting and Retaining Adult Learners

Our Spotlight on Technology Issue of "What's the Buzz?" will be in May, 1995. At that time we will bring you information about the application and use of technology(ies) to adult basic and literacy education (ABLE).

When properly used, Technology can enhance the quality of learning, motivation and interest of adult learners in any instructional setting. Our students are our best recruiters as witnessed by the statements from every literacy provider in a recent survey that "Word of mouth" is most used to recruit new adults into ABLE programs.

In the book "Adult Literacy and New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime", the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment notes four "spin-offs" to the instructional use of technology in adult education Recruitment and Retention:

1. Technology can be a magnet, attracting learners.
2. More learners can be served and teachers used more productively.
3. Programs can broaden their reach, serving those in remote areas.
4. Teachers, counselors can maintain regular contact with learners.

## From the Pennsylvania Adult Education State Plan — — STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Although new standards/assessment of program quality in Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education are being developed by persons contracted with by the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, the Adult Education State Plan presently in force contains the following Quality Indicator. Measures and Standards in the area of Student Recruitment:

"Indicator 6: Appropriate Student Recruitment Methods. Programs successfully recruit the population in the community identified in the Adult Education Act as needing literacy services."

Measures: documented recruitment plan; evidence of methods used; evaluation data on effectiveness.

Standards: A written student recruitment plan appropriate to the recruitment of students identified as needing literacy service; Maintain measures of student contact; Maintain documentation of results; Involve community; Have available examples of recruitment literature.

## There Are Significant Differences between Adult Ed Participants, Non-participants

### Money Talks

A study completed in 1988 by Thomas Hawk went beyond studying the motivations for adult participation in continuing their education (one of the most thoroughly researched areas in adult education) and related his research to economic factors limiting or enhancing adult student recruitment.

Unfortunately, the results of Dr. Hawk's study showed the lack of equal access and equal opportunity to adult education may be the most significant factors in limiting enrollment.

For example, the study revealed that, for both men and women, **previous education, age, and professional employment status** were the most important factors distinguishing between participants and non-participants.

According to Hawk, "the opportunities for access to the lowest-cost educational opportunities seem not to be equal, and individuals whose participation would be of great personal and societal benefit are **excluded** or forced to pay (proportionately) much more for education than individuals already in a favored economic situation."

Hawk identified family income as extremely important in determining the probability of enrollment for men; the opposite pattern emerged for women.

A higher regional unemployment rate was a disincentive for male participation in career-related education (contrary to some ABLE programs finding an increase in enrollment during difficult economic times).

**Personal enrichment** was found to be a "non-factor" for attending adult education classes especially when compared to the motivational importance of career-entry preparation and the career enhancement potential of adult education.

Hawk makes a number of suggestions about the implications of his research for policy makers, postsecondary education leaders and researchers. Adult educators may wish to use some of his practical, concrete suggestions in their work to decrease deterrents to participation in their programs.

This article excerpted from "Determinants of Part-time Adult Student Participation in Education" by Thomas Hawk (1988) and an article by Susan Imel of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education. Dr. Hawk's 62-page paper is available through ERIC (ED 292 524) by contacting one of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers. ■

## Iowa recruitment study shows perceptions and situational barriers important factors in non-participation

Why don't more adults who need adult basic and literacy education instruction enroll in our programs? This is the big question which local programs must answer if they are to tap even part of the large pool of undereducated non-attenders present in every community.

One study completed in Iowa in 1989 suggests adults' attitudes toward school and themselves, along with problems such as child care and transportation, are responsible for a great number of adults not enrolling in adult basic and literacy education programs.

The survey completed by the project showed the following as the six top priority reasons from adults for non-attendance:

1. I would feel strange going back to school.
2. There aren't many people in adult classes who are my age.
3. Going back to school would be like going to high school all over again.
4. I am too old to go back to school.
5. I don't know anything about adult high school classes.
6. A high school diploma wouldn't improve my life.

Although each of these problems may not be present in your community, some probably account for your recruitment problems. Programs encountering recruitment problems would be well advised to survey their own communities and develop strategies such as increased public relations, personal contacts, etc. to better inform some of those adults who should be in our classes. ■

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## Adult Education Licensure – did we hit a nerve?

Wow! Some of the topics and issues we have discussed in "What's the Buzz?" have generated reader mail, but never to the extent of our discussion of Licensure/Certification for Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) personnel. We cannot take the space to print all the letters we received, but have excerpted from some:

"Licensure means tutors can be paid. Will Pennsylvania pay tutors after licensure? What monies would be needed for adult education if all volunteers were licensed and ask to be paid? Has anyone thought of the consequences of licensure?" - - A.M. Langford, Abington, PA.

"Our older tutors, I'm sure, would not be interested in (a) getting a bachelor's degree, or (b) receiving a provisional licensure until they're examined again." - - Peg Buchin, Willow Grove Literacy Council, Inc. (all tutors, officers and administrators serve without pay).

"I was appalled to read that Pennsylvania might consider certification or licensure of people involved in adult basic education of literacy programs. I think this would all but destroy hundreds of very effective voluntary tutoring programs." - - Renee T. Levin, Laverock, PA.

"In 1983, I participated in the writing of a research study conducted by Judith Cope, Meredith Leahy, James Reid and myself. Our recommendation was that the Department not develop and implement a certification process because (among other things) it would not guarantee any improvement in the quality of ABE teachers." - - Dr. Richard L. Learn, SCI Cambridge Springs, PA.

*(editor's note): As far as we can determine the only proponents of state licensure or certification for Adult Basic and Literacy Education personnel are those adult educators concerned about the lack of a "career track" in ABLE. This concern is certainly real and leadership and professionalism in our field should be concerns for everyone involved in Pennsylvania adult education. However, if the opinions expressed by the readers from whom we have received telephone calls and letters are any indicator, we are assuming certification and licensure are dead issues.* ∎

# THE PENNSYLVANIA LIBRARY INSTITUTE

Congratulations to Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy which received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Library Education and Human Resource Development Program to coordinate a training institute for public librarians in Pennsylvania.

According to Barbara Van Horn, Library Institute Coordinator, the training will focus on providing library services to underserved populations with a special emphasis on low-literate populations, older adults and rural residents. It will stress the importance of cooperation and collaboration among community organizations when planning new or expanded library services.

### Library Institute Teleconference

At a teleconference held recently, Library Institute Director **Dr. Eunice Askov**, who is also Director of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, was joined by **Sara Parker**, Commissioner of Libraries in Pennsylvania, **Cheryl Keenan**, Director of the State Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, **Shirley Sharp**, State Representative of the American Association for Retired Persons and **Bernie Vavrek** of Clarion University of Pennsylvania. The group discussed the training which would be involved in the Library Institute and how libraries throughout the state could involve themselves in meeting the needs of the target populations.

**Dr. Askov** introduced the Teleconference and stated the Library Institute would provide current information on targeted populations, assistance in designing new and expanded library services, and provide opportunities for participants to share information with colleagues.

**Cheryl Keenan**, Director of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, noted the problem of the proliferation of state-level agencies dealing with literacy. Presently there are five major state agencies funding literacy initiatives with at least eight programs in the Department of Education.

She noted the literacy effort is diverse in approaches and there is a need to make literacy programs more meaningful to meet adult learners' needs. "It is important to form networks of human service providers in our communities," she said.

Ms. Keenan noted the volunteer effort in literacy in Pennsylvania is significant and that there is a trend on the part of the business community to become more involved and concerned about literacy.

A two-day Training Institute will be held on November 3 and 4 with two regional training sessions scheduled for Spring, 1995 in Wilkes-Barre, Harrisburg and Butler.

Local Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education programs would be well advised to contact their local libraries and form cooperative linkages to enhance the quality of literacy services to adults in their communities. ∎

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### Customized Software now available for your program

One of the problems facing Adult Basic and Literacy Education programs in Pennsylvania is the identification of Software which will meet their unique, individual program needs.

**Brett Bixler**, an instructional designer with Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, is the Project Coordinator of a current Section 353 funded Software Customization Project designed to help local programs adapt commercial, generic, computer software to program and adult student needs.

The Project will help identify customizable software appropriate for ABLE program needs, customize software to meet unique needs, and present workshops on customization methods.

ABLE programs interested in software customization and/or training should contact their Regional Staff Development Center. Mr. Bixler may be contacted at (814) 863-3777.
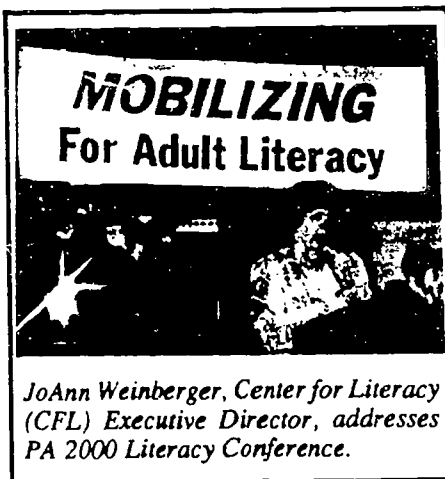
# Adult Literacy in Pennsylvania
# RESULTS OF THE STATE ADULT LITERACY SURVEY (SALS)

When the results of the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) were released last fall, they appeared in radically synopsized form in most national and some local newspapers. However, as with the adoption of Goal 5 of the national education goals, little has happened on the national literacy front since the survey; indeed, since the adoption of the goals.

As Dr. Andrew Hartman, Director of the National Institute for Literacy, said recently at the Pennsylvania 2000 Conference: "Since the passage of the National Literacy Act in 1991 there has not been much discussion in Washington, DC regarding adult literacy. New money is not going to come through the adult education act."



*JoAnn Weinberger, Center for Literacy (CFL) Executive Director, addresses PA 2000 Literacy Conference.*

The Pennsylvania State Survey: Now we have the SALS and whether or not the shocking results translate into action by the Governor and Legislature will depend, to a great extent, upon the efforts of you. There is little doubt the SALS results underline the serious need for increased services to Pennsylvania's large, undereducated adult population. We sincerely hope the SALS results will not be put in a pigeonhole in your desk or on a top shelf in your closet. Use the results to tell your community and legislators what's going on in Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania State Adult Literacy Survey, like the National Adult Literacy Survey of which it is a part, is based on a new definition of literacy and therefore follows a different approach to measuring it. The aim of this survey is to characterize adults' literacy skills in English based on their performance on diverse tasks that reflect the types of materials and demands they encounter in their daily lives.

## Profiles of Adult Literacy in Pennsylvania

* 18-22% of the adults in Pennsylvania demonstrated skills in the lowest level of prose, document and quantitative proficiencies (Level 1). Some had such limited skills that they were unable to respond to much of the survey.

* The composition of the Level 1 population in Pennsylvania differs in some important respects from the state population as a whole. Just 36% of the adults who performed in the lowest quantitative proficiency level had completed high school or received the GED diploma or attended a postsecondary institution. This contrasts to 74% of the state population as a whole. 50% in Level 1 of the quantitative scale were 65 or older and 40% had physical or mental conditions that kept them from participating fully in work, school, housework, or other activities.

* 25-28% of the Pennsylvania respondents performed in the next higher level of proficiency (Level 2) on each of the three literacy scales. They were generally able to locate information in text, to make low-level inferences using printed materials, and to integrate easily identifiable pieces of information. Further, they demonstrated the ability to perform quantitative tasks that involve a single operation where the numbers are either stated or can be easily found in text.

* Individuals in Levels 1 and 2 were sometimes, but not consistently, able to respond correctly to the more challenging literacy tasks in the assessment requiring higher level reading and problem-solving skills. In particular, they appeared to have considerable difficulty with tasks that required them to integrate or synthesize information from complex or lengthy texts or to perform quantitative tasks in which the individual had to set up the problem and then carry out two or more sequential operations.

* Approximately 32-35% of the survey participants in Pennsylvania performed on Level 3 and 17-21% on the two highest levels (4 and 5).

* The average prose, document, and quantitative proficiencies of adults in Pennsylvania were slightly (5-7 points) higher than those adults in the Northeast region, but approximately the same as adults nationwide. In all three populations -- state, region and nation -- the average scores were in the high end of Level 2.

Other findings:

* African American adults in Pennsylvania were more likely than white adults to perform in the two lowest literacy levels and less likely to attain the two highest levels.

* 14% of the Pennsylvania residents reported having physical or mental conditions that keep them from participating fully in work or other activities. These individuals were more likely than adults in the population as a whole to perform in the lowest levels on each literacy scale.

* The average prose and document proficiencies of men and women in Pennsylvania did not differ, but the average quantitative proficiencies of men were 15 points higher than those of women.

* On each literacy scale, the average scores of school dropouts nationwide who had studied for a GED or high school equivalency diploma were approximately 50 points higher than those of dropouts who had not participated in such a program. 84% of the GED program participants in Pennsylvania were 25 years or older.

* 20% of the adults in Pennsylvania who had not earned a high school diploma or GED and who were employed indicated that they would be willing to pursue a high school equivalency diploma during work hours, if their employers allowed them to do so.

* Slightly more than two-thirds of the adults in Pennsylvania felt that employers have an obligation to provide literacy education to employees who need it.

As noted in a recent report from the American Society for Training and Development, "The association between skills and opportunity for individual Americans is powerful and growing . . . Individuals with poor skills do not have much to bargain with; they are condemned to low earnings and limited choices."

The data from the SALS appear to support such views. On each of the literacy scales, adults who were unemployed or out of the labor force and who earned low wages tended to demonstrate far more limited skills than those who were employed and who earned high wages. Adults who rarely or never read displayed lower average proficiencies than those who were at least occasional readers. Moreover, the average literacy scores of individuals who received food stamps and who were poor or near poor were much lower than those of their more affluent peers.

Copies of the SALS were distributed at recent statewide meetings and according to Don Lunday, Chief of the Special Projects Section of the ABLE Bureau, each program director has been sent a copy of the SALS. ∎

## PA Gubernatorial candidates support literacy

Tom Ridge, Republican Candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania and Mark Singel, present Lieutenant Governor and Democratic part candidate, have responded to a query by JoAnn Weinberger, director of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia and Chair of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) Legislative Committee.

Ms. Weinberger asked each candidate to provide PAACE with their position on the need for and funding of adult literacy programs in the Commonwealth.

### Singel Emphasizes Casey Record

In his response, Mark Singel noted the support to adult literacy programs which has been provided during the present administration's tenure. "Our administration has provided over $36 million for the State Adult Literacy Grant Program . . . the Pennsylvania Department of Education has strongly encouraged and supported the development of family literacy programs . . . also supported at least 50 work sites with basic education programs." He closes his letter to Ms. Weinberger by pledging to continue and expand the commitment to improve the literacy skills of Pennsylvanians.

### Ridge Supports PA Literacy Act, "Innovative" funding, Improved K-12 Education

Candidate Tom Ridge emphasized the work of his wife, Michele, in the Erie County Library. He pledges to "strive to increase and improve the services to those who need literacy training . . . Innovate ways to fund these programs . . . work for passage of a Pennsylvania Literacy Act to streamline state literacy programs, reduce duplication of services and coordinate efforts on the state and local level." Mr. Ridge notes, "The root of the adult literacy problem rests with a public school system that is graduating students who can not read their diplomas." ∎

## Statewide Adult Literacy Service Provider Survey

### Recommends more funding and "Do more with the resources available now"

If you're not familiar with the National Education Goals, Goal 6 (formerly 5) says: "By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship".

The Pennsylvania 2000 Adult Literacy Task Force, with funding provided by the U.S. Department of Education and Pennsylvania 2000, recently conducted a survey of adult basic and literacy education providers throughout the state. Principal investigators for the project were Lori Forlizzi, Research Associate, and Eunice Askov, Director of Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy.

The Final-Report tabulates the services provided by 324 organizations throughout Pennsylvania and shows "great diversity in service provision."

Of the service provider organizations answering the survey and included in the tabulation 34% are Community-Based organizations (CBO's), libraries, religious affiliates, etc.; 28% are School Districts, Intermediate Units and Vocational-Technical Schools; 8% each were literacy councils and post-secondary education institutions. An additional 74 organizations ranged from governmental agencies such as housing authorities, to unions, to 13 for-profit corporations.

**Wide Range of Program Services:** The predominate types of services provided by responding organizations are: ABE (Adult Basic Education 0-8): 60% of the organizations provided this service; GED/ASE (General Educational Development/Adult Secondary Education) – 58%; Basic Literacy-53%; 46%- English as a Second Language (ESL); 19%-Customized Basic Skills Instruction for Work; 14%-Customized Basic Skills Instruction for Family Literacy.

**Students Served:** Of the total 69,687 adult students represented by the organizations in the report 26% are ABE students, 24% ESL, 20% GED/ASE, the remainder are in family or work literacy or other types of instructional programs.

**Staff:** 64% of the organizations use part-time teachers/coordinators; 52% use volunteer tutors; 42% use full-time teachers/coordinators. The largest number of staff members used is volunteer tutors (10,029 - 70% of total staff). Next are Volunteers (1,534 - 11%); and Part-time teachers/coordinators (1,270 - 9%). 135 organizations (42%) of the 324 reported have full-time teachers/coordinators for an average of 4.55 per organization contrasted to an average of 60.42 volunteer tutors per organization (which uses them) and 6.38 part-time teacher/coordinators per organization.

**Funding:** 161 (50%) of the organizations reported in the survey receive 75-100% of their funding from government sources, but nearly $10 million in funding is received by all organizations from private sources.

### Recommendations

The report suggests two possible courses of action to improve the availability and quality of literacy services in Pennsylvania.

1. Increase levels of both government and private funding (including corporate, foundation and union funding), in order to increase the capacity of adult literacy service provision.

2. Do more with the resources available now. Providers could switch their current focus and provide literacy skills in contexts that are meaningful and relevant to adults (for example, family and job-related contexts) rather than continuing to provide more traditional (general) programs of study.

Providers could also increase reliance on technology to accomplish more.

Copies of the final report of the survey are available through either of the state Adult Literacy Resource Centers (AdvancE in Harrisburg, 1-800-992-2283, or the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center at 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216). ∎

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# IT'S A DATE!

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# What's The BUZZ? TM

| Tell Us What's Happening in PENNSYLVANIA | (i) Literacy | E.S.L. English as a Second Language | General Educational Development | A.B.E. Adult Basic Education | Be All You Can Be Adult Education Is the Key |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

NOVEMBER, 1994                    VOLUME 14, NUMBER 3

## Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education Announces New Statewide Initiative
### EDUCATIONAL QUALITY FOR ADULT LITERACY
by Cheryl Keenan, ABLE Bureau Director

The Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) is pleased to announce a new statewide initiative, Educational Quality for Adult Literacy (EQuAL). The project is designed to promote educational excellence in Adult Basic and Literacy Education by developing a "systems" approach to quality programs. EQuAL is funded through a Section 353 grant with COSMOS Corporation, located in Bethesda, Maryland. Judith A. Alamprese, Director of the EQuAL project, is nationally known for her work in adult education.

**Two Main Objectives.** EQuAL has two main objectives. The first objective is to develop statewide performance standards for adult education and literacy programs. In approaching the development of statewide standards, ABLE will establish an Advisory Council comprised of adult education and literacy providers. The Council will be active in assisting the development of standards that will accommodate the needs of diverse providers and adult learners. The EQuAL project will also work in conjunction with pilot sites to design and enhance the collection of data. Ultimately, the data collected and analyzed will lead to quality statewide program standards. Pilot activities will begin in the 1994-95 program year and expand throughout 1995-96. Statewide draft standards will be developed by 1996.

The second objective of EQuAL is to develop an improved program evaluation system. The system will include the collection of critical data elements in conjunction with qualitative on-site evaluation. The program evaluation system will be designed to assist programs in identifying strengths and needs and to link technical assistance to identified program improvement areas. The project will pilot components of the system in the current year.

**Three-Year Project.** EQuAL is scheduled as a three-year project. Accordingly, the end result will allow agencies to measure their outcomes against statewide standards as well as provide a program evaluation tool that links technical assistance to program improvement. Additionally, EQuAL will provide a management tool to the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education that can be used to reward program quality performance and strengthen learner outcomes. Ultimately, these accomplishments will lead to overall educational excellence for adult literacy in Pennsylvania.

*Teleconference on November 21. ABLE Bureau Director Cheryl Keenan will appear on a special videoconference from 1-3 p.m. on November 21 to explain the EQuAL Initiative. Contact your regional staff development center for downlink viewing and/or the availability of videotapes of the teleconference.* ■

### FEDS PLACE GED UNDER FIRE
The General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS) is asking for help from adult educators to counteract the current attack on the viability of the GED examination; specifically a request from the U.S. Department of Education which is asking for public comment concerning the GED and says that, " . . . Studies focusing on the skill levels, economic outcomes, and postsecondary education experience of GED holders have yielded inconclusive and sometimes contradictory results. Should attainment of a GED diploma continue be a primary focus of Adult Secondary Education?"

GEDTS asks that written comments be addressed to Dr. Augusta Souza Kappner, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Ave., SW, Room 4090-MES, Washington, DC 20202. ■

# People, Programs and News in PA ABLE

○ **Rachel Zilcosky**, Coordinator of the **Region 4 Staff Development Center** in Pittsburgh, writes that the six most requested topics on the latest Regional Staff Development Needs Assessment in her region were: 1. Teaching Techniques: Reading Skills; 2. Teaching Techniques: Writing Skills; 3. Small Group Instruction; 4. Teaching Techniques: Math Skills; 5. Teaching Techniques: Spelling; 6. Computer Assisted Instruction. Assessments were returned by 67 instructors and 33 administrators.

○ The **Scranton Council for Literacy Advance (SCOLA)** played a significant part in the recent state-wide ad campaign to recruit tutors and donors for local literacy programs. According to **Diana Statsman**, SCOLA Director, 13 billboards were donated, both cable TV outlets in her area carried messages about the campaign and mailed more than 70,000 flyers with their bills, two television and five radio stations ran public service announcements (PSA's) and the Lackawanna County Library System put up posters. That's real community involvement!

○ Congratulations to **Ellen Gard**, ESL Instructor at **Connelley Technical Institute and Adult Education Center** in Pittsburgh. **Hands-on-English**, a periodical for teachers and tutors of adult English as a Second Language (ESL), recently featured a cultural activity of Ellen's called "Famous Quotations" in which students develop Cultural Literacy by studying varied quotations. Subscriptions to Hands-on-English are $16 to PO Box 256, Crete, NE 68333.

○ Word from **Kathy Kline**, former co-ordinator of Regional Staff Development Region #8 at Cabrini College. Kathy is now Executive Director of **Adult Learning Center, Inc.** which will open for students in January, 1995 in the Gay Street Plaza in West Chester. The Center will provide employment, job training skills and help with placement for caregivers of economically disadvantaged children in Chester County. Good luck, Kathy!

○ We recently received the comprehensive, informative Annual Report for 1993-94 from the **Intermediate Unit #5 Adult Education Program** directed by Dr. **Richard Gacka.** The report notes, in statistical and narrative form, services provided during the year to 1,074 adult students at the 11 sites operated by the program ("It is the intention of the IU to operate classes so that transportation is minimized.") Services included the gamut of Literacy, ABE, GED, ESL, pre-GED and life skills instruction including the delivery of 2,170 tutoring hours by 56 volunteer tutors.

An interesting note in the "Future Plans" section of the report: "Planning for 94-95 calls for a continued shift to a more vocational oriented curriculum linked to the applied academic curriculum being developed within the Tech Prep area."

○ We read in the Fall issue of the **PAACE News**, the newsletter of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education, that eight literacy programs in Pittsburgh have joined to sponsor a program called **"Literacy AmeriCorps Pittsburgh"** which will be an extension of the domestic version of the Peace Corps. Seattle, New Orleans and Houston have similar programs which are being coordinated by the National Institute for Literacy. The Pittsburgh program is being administered by the **Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council** and its Executive Director, **Don Block.** Plans are to employ twenty full-time National Service Workers in community service projects. The PAACE News notes that further information is available from **Jodi Golcomb** (412) 661-7323.

○ We won't go into detail, but note an interesting conversation at a recent PAACE Board meeting between **Peggy Greene**, PAACE Membership Chair who is with the adult education department of the **Harrisburg State Hospital** and **Carol Molek**, PAACE president and Director of the **TIU 11 Adult Education and Job Training Center** in Lewistown. The topic of discussion was a book titled "The Invisibility of Middle-aged Women".

○ "Working for Myself," a set of ten stories about ordinary people who successfully build their own small businesses. has been released by Lake Education, Belmont, California. The author is **Tana Reiff** of Lancaster. The extensive curriculum guide accompanying the set was co-authored by Reiff and **Jane W. Ditmars**, Director of the **Tri-Valley Literacy Staff Development Center** at Lehigh University. Each story in the "Working for Myself "series realistically illustrates the development of a different enterprise, launched with little or no start-up capital. As Reiff notes in the curriculum guide, "I think readers will enjoy these stories even if they never give self-employment a second thought. These are, first and foremost, *stories*." Reading level is indexed at 3.0-3.9. For more information, contact Lake Education at (415) 592-1606.

○ **Gail Leightley**, Coordinator for the **STARS Region 2 Staff Development Center** at the CIU 10 Development Center for Adults, has announced 12 tapes produced by New Readers Press are available to each of the 16 program sites in Region 2. The tapes, titled "Stand-up Teaching and/or One-on-One Instruction" and "Effective Strategies for Teaching Adults" will, in the words of Ms. Leightley, "probably reach more people and be more cost beneficial than anything else we do this year!" To enable local programs to schedule viewing times convenient to paid staff and tutors, the tapes will be circulated in sets of four.

For more information contact the Region 2 Staff Development Center at (814) 359-3069.

○ **PAACE Announces State Financial Aid for Part-time Adult Students**

The Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) is pleased to announce the Pennsylvania Legislature has passed legislation which will enable the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) to grant financial aid to part-time (at least 1/2 time) adult students on the same basis as full-time students at postsecondary institutions.

The new aid program will begin operation in December and part-time students are encouraged to contact their financial aid office at the institution they attend or plan to attend or PHEAA at (717) 257-2800.

The PAACE Board of Directors gives special thanks to Tom Wertz who worked with PHEAA to develop the new legislation. ∎

# Two Noteworthy Adult Education Conferences in Pennsylvania

The first state-wide Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Education Research Conference (ACERC) was held October 8, 1994 at the Penn State Center for Continuing and Graduate Education in Monroeville. This founding conference was co-sponsored by Penn State University and Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Over 100 participants attended the research presentations - - all of which had been selected through juried review by a panel of experts. Presentations also included invited research papers by featured Pennsylvania adult educators, and an informal "poster session" was part of the program to allow students and those interested a chance to talk more informally about emerging issues or research projects-in-progress.

The day included a keynote address by Dr. Henry Johnston of Penn State and ended with a symposium panel on the ethical and legal rights of subjects who are being researched.

Co-chairs of this 1994 Conference were Dr. Allan Quigley and Dr. Gary Dean of Penn State and IUP, respectively. "An interim planning committee was formed to find a 'home' for the Second Annual Conference," said Dr. Quigley. "The idea is that the ACERC will be hosted by one of the Adult Education University programs each year. We have a lot of support, in-

### The State-Wide Research Conference
by Dr. Allan Quigley
Penn State Center for Continuing &
Graduate Education, Monroeville

cluding PAACE's support, so we hope this will be an on-going annual event each fall. It is a conference aimed at the Adult and Continuing Education research community and those who are interested in putting research to practice in Adult and Continuing Education."

The idea for the conference came from one of the Monroeville Graduate students, Anne Rockwell. According to Dr. Quigley, "Anne had attended the international Adult Education Research Conference which was held at Penn State, University Park in the Spring of 1993. She and other students were interested in having the AERC Pennsylvania Researchers come to visit our Graduate program in Monroeville. One thing led to another and, with IUP's help, we achieved what many of us think is a major addition to Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Edu ation."

The one day event was a landmark for Pennsylvania adult and continuing education. We wish every success to the 1994-95 Planning Committee and will look forward to hearing about it in the months to come.

*Editor's Note: We will feature some presentations from the Research Conference in future issues.* ■

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Although we will deal in more detail with the Fourth Annual National Conference of the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN) in our January Spotlight feature on Special Learning Needs we must pass on to our readers the interest, excitement and "top-drawer" content of the NAASLN Conference which was held in Philadelphia September 29-October 1, 1994.

### NAASLN

working with special needs adults; and there is still lots to do.

There were 30 states, one territory and the District of Columbia represented and the program was crammed full of a wide range of relevant topics with topnotch presenters. Congratulations to Dr. Richard Cooper, Conference Chair and Martin Murphy and Allison Pokras of the Center for Alternative Learning in Bryn Mawr, for an out-

We emphasize this was a national conference and, in conversations with Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education practitioners who attended (there were over 100 of the total 325 attendees), we found a true feeling of gratitude for attendees being able to broaden their awareness of the complex problems inherent in special needs adult education by talking and listening to persons from as far away as Hawaii. Many ideas were shared; some new philosophies and ways of dealing with challenges were discussed; most of us attending the Conference came away with the feeling that Pennsylvania is doing lots of things right in

standing job of putting together a truly impressive group of experts in the field of Adult Special Learning Needs.

NAASLN, the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs, is a unique organization of persons concerned with providing quality educational opportunities for adults with special learning needs. Membership for an individual is $45 and checks made payable to NAASLN may be mailed to Dr. Richard Cooper, P.O. Box 716, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.

Keep an eye on The Buzz in May and June for information about next year's NAASLN Conference. ■

*At the 1994 NAASLN Conference in Philadelphia: from left, Richard Cooper, Conference Chairperson and Director of the Center for Alternative Learning in Bryn Mawr, PA; William Langner, U.S. Department of Education; Kenneth McCullough, President, American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE).*

**Adult Literacy:** A collection of articles about reading instruction for adult learners is compiled from the excellent **Journal of Reading** from the International Reading Association (IRA). A wide variety of topics from assessment, to teaching methodology, to technology, to tutoring, etc. is dealt with in case studies, teacher research, and portraits of adult literacy tutoring. Both theory and practice are dealt with in the 45+ articles. From IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139 (1-800-336-7323, ext. 266); request publication #122-310, $19 ($14 for IRA members).

**Pennsylvania Government: A Handbook for Citizens:** Developed by Dr. Barbara Woodruff at the TIU Adult Education and Job Training Center in Lewistown, the Handbook, written at the 4-8 level, gives a five unit overview of state government and various state agencies and their responsibilities. Questions and crossword puzzles provide additional student activities. Contact the South-Central Region #5 Staff Development Center, (717) 248-4942.

**Classroom Strategies for Assessing Limited English Proficient Students in Vocational Programs: A Resource Handbook.** Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, the handbook documents assessment strategies with promise to accurately assess limited English proficient (LEP) adults in vocational programs. Assessments in current use, those with a potential for duplication, and those in the testing and development stages are analyzed and specific techniques are explained with examples given. Chapters are designed to answer the What, Why, How and Where of different issues and strategies of assessment. $24.95 including shipping from Crosspaths Management Systems, Inc., Two Wisconsin Circle, Suite 660, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

**South-Western Publishing Offers Book/Computer GED Program**

There are lots of them around and General Educational Development (GED) preparation programs with computer capabilities are probably either working with GED preparation software or at least considering adopting this latest medium in adult education instruction.

As with most technology, adult education computerized instruction is continually changing - hopefully improving - and one of the latest entries in the Marketplace is a GED preparation program by South-Western. We think the program deserves a look at both the software and the five GED test preparation books. We're not sure if the books complement the software or vice-versa, but the combination should fit right into most programs which can come up with the price.

Demo disks are now available (as are review copies of the main texts, exercise books and GED test booklets, pre and post-test). The program is compatible with 3-1/2 and 5-1/4" IBM and MAC disk set ups (hard drive required). The total Software package is $995 (main texts are $10.50 each), but demo disks are free so why not have a look? The Pennsylvania sales rep for South-Western is Scott Walker (412) 466-6261.

**Looking for Multicultural Materials?** Here's a Whole Catalog Full! Our latest copy of **Multicultural Messenger**, the newsletter of the International Multicultural Education Association, contains a new catalog by Peoples Publishing called "Classroom Equity, U.S.A." and if you're looking for multicultural literature, textbooks and teacher resource materials, you may want to send for a copy.

We must warn you most of the materials were developed for the K-12 market and, as such, the instructional materials will have to be screened carefully so as not to turn off adult learners. However, there are many usable materials such as the Multicultural Biography Series "Heroes Don't Just Happen" which tells the stories of notable sports figures (Arthur Ashe, Roberto Clemente, Kristi Yamaguchi, etc.) who overcame personal as well as racial barriers to success.

There are also a number of books designed for Professional Development, and a Handbook of Hispanic Cultures in the United States (one each in Anthropology, Sociology, History and Literature and Art). Most books are accompanied by "authentic voice" tapes.

To get a copy of the catalog or to subscribe to the **Multicultural Messenger** ($97), call (800) 822-1080.

**TUTOR: A Collaborative Approach to Literacy Instruction**

This is the title of a newly published book from Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) and in this seventh revised, updated edition increased emphasis is placed upon meeting the ever-changing needs of adult literacy instruction in such areas as: tutoring as a collaborative process (adult learners are part of the collaborative effort); the learner-centered approach (student goals and needs are the heart of the learner process and students are equal partners in the process); early introduction to process writing; techniques to use with real-life materials; how adults learn; and assessment as an ongoing process.

This is not just a "pie in the sky" book, but a training tool which could be used with effectiveness by tutors, teachers and anyone working with adult learners (characteristics of adult learners, characteristics of effective basic literacy tutors, learning and tutoring, reading strategies, etc.).

We have been impressed with LVA-published materials in the past including their excellent handbook dealing with the establishment of family literacy programs. "Tutor" is of equal quality and well worth the $12.50 plus shipping. We feel every adult educator can learn from this book. Contact LVA at 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214-1846 (315) 445-8000.

**IRA Offers Free Family Literacy Brochure**

A brochure recently published by the International Reading Association, "Family Literacy: New Perspectives, New Opportunities," will help individuals who are seeking general information about family literacy and educators who are looking for guidelines to develop family literacy programs. Community organizations, literacy programs, schools, and libraries will find the brochure a useful tool to inform the public about the topic of family literacy.

Single copies of "Family Literacy" are free and can be ordered by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Family Literacy Brochure, International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA. ∎

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## Spotlight on *RETENTION*

In Adult Basic and Literacy Education, outside of instruction, there are two R's - - Recruitment and Retention.

Last month we spotlighted Recruitment and noted some problems, research and suggestions designed to assist programs recruit not only *NUMBERS* of adult students, but to bring into their programs some of the most reluctant potential students.

*RETENTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS.* When we identified those topics we would Spotlight in our first issues of the 1994-95 year, we advisedly began with information about the Adult Learner (September, 1994). As we prepared the information for this month's issue relating to Retention of Adult Learners, we could not help but go back to the September issue and note the parallels.

*THOSE PROGRAMS WHICH MEET THE NEEDS OF THEIR STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE RETENTION PROBLEMS.*

Adult Basic and Literacy Education programs must identify their students' needs. They must assist students to set goals, help them reach these goals and, further, make sure the adult student realizes what has been happening and appreciate what could be achieved by steady attendance and participation in the program.

## Another National Adult Education Study . . . Explodes some myths about attendance patterns

The announced purpose of the National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs is to evaluate programs' potential "for significantly reducing deficits in the adult education population with respect to literacy, English proficiency, and secondary education."

The report is divided into four sections: 1. Patterns of enrollment and attendance (11 percent of all new enrollees continue into a second year of instruction, etc.); 2. Program characteristics which result in newly enrolled adults actually beginning instruction; 3. Differences between adult students who reach the federally defined 12-hour attendance threshold and those who do not (no differences); and 4. Characteristics of adults who receive a relatively large number of hours of instruction.

### 1. *Patterns of Enrollment and Attendance:*
- About one-third of all new clients enroll in September or October.
- Eighty-five percent of individuals who enroll in adult education programs actually begin instruction.
- ESL clients who begin instruction receive a median of 77 hours of instruction over 16 weeks.
- ABE clients who begin instruction receive a median of 31 hours of instruction over 10 weeks.
- ASE clients who begin instruction receive a median of 26 hours of instruction over 8 weeks.
- Eleven percent of all new enrollees continue into a second year of instruction.

### 2. *Newly enrolled clients are more likely to begin instruction if they are enrolled in*
- Smaller-sized programs.
- Programs that do not emphasize outreach and recruitment activities.
- Programs that have low costs per client seat hour.
- Programs which have substantial integration of social services.

3. *There are few differences between client populations who reach the federally defined 12-hour attendance threshold and those who do not.*

4. *Distinguishing personal and programmatic characteristics of clients who receive a relatively large number of hours of instruction*

- Long-term persisters are likely to be those who use support services.

- Long-term persisters are likely to receive instruction during the day, rather than evening.

- Motivational variables do not discriminate persisters from nonpersisters.

- In Adult Basic Education (ABE), older clients are more likely to persist than younger clients, but age is not a substantial predictor for Adult Secondary Education (ASE) or English as a Second Language (ESL).

- ABE programs with relatively prestructured (as opposed to highly individualized) curricula are more likely to increase client persistence, but not for clients in ASE or ESL.

- ESL clients are more likely to persist when enrolled in large classes, ABE clients are more likely to persist in medium-size to large classes (more than 10 clients), and class size is not related to persistence for ASE.

- Spending more per client seat hour is not positively related to persistence.

Full copies of the Third Interim report (price is $15 which include postage and handling) may be purchased from Sally Lukash, ADULTED Orders, Development Associates, Inc., 1730 North Lynn Street, Arlington, VA 22209 (800-348-7323). ■

# Pennsylvania's Section 353 Projects and

## Effective Instruction and Counseling Intervention Improves Retention

Dr. Allan Quigley is a noted instructor and researcher in adult education and is currently serving as Assistant Professor and Regional Director in Adult Education at the Pennsylvania State University Center for Continuing and Graduate Education in Monroeville.

His Section 353 Research Project completed in 1991 is based upon in-depth interviews of adult basic education students. Dr. Quigley divides these adult students into two groups: 1. Reluctant Learner Dropouts; and 2. Persisters.

The "Reluctant Learners" were those who discontinued attending classes between the first day and before three weeks had passed and who showed no obvious reason to drop out except for "attitudes shaped by earlier experiences, particularly those of earlier schooling."

**Negative Attitudes of the Reluctant Learner:**

Instead of being unable to adjust to the routines of schooling and a school-like atmosphere, most reluctant learners said they were unhappy because the adult education instruction to which they were exposed was not challenging enough, did not give them enough attention, was not academically focused and did not provide enough one-on-one tutorial experiences.

**Instructors and subject matter** were found by dropouts to not meet their expectations. The subject matter was viewed as being irrelevant and adult education teachers did not fit the role of classroom teachers which the reluctant learners expected (they were less like their former teachers in "traditional" school). The study concludes, "ABE did not give them relevant knowledge and, as they received less help from ABE teachers, even as compared to their earlier schooling, they were less comfortable than the persisters as time progressed."

**Counselors May Be a Key.** Despite the reluctant learners' lack of satisfaction with their instructors in adult basic education, they felt the counselor was "the only one of help in ABE".

Thus the counselor, according to Dr. Quigley, "plays a key role in the contacting and reaching of these potential droupouts."

In a 1992-93 follow-up study (also funded under Section 353) Dr. Quigley, with the cooperation of adult education staff at the Connelley Skill Training Center in Pittsburgh, developed instruments and strategies for early identification of potential "reluctant learner dropouts" and attempted to determine which instructional model was most successful in retaining these potential dropouts.

The follow-up study recommends that every adult education program, large and small, make an attempt to identify "Reluctant Learners" and that "a lot of teacher care and attention (TLC) will be of little help with reluctant learners." Rather, the report concludes, the use of counselors and small group instruction alone with the development of peer support groups will help reduce tragic dropout rates, in some cases as high as 65-70%.

The final reports of these research projects are available on free loan from either of the state Adult Literacy Resource Centers (Harrisburg 1-800-992-2283 and Western Pennsylvania 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216). ∎

## Study Identifies Characteristics of High and Low Attenders

ADULTS WHO ARE MOST LIKELY TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM OF ADULT STUDIES OFFERED AT AN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM ARE:
**Older**
**Female**
**On the 0-4 instructional level**
**Handicapped**
**Have little formal education**

This was the conclusion drawn by a Section 353 study completed at the Center for Literacy (CFL) in Philadelphia in 1990. The study, co-conducted by Maric Vannozzi Knibbe for CFL and Russell A. Dusewicz for Research for Better Schools, studied 1,047 adult students who, over a five-year period, were identified as "dropouts" and 2,503 who were non-dropouts.

### Characteristics which Predict Attendance

The strongest predictors of student attendance were age, gender, instructional level, handicaps and formal educational level completed.
**Gender:** Females attained higher hours than males
**Instructional level:** 0-4 level had highest mean number of hours
**Age:** As age increased, the mean hours increased
**Ethnic membership:** African-American group attained more hours; Asian-American group attained the least hours
**Dependents:** Those without dependents attained more hours
**Employment:** Unemployed students attained more hours; however when divided into looking/not looking for work, those looking for work had the lowest retention
**Formal educational level completed:** Those with the least previous formal education attained highest mean hours
**Handicapped:** Handicapped attained higher hours than non-handicapped

**No significant differences** were identified which depended upon: where the students lived in relationship to their program site; among single females with dependents, married females with dependents and married females without dependents; between students eligible for public assistance and those not.

### Implications

Based on what was learned about retention of students and tutors in CFL's program, staff developed program recommendations to increase student retention: focusing on specific, individualized student goals and interests; increased support from staff; topic oriented small group instruction; increased flexibility for special needs; relevant curriculum and materials; tutor/teacher training oriented to specific student needs; ongoing tutor/teacher support; meaningful and supportive initial and ongoing assessment; portfolio assessment for increased understanding of progress, processes and goals; student collaboration; drop-in centers for transition periods.

Copies of this full final report and Dr. Quigley's research which also studied retention of tutors are available from either of the two State Adult Literacy Resource Centers: Western Pennsylvania (800) 446-5607, ext. 216 or Harrisburg/AdvancE (800) 992-2283. ∎

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# Other Studies on Adult Student Retention

## Self-esteem and Empowerment May Increase Retention

This was the conclusion reached by the project titled "Building a Better You" which was conducted by the Lutheran Settlement House (LSH) Women's Program in the Fishtown section of Philadelphia. The project, adapted from an earlier Section 310 project (predecessor to Section 353) carried out by the Mon Valley Progress Council (outside Pittsburgh), was titled "Building a Better You: A Demonstration in Elderly Enrichment".

The LSH project applied materials and techniques developed in the earlier project to a younger population with the goals of: a. building self-esteem; b. building self-confidence; c. increasing communications skills; and d. improving decision-making and problem-solving skills of the women involved in the program. The rationale was that many women dropped out of the adult basic education program because of problems they were not equipped to solve and, by improving their skills in the areas targeted, the women could overcome the barriers to their attendance and complete the program.

**Self-Esteem:** By and large the activities developed for this area in the original project were also used in the adaptation. These included an early session in which students introduced themselves to each other. The other two sessions dealing with self-esteem involved students listing their activities carried on in one day and identifying those family members, friends, etc. who benefited from the activities. The next step was to identify how the activity benefited the student, followed by a discussion about finding time for oneself. Session II involved adult learners in listing their usual activities for the day, the skills involved and the marketability of each skill. Skills needed for the job market were also identified.

**Communication:** In the Lutheran Settlement House adaptation, Communication Skills were divided into verbal and non-verbal areas with appropriate participatory activities for each area. Role playing without the use of words in a variety of situations resulted in the class identifying the situation from the acting involved and dramatizing, with words, the same scenarios - - the goal being to emphasize differences between verbal and non-verbal situations.

**Decision-Making and Problem-Solving:** Developing Decision-Making and Problem Solving skills were included in the same section in both the original project and the adaptation and, for reasons not identified in the report, the adaptation reduced the activities in this area.

**Results:** According to the final report two areas of student improvement were only partially reflected in the drop-out/completion/continuation statistics.

These were an increase in the number of adults continuing on to college-level work after completing the project and the positive feelings expressed by program participants. In addition, the project focused staff attention on the area of retention with support staff working more closely with individuals who identified possible problems which might impact upon their continued attendance. Other research evidence would indicate this latter was partially responsible for the statistical improvement in retention, completion and continuation. ∎

## RETENTION STUDY: Towards the ABE Promised Land

This project was the topic of a concurrent session at a recent Midwinter Adult Education Conference and we report some of the findings because of the information received by interviewing students who dropped out of the Lutheran Settlement House (LSH) Women's Program adult classes (see also the other LSH project on this page). The final report of the project notes these former students' perceptions, along with the results of entry and end interviews of retained students and surveys and observations from teachers of the students.

### FINDINGS

✽ 78 students started in four classes in September. By December 21, 26% had dropped out (defined as attending at least once and not returning).

**Dropouts**

✽ The primary reasons given for not returning were: employment; child care problems; health problems.

✽ Some dropouts said they had achieved some of their goals; others found the adult classes to be different than they expected, but they liked the classes; others complained the classrooms were too small and crowded and they needed more individual attention.

**Students Who Stayed**

✽ Most suggestions for improvement were focused on resources: class size; desire for more class time, materials, tutors and computer time.

✽ Support from family, friends, teachers, classmates, etc. was rated as the most important reason for staying. Second was the importance of their classmates. This was true in classes using collaborative learning techniques and student tutors; it was not true in classes where the teacher used lecture/whole class instruction style.

**Conclusions**

✽ "There are many factors leading to retention. Primary are self-esteem and motivation, support from others, and quality of teacher interaction. The longer an adult student continues in the class the greater is the sense of self-esteem and empowerment."

### IMPLICATIONS TO PROGRAMS

✽ Programs should help students set realistic goals upon entry and assess progress periodically using "alternative" assessment methodologies.

✽ Programs need to follow up on students who drop; teachers or other students should call the dropout.

✽ Registration and orientation are important; include information about program and other services; introduce staff; use information about program written by alumni or other students.

✽ Teacher behavior and instruction that **supports retention** include: small group/collaborative instruction; caring and respect; a variety of teaching materials; materials that are interesting and meet the needs of the adult students.

✽ Student support services should be provided; if not available tell students where they may be found and how they may be accessed. ∎

*The following is an adaptation of a "Refereed Paper" presented by* **Dr. Trenton Ferro,** *Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Adult and Community Education at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The Paper was presented by Dr. Ferro at the recent Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Education Research Conference.*

# Regaining and Retaining the Recalcitrant Learner: A project that *works*!

This report is based upon a comprehensive evaluation research study conducted to determine how and why the New York State Adult Life Management Program was so effective. The Program is a statewide (in New York) Leadership Initiative consisting of a "massive instructional program development effort concentrating on staff development, curriculum development, and innovative instructional delivery systems."

The dramatic results in terms of student progress, growth and learning have drawn the attention of adult educators who find such a high degree of success and involvement by adult learners to be exceptional in adult basic and literacy education.

## Overview of Findings

• "The change in learners' belief statements about themselves from 'I'm a failure' to 'I can.'

• Consistent use of learner-centered learning situations (unfortunately, words such as "teaching" or "education," although perfectly legitimate, still convey too many traditional, and often negative, meanings and memories).

• The central role of the teacher both in facilitating learning and in developing the learning modules.

• The importance of on-going teacher support and teacher training by the State Education Department.

• The key concept of identifying and utilizing sensory learning styles.

• The development of unit modules and lessons which fully utilize 1) student potential, 2) preferred learning styles, and 3) understanding and insights gained from research into both a) human development and b) cognitive science and mind/brain research.

• Practice based on a new educational paradigm which, although discussed in the adult education literature, is rarely applied.

"What makes the Adult Life Management Program work so well are the various levels of human interaction, support, and caring. Learners are held up and treated as persons of worth and value; teacher/facilitators, modeling behaviors as people who care, commit themselves to drawing out the human potential in the learners; coordinators and directors at both the local and state levels, in turn, hold up and treat these teacher/facilitators as persons of worth and value.

## Student Reactions

"Attitudes and actions noted by the researcher as he visited classes and talked with learners and teachers include:

• Acceptance of the teacher and of each other by the learners.

• Sharing of personal experiences without reticence.

• Active participation, usually without prompting by the teacher.

• Openness on the part of the learners in their responses to teachers, fellow students, and course content.

• Bonding, as witnessed by numerous verbal expressions and physical actions.

• Growing self-esteem; internalization of the IALAC ("I am lovable and capable") principle.

• Responding to the love showered on them by the teachers, demonstrating that, although they are capable of and desire affection, they have been hurt to the extent that they have often withdrawn from intimacy for self-protection.

"Any number of participants were beginning to reveal potential and capabilities which, until now, they have not realized. These are learners who are 1) recognizing and verbalizing both the blocks to developing their own potential and the dreams which will make tapping that potential possible and 2) developing the attitudes and strategies they can utilize in bringing about the change they desire in their lives. Many demonstrate that they are struggling against, and overcoming, the negative behaviors (for example, using drugs and alcohol, exhibiting abusive behaviors, etc.) which they have adopted to escape life situations with which they could not, until now, deal and cope. Because of the positive atmosphere and accepting behaviors of the Life Management classes, learners are internalizing and responding to subject matter and activities.

### Teacher Reactions

"Teacher behaviors can be summed up in the word 'LOVE' (yes, with capital letters). They are open, accepting, and positive; they treat their learners with respect, honor, and esteem. They are truly interested in their learners; they are facilitative; they respond to the moment, to what comes from the group, to –in terms of the jargon of the day– "where the students are." They are walking, breathing exemplars of what they teach. They demonstrate by their own behaviors those skills they encourage learners to develop and use:

| | |
|---|---|
| • Listening skills | • Recognition of persons |
| • Dealing with anger | • Reflective feed-back |
| • Recognition of each positive step | • Coping with stress |
| | • 'I' messages |
| • Communication skills | • Time management" |

The facilitator/instructors in this program have overcome the perceptions held by all too many adult students that "teachers are insensitive, judging, not caring, unresponsive and unhelpful". Whether these perceptions are true is relevant, but more relevant is that the students perceive them to be true unless the teacher takes steps to prove otherwise. Content centered instruction driven by behavioral objectives too often results in students being treated "as objects, however unintentional such a consequence might be".

**Person-Centered.** Researchers found Life Management classes and teachers were person-centered. Student input was regularly invited and teachers demonstrated a continual concern for understanding the individual learner.

**Content and Process.** The Adult Life Management Program is based on a sequence of "modules". Dr. Ferro's report outlines the modules and makes the point that "How the content . . . is handled is a matter of importance equal to, if not greater than, the content itself". Teacher involvement, teacher support, identification and utilization of sensory learning styles, a nine-step instructional delivery system and methods and devices which emphasize the affective domain and kinesthetic style of learning are all major components of the Program." ∎

## STUDENT/STAFF DATA REPORTING

### by Dr. William Murphy, ABLE Bureau Research & Evaluation Chief

We have just completed our Federal Report on students enrolled in our programs. You are to be commended for your cooperation in what is one of the must unpopular responsibilities in running an adult education program. Thanks to your service efforts and willingness to cooperate with our requirements, we were able to enroll 59,238 students of whom 50,154 qualified as meeting federal service standards. These standards require that the student receive at least 12 hours of instruction/counseling or achieve basic objectives within a shorter period of time. In addition 4,254 tutors were trained, and 38,017 students received additional services by Philadelphia based providers.

**Numbers Lower.** Historically, these numbers are slightly lower than last year's total of 61,801 total students. Nevertheless, 3,679 participants passed the GED test, 2,838 obtained employment, 1,650 improved the employment situation, and 417 were able to leave the welfare rolls. This last figure, while historically small, is one of the major financial justifications for our programs. When AFDC dependent costs are factored in, the potential savings are significant.

Our annual reports will be published later in the fiscal year. Our next task will be to compile and distribute the individual program reports. These reports will be based only on data available at the time of the Federal Report. We close our files on **September 30** and cannot accept corrections or additions after that date. In August we mailed out listings of unmatched forms and we were able to eliminate about three quarters of the problems. However, we were left with programs which had significant numbers of missing copy threes. Those students cannot be counted because we have no record of their completing or leaving the program.

**Problem Areas.** Based on problems which occurred in the data collection, providers should note the following:

**1. Forms must have the correct program number or they will not be credited for the students.**

**2. Copy 3 submissions are actually the most important effort because they ensure credit for hours of instruction and successes.**

**3. We no longer examine our files early in the program year in order to send admonishments to programs with low enrollments. It is best to send your forms in bulk later in the program year.**

**4. Double check all forms on contract number, race, sex, age, level, instruction hours, and outcomes. They are critical for our reports.**

**5. The Bureau no longer requires attendance reports. They should be maintained on file at the agency.**

**Help Us Improve the System.** Finally, I would like to note our efforts at making changes in the system. I will meet with interested program staff on November 10 in Harrisburg (day trippers only) and also participate in a session at the Penn-Ohio conference. We will discuss and evaluate how to improve the system and relieve some of the reporting burdens in coming years. If anyone is interested in participating in either of these meetings, please drop us a letter stating your interest.

We find the scannable forms a significant improvement from our side even if they are more difficult for providers. I would like to implement a system of automatically carrying over students each successive year rather than mandating a new enrollment form. This can be done for the next program year, however, it will be done only if we have social security numbers and correct demographic information on the original enrollment form.

**Student Database.** Our most exciting effort is the development of student databases which will allow a program to track their students on an office PC and then send in the required information on disc at the end of the year in lieu of the student forms. The Center for Literacy in Philadelphia has a 353 program to develop a complete stand alone system to meet these needs.

The Research and Evaluation unit is working hard to keep up with the rest of our Bureau in our joint efforts to streamline our procedures and improve the overall efficiency of adult education programs. ■

## American Legion Tackles Illiteracy
### Provides free materials, tutors to libraries

The largest Veteran's organization in the world, The American Legion, has adopted Goal 2000's literacy challenge as a primary project and, in addition to providing free copies of the "I Want to Read" videotapes to library literacy programs, is mounting an extensive public awareness campaign throughout the state through the **Read USA** literacy program.

"Pennsylvania has taken the lead in literacy," said John Minnick, Read USA Director of Association Services, at a recent meeting of the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy. Pennsylvania is the Legion's largest state and each



*READ USA representatives Ross McGary, left, and John Minnick with Pennsylvania State Literacy Coalition (PSCAL) President Jo Ann Plummer of the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare.*

local post is being asked to coordinate/cooperate with local library adult services and adult basic education to form important linkages for the widespread use of the video series "I Want to Read" marketed by New Readers Press.

READ USA has sent every library in Pennsylvania information about contacting their local American Legion Post for materials and assistance. "Libraries must assume the initiative," said Mr. Minnick, "but we stand ready to help with materials, press releases, air time for broadcasts of the tapes, etc." ■

# ADULT LITERACY TRAINING AND THE INTEGRATION OF HUMAN SERVICES

**Abstract**

*Service integration is a public policy strategy that brings together many services for highly disadvantaged persons, refashions the delivery of those services to meet individual needs, and thereby increases the possibility of long-term success. Literacy training is an appropriate centerpiece for service integration because it contributes to the long-term self-sufficiency of individuals and families, thus meeting the strategy's central objective. Two service integration models that employ literacy training in a central role involve skills training and employment preparation and the development of parenting and child development skills. Service integration designed around literacy training can contribute to (a) increased understanding of literacy issues among human service providers, (b) informal literacy training in many service contexts, (c) new opportunities to ground literacy instruction in real life applications, and (d) improvements in the capacity of human service agencies to serve persons who have previously failed to achieve literacy goals.*

## Introduction

Over the past several years, policymakers, human service providers, and analysts have breathed new life into the old idea that human services for individuals and families with multiple needs can be most effective when they are tailored to the recipients' special circumstances and are based on extensive collaboration among public and private providers. This paper explores approaches to service integration in the specific context of literacy training for adults. As the following discussion indicates, the combination of literacy instruction with human service integration offers important possibilities for enriching both endeavors and thus improving the lives of disadvantaged individuals and families.

## A. Relevance of Service Integration to Adult Literacy Training

Many different measures indicate that adults who are illiterate or who have low literacy skills are likely to have additional problems and needs, some of which may present even greater challenges than illiteracy itself (e.g., see Hodgkinson, 1989, for a review of interrelated need factors in disadvantaged American families). Such problems may include poverty, unemployment, poor health, and substance abuse. Some problems may be the direct result of illiteracy, such as those experienced by an unskilled laborer who cannot follow written instructions for operating a new piece of equipment and loses her job. Other problems may be indirectly related to illiteracy, such as the health problems of an older person who cannot control his high blood pressure because he is unable to read nutritional information on food labels and dosage instructions on medicine containers. In both cases, illiteracy can set in motion a series of events that lead to personal hardship and, in some cases, dependence on others.

An increasing body of evidence suggests that the best approach to assisting individuals with a wide range of needs, including literacy, is through comprehensive, integrated services tailored to the individual and family. However, the integration of services requires extensive collaboration among service providers and, in many cases, new relationships between providers and service recipients.

Integrated service delivery holds the promise of addressing long-term impediments to self-sufficiency rather than short-term problems alone, as the existing social service system is prone to do. However, the importance of addressing immediate needs is not ignored under the integrated service approach. By incorporating the capacity for providing immediate help (e.g., job placement and emergency child care), integrated services can create relationships and opportunities that lead to the identification and treatment of long-term problems such as illiteracy. Responses to acute needs can thus be parlayed into comprehensive, prevention-oriented assistance that leads to long-term success.

## B. Service Integration Can Improve Human Services and Literacy Training

Unfortunately, in the real world of human services and people with problems, the system does not operate as smoothly as would be hoped. There is rarely a professional guide to help a family or individual step back, assess overall needs, and design a plan to address them.

The result of service fragmentation is that individuals and families in need confront a highly disjointed human service system and at no point are they assisted in looking at their overall situation. Typically, services are not provided on a priority basis; rather, clients receive the services that can actually be arranged and in standard amounts that may be more or less than they truly require. Individuals or families with moderate needs may be able to navigate successfully through the maze, find the help they need, use it, and begin to function independently. However, those with the most serious needs are unlikely to fare as well.

Literacy training services are consistent with the long-term view of service integration, since literacy is an essential tool for empowering people to improve their lives and those of their family members. Because it contributes to both crisis prevention and family preservation, literacy training can serve as an important focal point for service integration, and it is appropriate whether the integration is driven from the top down or the bottom up.

## C. Models for Integrating Multiple Services Around Literacy Training

Two models of Human service integration built around literacy training are outlined in this section of the report. While literacy training is the central element in both models, each has a specific goal that drives the development of program components.

"What's the Buzz?" will feature information about the two Human Service Integration models in future issues. To order a copy of the complete report contact the National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL), University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111. ■

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# Potpourri, Miscellany, etc.

## November at WPALRC

by Chris Kemp
Western Pennsylvania Adult
Literacy Resource Center Specialist

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From the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE)
(717) 787-5532

**A Reminder**

Don Lunday sends a reminder to programs that Monthly Attendance Reports are no longer required to be filed monthly with the Bureau. However, programs should maintain their attendance reports on file.

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## The new "Buzz" word: NUMERACY

### PBS and NCAL Offer Numeracy Training Staff Development Opportunity

The National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL) and the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) have joined forces to present the second in a series of professional development videoconferences designed to meet the diverse needs of adult literacy practitioners (the first offering was the "Technology: New Tools for Adult Literacy" teleconference).

**Adult Numeracy Instruction: A New Approach** will be broadcast on December 1, 1994 from 1-3 p.m. and will be available at a number of sites throughout Pennsylvania including a number of regional staff development centers.

A panel of leading adult educators from the field will discuss their first-hand experiences with numeracy instruction, staff development and adult learners. The panel will explore reasons why math is problematic for both teachers and learners, present a whole math framework for teaching adults and offer innovative instructional strategies and resources that will enable students to develop flexible problem-solving and communication skills for application to real-world situations.

Designed primarily for adult literacy instructors and program administrators, the videoconference is available free of charge to institutions wishing to host the event - - call PBS at (800) 257-2578.

For more information about the teleconference contact NCAL at (215) 898-2100 or call your regional staff development center. ■

## Recognize your outstanding students and your peers

Last month we brought you information from the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) concerning the nomination of Outstanding ABLE Students for the year. This month we note the similar effort by PAACE for nomination for **"Outstanding Adult Students in Higher Education"**. Guidelines and nomination forms have been mailed to PAACE members and adult educators working in Continuing Higher Education may contact Charlene Harrison, Chair, PAACE Awards Committee, 323 Boucke Building, Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802. DEADLINE: November 18, 1994.

**Nominations Open for Outstanding Adult Educator.** The Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) requests your nomination for the award of Outstanding Adult Educator in Pennsylvania for 1995.

The recipient will be a person, or persons, who, in the judgment of the Selection Committee, **has made an outstanding contribution to the development and advancement of adult education.** Here's an opportunity to say "thank you" to an adult educator who has made a real contribution to your profession.

Last year's recipient, Dr. Allan Quigley of the Penn State Monroeville campus (4518 Northern Pike, Monroeville, PA 15146), may be contacted for nomination forms and additional information. DEADLINE: December 3. ■

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**Corrections from our October, 1994 issue . . .**
(anybody need a typo elf?)

- Mark Singel, Pennsylvania Lieutenant Governor, is the Democratic Party Candidate for Governor.

- The June, 1995 Literacy Conference will be held at Penn State, University Park June **23-25.** It is not an LLA conference.

- The Coordinator for the Region 6 Staff Development Center is **Paula Smith.**

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November is the month in which nature's creatures throughout western Pennsylvania complete their preparations for winter. The staff at WPALRC is no exception.

WPALRC staff and PDE staff are collaborating with the staff from the Distance Learning Center to produce a teleconference, "Developing Quality Systems in Adult Education". The program will be telecast at 1PM on Monday, November 21 (before the snow starts to fly). The program will introduce a new state-wide initiative, Educational Quality for Adult Literacy (EQuAL). The program participants will discuss the need for a "systems" approach to quality and present how the EQuAL Project will develop such a system. Watch the mail for a brochure containing more detailed information.

WPALRC will be participating in the Penn-Ohio Conference, November 18 and 19 at the Avalon Inn in Warren, Ohio. Join Resource Specialist, Chris Kemp, for the carousel "Multiculturalism and Technology at WPALRC". November is "prime time" for site visits, workshops and inservices (before the roads and people's tempers get bad). To arrange a workshop or inservice at WPALRC or to schedule a site visit at your program, call Chris at 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216 or 273.

The Region 1 and Region 4 Staff Development Centers sponsored a Vendor Fair October 14 at Troggios in New Castle. The Vendors were extremely kind to WPALRC and the staff will be very busy adding all the new materials to the shelf collection. Thank you to the staff development coordinators and all the vendors!!! Please come to the Center to see all the new materials. Appointments are not necessary but it is a good idea to call before a visit, especially as winter weather becomes more threatening. ■

# IT'S A DATE!

**1-4:** AAACE 1994 Adult Education Conference; Nashville, TN; Contact AAACE at 1200 19th Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036 (202) 429-5131.

**2-5:** Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) Annual Conference; Town and Country Hotel, San Diego; Contact Peggy May, LVA, 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13215 (315) 445-8000.

**3-6:** National Multicultural Institute training courses in Washington, DC. Call (314) 651-2551.

**4:** Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC) Meeting: 10-3; Ross Memorial Library, Clarion. Contact Linda Herr (717) 584-3824.

**5:** Three Rivers TESOL meeting; Wheeling, WV. Call (412) 624-5913.

**7:** ABE/GED Program Division of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE); 10-3; Program Division Meeting at the Centre County Vo-Tech School in Pleasant Gap; Contact Joyce Kerrick, Division Chair, (717) 961-7834.

**7-8:** "Teaching and Learning in Nontraditional Settings: Delivering Effective Programs Off the Main Campus." Boston; Sponsored by OALS; Contact OALS (212) 713-8101.

**9-12:** 45th Annual Conference of the Orton Dyslexia Society; Los Angeles; Theme: "Lights . . . Camera . . . Literacy." Contact the Orton Dyslexia Society, 8600 LaSalle Road, 382 Chester Bldg., Baltimore, MD 21286.

**10-11:** LLA Trainer Apprentice training; Danville; Contact Linda Herr (717) 584-3824.

**10-12:** 16th Annual Conference on Learning Disabilities; San Diego; Contact Council for Learning Disabilities, PO Box 40303, Overland Park, KS 66204.

**10-12:** 19th Annual Conference, Association for Community-Based Education (ACBE); Alexandria, VA. Contact ACBE (202) 462-6333.

**12:** Eastern Pennsylvania TESOL meeting; University of Delaware; Contact Ruth Jackson, ELI, U of D, Newark, DE 19716 (302) 831-2674.

**14-20:** BOOKS FOR EVERYONE/EVERYONE FOR BOOKS! Theme of Book Week '94. 75th National observance of National Book Week.

**18-19:** Penn-Ohio Adult Education Conference; Avalon, Ohio. Contact Bootsie Barbour (814) 454-4474.

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**November 21:** "EQuAL" (Educational Quality for Adult Literacy) Teleconference. 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Contact your Regional Staff Development Center for a downlink viewing site. See related article on page 1.

**December 1:** 1-3 p.m. **Adult Numeracy Teleconference;** Contact your Regional Staff Development Center for these and other Downlink sites: **Region 2:** Penn State, State College; PA College of Technology, Williamsport; Bethune Douglas Community Center, Williamsport; CSIU 16, Montandon. **Region 4:** ARIN IU #28; Washington County IU #1; Allegheny IU (Station Square); PSU-Beaver Campus (tentative). **Region 6:** Catholic Diocesan Center, Harrisburg. **Region 7:** Site to be announced. **Region 8:** Sites to be announced.

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**Regional Staff Development Center Events:** Contact your regional staff development center for more information about these and other Staff Development opportunities.

**Region 2:** Pleasant Gap. (814) 359-3069. **November:** 7-Teacher Experiences with the Project READ Materials; and PAACE AGE/GED Division meeting; 9:30-2:30. 21-EQuAL Teleconference (see article on p. 1). Downlinks at: CIU 10, West Decatur; Bethune Douglas Community Center, Williamsport; CSIU 16, Montandon; Mansfield University.

**Region 4:** Pittsburgh. (412) 661-7323. **November:** 18-Supervising and Managing Volunteers; 9-12:30. Penn State-Monroeville.

**Region 5:** Lewistown. (717) 248-4942. **November:** 30-Fall Technology Workshop: Adult Education Software Review; 10-3; Tuscarora IU #11, McVeytown.

**Region 6:** Harrisburg. (717) 232-0568. **November:** 19-Introduction to WordPerfect 5.1; 9-noon; Harrisburg Area Community College. 21-EQuAL Teleconference Downlink at Bishop Daley Hall, Catholic Diocesan Center, Harrisburg (see related article on p. 1).

**Region 7:** Bethlehem. (610) 758-6347. **November:** 8-Multicultural Learning Styles Workshop; 7-9 p.m. Reading Area Community College; 18-Stress and the Adult Literacy Educator Workshop; 9-12 noon; Iacocca Hall, Lehigh University.

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**Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter**

# "What's the Buzz?"

November, 1994

6

DECEMBER, 1994        VOLUME 14, NUMBER 4

## IN THIS ISSUE

## A Recipe for Success . . .

# WESTERN PA VENDOR'S FAIR!

Take two enthusiastic, energetic regional staff development center coordinators; and nine publishers' and professional development information vendors; combine with over 100 adult educators, a continuous flow of coffee, donuts, hors d'oeuvres and snacks. Mix well from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and you have SUCCESS!

It all began when the decision was made to drop the usual fall workshops format and have the regional staff development centers assume the responsibility for staff/professional development formerly provided by the fall workshops.

Interestingly enough the cries of anguish received from "the field" were not because of the loss of the concurrent sessions - - the regional staff development centers have offered lots of workshops dealing with these topics. The problems were expressed in such comments as: "How will I get my sample copies?" "I depend on my discussions with the publisher reps to learn what I can use to meet my unique needs." "My program has a low budget and I use the samples I get from the vendors."

A number of the regional staff development centers took notice of their constituents' plight and added vendors to their fall staff development workshops. However, we recently had the pleasure of attending something unique in Pennsylvania Adult Education - - a **Vendor's Fair.**

It was the brainchild of Bootsie Barbour and Rachel Zilcosky, Region 1 and 4 Coordinators respectively. And it worked! Adult educators came from as far South as Washington, PA to Erie in the North and as far East as Clearfield (over 100 miles) to New Castle
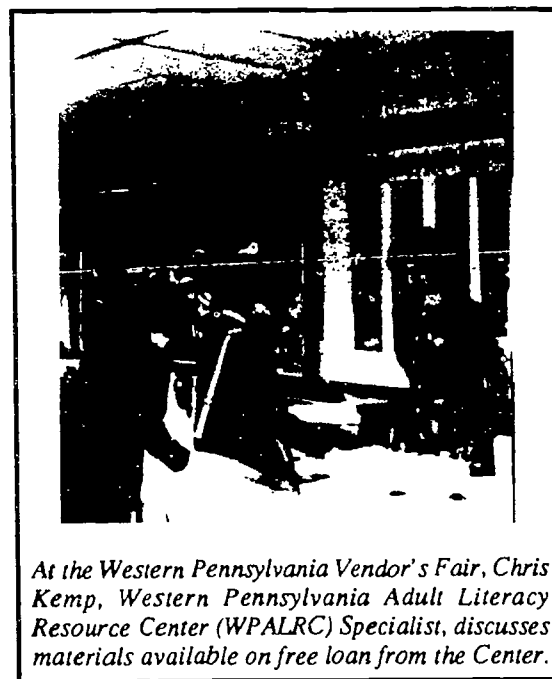


*At the Western Pennsylvania Vendor's Fair, Chris Kemp, Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (WPALRC) Specialist, discusses materials available on free loan from the Center.*

which is about the center of Western Pennsylvania. There was no program; no "sit down" meal; teachers, tutors, counselors and administrators wandered in and out; publishers' representatives were kept busy showing their products, giving out review copies and explaining how what they offered would fit in with what a particular program needed. One of the most frequently expressed comments was, "I finally had as much time as I needed to discuss my program and the books with the sales rep."

> A unique solution to a unique problem in adult education; and one we would like to see replicated in a number of places.

A unique solution to a unique problem in adult education; and one we would like to see replicated in a number of places. Congratulations to Bootsie, Rachel, their administrators and the financial and technical support from the ABLE Bureau which permits the Staff Development Regional Coordinators to show what can be done with hard work and creativity. ■

# Here It Comes . . .
# The NEW GED
## but don't panic; it's probably at least 6 years away!

According to a recent issue of **GED Items**, the newsletter of the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS), preparations are currently underway for development of the New GED test for implementation probably in the year 2000 (but that's only 6 years away!).

Jean Lowe, Director of GEDTS, explains that GEDTS every decade or so begins the process of re-evaluating the GED Test to assure its content is consistent with the skills and knowledge required of contemporary high school graduates. The present test was revised in 1978 with the essay being added in 1988.

The following questions will be addressed during the consideration of revisions for GED 2000:

1. Should the tests continue to be anchored in the "essential" componer s of a high school curriculum?

2. Should the GED test battery include a series of additional and/or optional tests which would measure a candidate's potential for success in a particular area (e.g. higher education, employment, etc.).

3. Should test scores be reported in a manner which would provide additional information to examinees, employers and/or admission officers?

4. What should be the role of technology in GED 2000? This pertains not only to test-taking and test-scoring, but also suggests the possibility of a test to measure technological aptitude and expertise.

Field testing of GED 2000 is scheduled to begin in 1996. If you have questions or suggestions, contact Pennsylvania's GED test administrator Larry Goodwin (717-787-6747) or contact GED S at One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036-1163 (202-708-5366). ■

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| Computers & Adult Education |

# Computers and Technology for A.B.L.E.'ers

by Dr. Benjamin Burenstein
Drexel University

This is the first in a series of articles in **The Buzz** about ways of using high technology, especially computer systems, in adult basic and literacy education. This article is an introduction to using computers. The author would be delighted for you to copy this article and use it as the basis of lessons for learners. Please write and tell us what you would like to see in this column, and we will try to address these issues.

## Working with Computers

When you use a pen, you don't have to worry about how they got the ink into that little tube, or how they get the point to roll around. You just use the pen to help you write whatever you need to. Think of the computer as a complicated pen. Right now, you don't need to worry about how it works, as long as it does the job you need it to do.

## Computers as Systems

Anything which has more than one part is called a **system**. When we talk about a computer, what we are really talking about is a computer system. Every computer system has six components which carry out distinct and essential duties. These six parts are the Input, the Central Processing Unit, Output, the Program, Memory, and the Computer Operator.

The first part is called the **INPUT**. This is how you put information into the computer. The keyboard and mouse are input devices, and so are microphones, video cameras, and scanners. Some let you put sound or pictures on the screen.

The second part of the system is called the central processing unit, or **CPU**. This takes place in the box under the monitor. This box is filled with chips and microprocessors. The CPU works with the information we give it using input devices, performing various mathematical and textural calculations to bring about the results we want.

The third part of the system is the **OUTPUT**. The output shows the results of the processing work the CPU has done. The most common forms of output we use go to the printer or monitor (screen),

but there can be other kinds of output -- if computers are used to control the temperature of a building, the output may be heat.

Input, output, and CPU devices are called **hardware**, because they are done with hard machinery which you can touch.

The fourth part of the system is the **PROGRAM**. Programs tell the CPU what kind of work to do with the information which has been put into it, and how to do it. Think of the computer as a dumb machine which can only follow orders one at a time, and only if they are given in a certain language. Programs are written by **PROGRAMMERS** in computer languages. Some computer languages you may have heard about are named **Pascal**, **BASIC**, and **COBOL**. We as teachers and administrators don't need to worry about how to write programs, because we can buy already written programs to use. You can, and should, learn how to USE computer programs. Programs are often called **software**.

The fifth part of the system is called storage, or **MEMORY**. There are several kinds of memory: **short-term memory** (sometimes called RAM, Random Access Memory) and **long-term memory**. Most computers use **FLOPPY** or **HARD DISKS** for long-term memory.

In the middle of the word C-O-M-P-U-T-E-R is the letter U. The sixth part of the computer system is a person, a computer **OPERATOR**. That's you! There has never been a computer built which can work without orders from a person.

Think of the computer system as a candy factory. The **input** is the sugar, flour, cocoa, milk, and other ingredients. The recipe for how to mix the ingredients is the **program**. The person who writes the recipe is the **programmer**. The disk is the cook book which has the recipe. The CPU is the machinery which pours the ingredients together, mixes them, and bakes the candy. And the **output** is the candy.

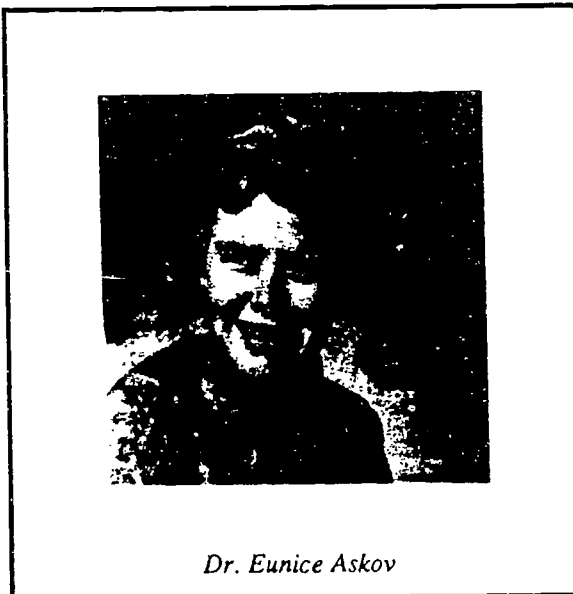*Editor's Note: We plan to bring o... readers an article each month relating to Technology and Computers. Please address computer/technology related questions to: Dr. Ben Burenstein, "What's the Buzz?", Box 214, Troy, PA 16947.*

# DR. EUNICE (NICKIE) ASKOV IS FIRST LITERACY LEADER FELLOW

Dr. Nickie Askov has been named the first Literacy Leader Fellow in the National Institute for Literacy's new effort to provide opportunities for outstanding individuals to make special contributions to the literacy field.

Dr. Askov, an expert in the areas of literacy research and practice, is currently Professor of Education at The Pennsylvania State University and Director of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, which is internationally recognized for its literacy research, development, and dissemination. She is a newly elected member of AAACE's Board of Directors, and director of their Commission for Business, Industry, and Labor. She is also the author of four textbooks on reading instruction, as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters.

*Dr. Eunice Askov*

years to examine the processes used to identify the literacy skills workers need to do their jobs. Dr. Askov will use this research to identify common core basic skills across occupational categories. She will also devise a model process for identifying needed occupational skills. Her work will conform to the occupational categories used to develop skill standards for the Departments of Labor and Education.

The results of Dr. Askov's fellowship will be correlated with a study of workforce literacy standards developed by the National Workforce Assistance Collaborative, a project funded by the Department of Labor and implemented by the National Alliance for Business. Dr.

Beginning this fall at NIFL, Dr. Askov's fellowship will involve research on workforce literacy projects of the past ten years. Askov is a member of the Collaborative's Advisory Board and the head of its workforce literacy task force. ■

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# ADULT LITERACY CERTIFICATE NOW AVAILABLE

The Pennsylvania State University has announced that a **Graduate Certificate in Adult Literacy Education** will be made available in January, 1995. By attending classes at either the Center for Continuing and Graduate Education in Monroeville, or the Adult Education Program at University Park, those working in the field of adult literacy or in roles supportive to literacy can now earn a certificate of graduate study. The Co-ordinators and Advisors on this new Certificate are **Dr. Nickie Askov** at University Park and **Dr. Allan Quigley** at Monroeville.

"We have had numerous calls through the years from practitioners in Pennsylvania and from people in other states and countries requesting a literacy degree of some kind - - a diploma, Masters, or even a doctorate in literacy education," said Allan Quigley. "The fact that tuition reimbursement is available through the Regional Staff Development Centers has made professional development more accessible and of greater interest than ever before. It has increased the demand for such a degree."

The certificate will begin with its first course in spring, 1995 and will consist of 18 credits of graduate study - - 15 credits of which can be counted into the Masters of Adult Education. The certificate includes a course on Teaching Adults, another on Program Planning, one on the Administration of Adult Education, one on Literacy in Theory and Practice, and courses dedicated to Literacy and the Teaching of Reading. These are supplemented by one-credit courses (two weekends in length) which focus on such areas as Learning Disabilities and Literacy, Motivation and Reading, Adult Learning Theory,

and Workplace Learning. Internships are also available for those who want "hands on" job experience.

"We hope this new certificate will help in the efforts to raise professionalism in literacy education across the state," said Dr. Quigley. "While there are some real advantages to local workshops, and many are available around the regions, we hope this certificate will provide more depth for those who want graduate credit recognition for their studies."

For more information on the literacy certificate, contact:

Dr. Allan Quigley, Monroeville Center for Continuing and Graduate Education, 4518 Northern Pike, Monroeville, 15146 (Ph. 412-372-4095); or Dr. Eunice Askov, 403 S. Allen St., Suite 206, Charlotte Bldg., University Park, 16802 (Ph. 814-836-3781 or 814-836-3777). ■

## THE OSGOOD FILE
CHARLES OSGOOD

### "PRETTY GOOD"

There once was a pretty good student,
Who sat in a pretty good class
And was taught by a pretty good teacher,
Who always let pretty good pass.
He wasn't terrific at reading;
He wasn't a whiz bang at math;
But for him education was leading
Straight down a pretty good path.
He didn't find school too exciting,
But he wanted to do pretty well
And he did have some trouble with writing,
And nobody taught him to spell.
When doing arithmetic problems,
Pretty good was regarded as fine;
Five and five needn't always add up to ten,
A pretty good answer was nine.
The pretty good student was happy
With the standards that were in effect,
And nobody thought it was sappy
If his answers were not quite correct.
The pretty good class he sat in
Was part of a pretty good school,
And the student was not an exception;
On the contrary, he was the rule.
The pretty good school he went to
Was right there in a pretty good town
And nobody ever noticed
He could not tell a verb from a noun.
The pretty good student, in fact, was
A part of a pretty good mob,
And the first time he knew what he lacked was
When he looked for a pretty good job.
It was then when he sought a position,
he discovered that life can be tough,
And he soon had a sneaking suspicion
Pretty good might not be good enough.
The pretty good town in our story
Was part of a pretty good state,
Which had pretty good aspirations
And prayed for a pretty good fate.
There once was a pretty good nation,
Pretty proud of the greatness it had,
But which learned much too late,
If you want to be great,
Pretty good is, in fact, pretty bad.

THE OSGOOD FILE, CBS Radio Networks,
Copyrighted by CBS Inc., All rights reserved.

Editor's Note: Our thanks to BUZZ reader Susan Boehret for bringing this to our attention. Ms. Boehret is with the Northampton Community College Act 143 program.

## A PRACTITIONER AND RESEARCHER'S PERSPECTIVE
by Rachel Zilcosky
Region 4 Staff Development Coordinator

On Friday, October 28, 1994, a group of twenty-eight Region 4 staff members and three presenters gathered at the Western PA Adult Literacy Resource Center (WPALRC). The topic for the day was student retention.

As participants arrived, they spent time talking and viewing the Resource Center while awaiting the start of the morning session. Chris Kemp, WPALRC's Resource Specialist, compiled the information on retention and distributed it to all the participants. Past 353 projects that dealt with retention were displayed and available for lending.

Nancy Woods of Beaver County's Adult Literacy Action began the morning with a group discussion. During this session practitioners discussed three key questions about student retention: What is a student? Why do students leave? What can we do to increase retention?

The issue of when we consider a client to be a student is pertinent to the topic of retention. We need to consider if our mission is to retain all students who contact our programs or only the students who have actual instruction time. When thinking about forming a retention plan, we need to consider what population we are targeting.

The group generated many ideas about why students leave. Students leave for either positive or negative reasons. The discussion then turned to looking more closely at the negative reasons in order to create a retention plan.

The group was divided into seven small groups in order to create a rough draft of a possible retention plan. Overall, the screening process was deemed most important in identifying factors which might lead to dropping out. This can be done before instruction ever begins. Since screening is so important, the instructors need to be aware and involved in the screening process. Communication between administration, the instructor and the student is the key.

During the afternoon session, Dr. Gary Dean of Indiana University of PA shared a review of literature on retention and literacy. Many of the results from these studies paralleled the ideas generated by the small groups in the morning. The literature review was distributed to the participants and will serve as a wonderful future reference.

Dr. Allan Quigley of Penn State Monroeville then presented his approach to retention which is action research. He shared previous projects that were completed by students in his one-credit action research course. A question and answer period followed in which participants suggested possible ideas for retention and Dr. Quigley helped them with initial steps.

If you are interested in receiving any of the literature distributed or created at this workshop, please contact the Region 4 Staff Development Center at 1-800-438-2011. ∎

# IT'S THE ECONOMY . . .

Like it or not adult educators in Pennsylvania and throughout the country are beginning to realize that, despite the wonderful personal gains made by their clients in adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) these gains must translate into a positive impact upon the Economy or our wonderful, committed programs will not continue.

The traditional slow, reactive pace of adult education is being forced to catch up with the fast-paced changes in business and industry and THE ECONOMY. Government, both federal and state (our largest funding sources) are increasingly beginning to share the concerns of employers that, by the year 2000, there just will not be enough workers with basic skills training necessary to carry on business as usual. The basic skills of the workplace of ten years ago are now **below the basic level necessary to** maintain the goals of business and industry.

## What Is Workplace Literacy?

Workplace Literacy programs focus on the literacy and basic skills training workers need to gain new employment, retain present jobs, advance in their careers, or increase productivity. Curricula are developed by educators, working with employers and employee groups, who assemble written materials used on the job and who analyze specific jobs to determine what reading, computation, speaking and reasoning skills are required to perform job tasks effectively. By their nature, successful efforts to institute workplace literacy programs require strong partnerships among educators, employers and employees.

### Who Participates?

Workers may be identified for participation in programs by the employer or they may identify themselves as interested in basic skills training. Workers may participate in programs to upgrade basic skills in order to deal with new technology or to transfer to new positions as old jobs are phased out. Other workers may receive English as a second language training to increase productivity or make them eligible for promotion. Workers also may learn speaking, listening, and problem-solving skills to maximize efficiency and participate in team work. Workplace literacy programs may be used to train new hires or may be used to train pools of applicants who will be screened for hiring by employers.

### Why Are Programs Needed?

Workplace literacy programs were first established by employers unable to locate workers with sufficient basic skills to handle entry level jobs, and by employers who needed to upgrade current employees' skills in response to new technology or market dislocations.

A structural shift in the American economy from goods-producing to service-producing industries by the year 2000 will put most new jobs in management, sales and service. The number of minorities and women will increase as a percentage of the workforce and these groups will need training to qualify for jobs requiring further education. In addition to upgrading their basic skills, workers will also need skills for team work, goal setting, problem solving, as well as participative management. Life cycles for products and processes have been shortened and future jobs ma: )e restructured about every seven years

Continuous learning and reskilling will therefore be a top priority in order to develop qualified people for available jobs.

*Editor's Note: The information above is excerpted from Fact Sheet #16 from the U.S. Department of Education's Clearinghouse on Adult Education and Literacy, Mary E. Switzer Building, Room 4428, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-7240, (202) 732-2396.* ■

"The ongoing transformation of markets and technology – the journey toward the new economy – is challenging the traditional distinction between academic and vocational education, between workplace and education. Increasingly, we will focus on learning rather than on institutions or sources of learning. It will be increasingly futile to draw the distinction between education in schools or colleges and education in the workplace. As employees have to engage in a continuous process of learning, so schools will have to engage in a continuous process of change. Whatever our boundaries, the need for the two systems to become increasingly integrated is very evident."

*Augusta Souza Kappner,*
*Assistant Secretary, Vocational and Adult Education*
*January 30, 1994*

# THE WORKFORCE/WORKPLACE LITERACY MARKETPLACE . . .

There are lots of workforce/workplace literacy materials out and some are honest efforts by publishers to gear up to the demand for this type of materials; others are high school "workovers" or shallow representations of what some publishers feel workforce/workplace literacy should be without having consulted adult basic and literacy educators nor persons in business/industry who know what their literacy training needs are.

*Contemporary Books brought out their Essential Skills For the Workplace series last year and approaches workplace literacy skills instruction from a point of view we have always thought appropriate for workplace/workforce materials: The standpoint of going from general workforce awarenesses (forms, information resources, etc.) to the performance by the adult student of actual tasks typical of the workplace.

"Essential Skills for the Workplace" consists of two books on each of two levels. Level 1 is more literacy-skill oriented than Level 2 while using the workplace and workplace activities as the framework for reading, writing, communication and math instruction. In the Level 2 books (Building Workplace Competencies and Improving Workplace Performance) Contemporary presents the student with some actual training tasks which should prove useful on the job and give students completing the series an edge over the inexperienced worker. These are presented in occupational "clusters" (Healthcare, Education and Human Services, Manufacturing and Mechanical, Transportation and Trade, Financial Services, Hospitality Services, Communication and Sales, and Office Services) with the student performing five tasks directly related to job duties in the cluster (adjust a schedule, prioritize medical information, plan an exam procedure, build a team, update a medical record). Specific activities within each task lead the student through the procedure and, although some adult basic and literacy education instructors may balk at teaching specific job skills which may be more appropriately presented in a training program, there is no doubt the approach is highly motivational and a creative instructor will find ways to capitalize upon this motivation and teach literacy skills at the same time. The Teacher's Guide will be invaluable in this regard with examples of functional contexts, instructional approach information and a comprehensive Scope and Knowledge chart telling which reading, writing and math skills are dealt with in each unit.

Contemporary's Pennsylvania sales rep is Myron Hallock (1-800-397-2556).

* "A Day in the Life . . . Instruction" and ". . . Assessment" programs mentioned in our "Literature" section are marketed by Curriculum Associates, Inc. in North Billerica, Massachusetts (800) 225-0248.

*Steck-Vaughn has a new series of Employability Skills Software in their Workplace Skills area. Available for Apple and IBM-compatible systems and written on the 3-6 levels, the program deals with attitudes and awarenesses of workers and prospective workers. Steck-Vaughn's Pennsylvania rep is Ron Ray, 1-800-531-5015.

* In 1990 Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) established a Center for Workforce Education to provide educational materials and training that build partnerships between business and industry and adult education and literacy programs for the enhancement of workers' literacy, workplace and life skills. In addition to a training program, the Center has a number of concept and "how to" books available including an action manual for training and development professionals (The Workplace Literacy Primer), a union guide to workplace literacy (Worker-Centered Learning), and three books designed to assist adult basic and literacy education programs establish and maintain workforce literacy programs: Workplace Basics, 16 skills employers say are crucial to the workplace; Workplace Basics Training Manual, a step-by-step guide for developing essential workplace skills and a blueprint for customizing workplace education programs; and Basic Skills for the Workplace, how to set up workplace literacy partnerships and meet the literacy needs of both workers and employers. For these and other publications and services contact the Center for Workforce Education, 1320 Jamesville Avenue, Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210-0131.

* Using its experience with Workplace Literacy, the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy is marketing two software packages designed to teach workforce personnel in the basic skills. Pennsylvania Blue Shield's Job Linked Skills Program is a basic skills instructional program for health insurance employees functioning at a mid-literacy (grade 5-8) level. The Program includes instruction on medical terminology, reading medical claims forms, writing and grammar, and reading insurance manuals. The program, distributed at cost, includes an Instructor's Manual. A demo disk is available.

* Another Software package is available from the Institute and is designed to teach entry-level workers and trainees the basic skills necessary for customer service and telephone skills. S.C.O.R.E. (Sales and Customer Service Occupational Reading Education) is designed for mid-literacy (6-10 grade level) readers and consists of simulated customer service and telephone sales job tasks, a supplemental vocabulary development package, and a classroom portion involving instruction in the work context. This package is also available at cost and both JSLP and SCORE run on Macintosh and PC-compatibles. Contact the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, 204 Calder Way, Suite 209, University Park, PA 16801-4756 (814) 863-3777.

* Other software packages for use in workforce literacy reading and math situations are available from Educational Activities, Inc. (PO Box 392, Freeport, NY 11520 (800) 645-3739) and we especially like the approach taken with these two packages because they are job-specific. Reading in the Workplace has three progressive levels of difficulty and separate sets deal with vocabulary in Construction, Automotive, Clerical and Health Care occupations. The programs are Apple II and MS-DOS compatible. Educational Activities also has a Macintosh program with more than 200 important workplace works (some technical). Ask for Workplace Words.

* Many, many more publications are available in print, computer and audio-visual formats in Workforce Literacy. If you are looking for materials in this area contact the publishers for review copies and plan a trip to one of the Adult Literacy Resource Centers to review the collections on file there. ∎

# The Ingersoll-Rand and Penn State Partnership: Early Workplace Literacy and Lessons Learned

## by Thomas Vineski

An early example of a workplace education and training project began in northeast Pennsylvania in 1987 with the Penn State University and Ingersoll-Rand/Athens, Pennsylvania partnership. The Athens, PA plant is the premier pneumatic hand tool facility in the corporation employing over 650 Pennsylvania and New York residents. A 1986 corporate-level decision for a multi-million dollar upgrade at the Athens plant created the need to determine what skills, knowledges and abilities would be needed by the production force of the future and the design and delivery of a comprehensive program to include a needs assessment and specialized educational and training programs. What follows is a brief review of that process and the results.

### Needs Assessment

As with any comprehensive educational project, a needs assessment is designed and conducted to identify performance deficiencies, opportunities for productivity improvement or in preparation for a planned and continuing process of change as part of a longer-range organizational strategy. The original needs assessment was prepared by a team from the Penn State Institute for Research in Training and Development directed by Dr. Gary Geroy. The primary function of this assessment was to determine basic skills such as reading, computational and word recognition and useage skills. At the same time, it was necessary to assess what skills and knowledges were necessary to present manufacturing processes and procedures and how these would change with the proposed plant-wide modifications.

Procedures involved a series of meetings with a task force selected of employee representatives, plant-wide employee information meetings and individually scheduled conferences. The actual assessment procedure included both an individual 10-minute employee interview and individually selected testing materials based on the completion of the WRAT reading word recognition test. Employees were then issued the testing materials and worked individually from 40 to 90 minutes utilizing elements of the WRAT and ABLE tests (times varied depending on the level of the materials selected). Results were processed and the scores with recommendations were forwarded directly to the employees at their homes. Only the aggregate scores were summarized and forwarded to the company. The results indicated that over half of the employees participating in the assessment displayed adequate reading and math skills greater than 8th grade equivalent and that only 2% functioned at or below the 5th grade equivalent in math or reading.

### Program Component Overview

As a result of the assessment, recommendations included four primary components: a basic skills remediation program known as the Refresher Series, a technical education program focused on the Cellular Manufacturing Technology and basic machine shop operations, a self-directed work team and management-skills program known as the "New Factory Transitions" and two associate degree programs in electrical and mechanical engineering technology. With these, it was felt, the primary foundations for workforce preparation for future IR production processes could begin.

The Refresher Series included the traditional workplace literacy programs: reading, writing and math. Math skills involved basic arithmetic and mathematical operations, problem-solving, calculator useage with an emphasis on decimal operations and micrometer useage. Algebra and geometry/trigonometry were also emphasized and conducted in small classes. Literacy, reading and writing focused on individual abilities and interests with classes conducted individually or in small groups. The Bradford County Literacy Council provided tutors for a number of employees while small classes were conducted at the plant for more advanced readers. Where possible, examples and materials were drawn from the plant environment supplemented by commercial and instructor-developed materials.

Over 20 employees went on to receive their GEDs as a result of the program. Later programs included several sections of basic computer literacy and operations classes and review courses in the fundamentals of business and technical writing.

Over 250 employees participated in these programs between 1987 and 1994 logging more than 8000 classroom hours. Classes were offered on the employees' own time and were scheduled, where possible, immediately before or after shift schedules to maximize convenience and participation. Instructors were hired from the community, with few having any experience in adult education. An orientation program including a "Manual for Adult Educators" was eventually developed and presented to each instructor. Program counseling and administration were provided by the Penn State Training Coordinator assigned to the project. Funding for administration and development came from the Ben Franklin Partnership with class funding from the PA Bureau of Adult Basic Education and Ingersoll-Rand.

The technical education component was known as the Cellular Manufacturing Technology Program and consisted of a series of text and experienced-based classroom programs which included: blueprint reading and geometric dimensioning, machine shop math, machine shop manufacturing processes, quality control, gauging and inspection and CNC (computer numerical control) machine operations totalling approximately 300 classroom hours over 18 months. Over 175 employees participated in classes conducted on company time at shift times convenient to production schedules.

Since a large portion of the anticipated change in plant-wide manufacturing operations involved moving to a multi-task, cellular and team environment from the traditional one-man, one-machine linear production style some consideration was needed for innovative problem-solving and self-management concepts. A program known as New Factory Transitions evolved, focusing on the human management side of change in the manufacturing environment. This program was developed and delivered by faculty from the Management Development Services of Penn State to over 270 employees over four years.

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## Workplace Partnership (cont. from p. 7)

The final component in the educational program plan focused on the technical engineering, maintenance facilities and supervisory employees. Associate degree programs in electrical and mechanical engineering technology were delivered from the Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus to the on-site location at Ingersoll-Rand 80 miles away for over six years.

### Operations and Review

What were some of the benefits and problems resulting from this early workplace literacy program that might benefit other programs? The initial program ended June, 1994, although coursework continues in the associates programs. According to Lori Seymour, Manager of Human Resources at the facility, "the previous push for literacy is going to allow us to get into more detailed technical training in the future. The Penn State / Ingersoll-Rand Partnership raised the awareness and importance of education in the consciousness of the employees." From my perspective as the training coordinator located on site the project represented a very successful attempt to deliver a comprehensive literacy program at such a great distance from the university campus. We all learned from the process, with each institution gaining respect and understanding for the other. Some observations which may be of interest to other practitioners:

- Where possible, all mandated classwork should be conducted on company time, with objectives for attendance, assignments and participation clearly stated and measurable.

- Attempts were made to provide individualized programs of study due to conflicts in employees' personal schedules. Often it was necessary to obtain self-study materials for a particular subject area.

- The needs assessment is an on-going process and regular updating should be addressed early in the program with a clear path for communications established between the company, program provider and the participants.

- It is important to remember that the objectives of educational programs and institutions and those of manufacturing facilities (or any other business/industry) are not always the same. Production schedules, personnel or machinery availability often will take priority over educational principles and practices when scheduling conflicts arise and compromise cannot be reached.

- Education and training are distinct concepts but are too often used interchangeably. Care should be exercised when using these terms. Many times managers or production employees would expect or need specific operational knowledge and skill "training" on new equipment or processes at the facility, only to be seriously disappointed, frustrated or angered when the educational classroom programs did not address their individual needs.

*Mr. Vineski is a former member of the Pennsylvania Adult Education State Plan Task Force. Presently he and his wife are traveling through the southwestern U.S. and Mexico and are involved in E.S.L. tutoring and a variety of projects.* ∎

## New Directions: A National Workplace Literacy Program Partnership
### by Susan Clark-Teisher

The U.S. Department of Education recently awarded Pennsylvania College of Technology, an affiliate of The Pennsylvania State University, a $1.2 million National Workplace Grant. The College is one of 46 projects in 27 states and the Marshall Islands receiving this funding.

Penn College formed a partnership with Rhome Management Company, owner of Williamsport Wirerope Works, Inc. (WWW) and Johnstown Corporation to provide job related workplace training skills to 739 employees. Johnstown Corporation and WWW are part of a competitive world market of industrial rolls-casting and wirerope production undergoing constant change dictated by new processes and technology. The companies must improve basic employee skills to keep pace with technological changes to remain successful. The College and its partners have named the project the "New Directions" Workplace Training Program.

Initial needs by work group were documented in task analyses, standardized assessment tools and worker/supervisor interviews. These assessments confirmed that 70 to 75 percent or more of non-management employees need workplace literacy skills improvement in one or more of the following areas: math, reading, oral or written communication. Individual assessments and training are slated to begin in early 1995 and continue through the Fall of 1997.

> "The real divide in the U.S. economy is no longer between services and manufacturing, or even between men and women. The real split separates those with the education to get good jobs from those who lack it."
>
> Time magazine, November 14, 1994

Penn College, located in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, will provide workplace literacy training to approximately 298 employees at WWW. The College has subcontracted with Greater Johnstown Area Vocational-Technical School to provide workplace literacy training for up to 441 employees at Johnstown Corporation in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

The primary objective of the "New Directions" program is to improve workplace literacy skills to a level sufficient to assure job retention, as well as, to increase opportunity for career advancement. Increased productivity, improved quality, reduced cost, increased employee satisfaction, and better long-term relationships with customers are the intended result of improved employee workplace literacy skills. This will position WWW and Johnstown Corporation to maintain advantage in both the domestic and international marketplaces.

*Susan Clark-Teisher is coordinator of Training and Outreach, Technology Transfer Center, Pennsylvania College of Technology, One College Avenue, Williamsport, PA 17701 (717) 327-4775.* ∎

Among one of the "classic" sources of Workplace Literacy information is a publication titled "Workplace Literacy: Reshaping the American Workforce — What Works?" It was distributed free by the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) in 1992 (contact one of the state Adult Literacy Resource Centers or your regional Staff Development Center).

The booklet studies programs funded by the National Workplace Literacy Program which, since 1988, has channeled more than $50 million into a number of states including Pennsylvania.

### WHAT WORKS?

1. Active and ongoing involvement of all project partners including employees.

2. Systematic analysis of on-the-job literacy requirements.

3. Instructional materials that are related to literacy skills required on the job.

### BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

1. The need to establish successful partnerships.

2. The pitfalls of developing contextual curricula.

   a. Some employers withhold job materials for security reasons.

   b. The curriculum must involve planned learning objectives leading to learners developing literacy competencies needed on the job.

   c. Some worker skills can be learned better by observing another worker; some are not related to literacy skills.

   d. Staff involved in Workplace Literacy must receive training substantially different from that involved in traditional literacy training.

   e. "Standard" or "Adaptable" curricula in Workplace Literacy are not available. Each new site and job must be examined within its context.

### THE KEY — JOB TASK ANALYSIS

Methods used to determine job tasks are lenses to view the literacy needs of employees. The use of several methods of analysis is most effective including observations, questionnaires, interviews and analyses of written materials. ■

# PENNSYLVANIA EMPLOYERS SAY:

These are some quotes from Pennsylvania Employers noted in a study of 575 firms throughout the state by Dr. Ross Koppel of Social Research Corporation in Philadelphia:

✔ "Poor reading abilities of workers negatively affect our business." - 32.4%

✔ "Our workers' reading abilities are an extreme problem that seriously affect our business." - 5%

✔ "Writing problems of workers affect our business." - 45%

✔ "We are not pleased with worker writing abilities. This problem affects our business." - 44%

✔ "Math ability of our workers is a problem." - 51.2%

✔ "The ability of our workers to communicate is a problem." - 49.4%

# Workplace Literacy Provider Network Expansion Grant Awarded

The Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State has received a Section 353 grant from PDE to expand Pennsylvania's workplace literacy provider network. Each staff development region will designate 1-2 persons to participate in the project as trainers of local ABLE providers in workplace literacy practices. The project will develop a training manual to assist regional trainers in training local providers. The project will also develop a database of state and national workplace literacy resource persons, curricula, instructional materials, organizations, and readings. Both products will be valuable resources for the Regional Staff Development Centers.

This project provides an exciting opportunity to share Pennsylvania's regional wisdom and expertise with others in the state and nationwide. If you would like more information about the project, contact Priscilla Carman at: Phone (814) 863-3777 Fax (814) 863-6108 or e-mail: psc3@psu.edu (Penn-Link users add @remote to end of e-mail address). ■

# Here's an Opportunity for Full-time Employment in Workplace Literacy

**P**ennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport has received a prestigious National Workplace Literacy Grant (see article on p. 8) and is looking for Curriculum Development Specialists and Program Director/Coordinators to implement the project.

The Project Director's position in Williamsport calls for a person with a Master's degree in Education, Vocational Education, Adult Education, Curriculum Development or related discipline or the equivalent in education, training and work experience. The Project Coordinator's job in Johnstown requires a Bachelor's degree in Education or a related discipline.

Curriculum Development Specialist positions are available at both sites and require a Master's degree in Education or a related field or equivalent education and appropriate work experience.

New Directions is a three-year funded project and continuation of these positions beyond October 31, 1995 is contingent upon extended funding.

For more details contact Human Resources, Pennsylvania College of Technology, One College Avenue, Williamsport, PA 17701 (717) 327-4770 or, for the Johnstown site, contact Anthony Crimarki, Director of Adult Education, Greater Johnstown Area Vocational-Technical School, 445 Schoolhouse Road, Johnstown, PA 15904 (814) 269-1491. ■

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### PASSAGE
### Stresses Workplace

Our sister publication PASSAGE is billed as "Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter" and, as with The Buzz, is free for the asking.

The November, 1994 issue contains a number of workplace-oriented articles including a feature on "Nine Tips for Continued Success in the Workplace" and another on "Workplace Trends and Statistics". To get on the PASSAGE mailing list, contact editors Bernadette Mangie or John Gobberish at 1-800-345-5443.

# AND TO HELP YOU INVESTIGATE WORKPLACE LITERACY FURTHER . . .

## From the Literature

**Mosaic:** Research Notes on Literacy is an excellent overview of research in the adult basic and literacy education field. It's free from the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, 204 Calder Way, Suite 209, University Park, PA 16801 (814) 863-3777.

The April, 1994 issue of **Mosaic** contains an article describing "**Assessment Courseware for Workplace Literacy**" by Brett Bixler and Eunice N. Askov of the Institute at Penn State. The courseware was developed as part of a National Workplace Literacy program and the article describes the computer-based, criterion-referenced assessment component to the instructional program "A Day in the Life . . . Instruction" which offers instruction in basic skills in five job areas with performance assessed in the "A Day in the Life . . . Assessment." "A Day in the Life . . . Instruction" and its companion "Assessment" are marketed by Curriculum Associates, Inc. (1-800-225-0248).

Another **Mosaic** issue (October, 1992) is devoted entirely to **Workplace Literacy and Workforce Preparation programs**. It contains an article titled "Report From The Trenches: Research on Workplace Literacy Programs", some "Recent Articles of Interest" and "New Publications" in the **Resources for Research and Practice** section.

Still a third **Mosaic** issue (June, 1991) describes **Workplace Literacy Evaluation** models and contains some excellent advise for adult basic education and literacy programs: "**Vendors and instructors must understand that workplace programs require a different way of doing business. Funders have every right to expect reasonable answers about how long gains will take, what resources will be required, and who will have access to evaluation information. To become effective in this area, program providers must adopt a trouble-shooting attitude and ask questions they have never needed to consider and may find distasteful.**"

Other free sources include the May/June 1991 issue of **ged Items** in which there appears a number of GED/Workplace Literacy articles including: "**GED in Workforce Literacy Programs**", and an article by Tony Sarmiento, Assistant Director of Education for the AFL-CIO, titled "**Wanted: A New Kind of Workplace**". For inclusion on this excellent newsletter's mailing list write GEDTS, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036-1163.

An informative publication put out in 1989 by the Appalachian Regional Commission titled "**Upgrading Basic Skills for the Workplace**" was developed by the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy for the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy. Eunice Askov, Director of the Institute, was project director and the ring-bound book takes readers from a definition of Workplace Literacy, through marketing and instruction including sample activities, forms, bibliography, etc.

At the Northeast Regional Adult Literacy Conference in Pittsburgh in 1993, **Margaret Welliver**, Coordinator of Adult Basic and Literacy Education for the State College School District, gave a comprehensive report titled "**Workplace Literacy: To improve basic skills for employees; To improve employee performance; To allow companies to compete in a changing economy.**" It contains lots of "nuts-and-bolts" including materials from the How-to Manual, "**Making Workplace Literacy Work**," produced by Jeffrey Woodyard, Executive Director of Tri-County Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc. in Harrisburg.

A very impressive report from the National Center on Adult Literacy (3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104) is titled "**The Impact of Workplace Literacy Programs: A New Model for Evaluating the Impact of Workplace Literacy Programs.**" It was released in February, 1993 as Technical Report TR93-2 and describes a study designed to develop an impact assessment model for workplace literacy programs and to produce data on the impact of programs at two sites. Examples of the conclusions of the study are: 1. There are several different workplace literacy problems, calling for a multi-stranded approach to instruction; 2. Improvement takes a significant amount of learner practice time; 3. Transfer of learning from one application to new applications is very limited; and 4. Significant learning loss occurs within a few weeks if skills are not practiced.

The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and the U.S. Department of Labor collaborated on one of the first "how-to" publications available early in the Workplace Literacy movement (October, 1988). It is the first of a series of five publications in the field and titled "**Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want**". In addition to describing workplace skills (Reading, Writing and Computation Competence; Listening and Oral Communication skills; Adaptability using Creative Thinking and Problem-Solving skills; Personal management characteristics such as self-esteem, goal setting/motivation and personal career development; group and organizational effectiveness, interpersonal and leadership skills) the workbook, in Part III, describes a 7 step program for a "Blueprint to Success: How to Establish Programs to Deliver Workplace Basics." The address for ASTD is: 1630 Duke Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313.

A report titled "**Current practice in Workplace Literacy Evaluation**" by Judith Alamprese, of COSMOS Corporation (yes, the same people doing the EQuAL project) concludes "As business and government invest more heavily in workplace basic skills programs, they show increasing interest in determining the usefulness of these programs. The overall measurement of productivity in the workplace continues to be a difficult task." At the EQuAL teleconference Ms. Alamprese gave the impression she feels assessment instruments and methods presently in use leave much to be desired. ∎

# People and Programs in PA ABLE

� Pennsylvania will be the site of the 1996 Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) National Conference. COABE is an affiliate of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). Our AAACE state affiliate, the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), will host the conference and, according to PAACE president Carol Molek and first vice-president Dehra Shafer, both of whom attended the 1994 COABE Conference, Pennsylvania was selected for this prestigious conference because of the top-notch state adult education Midwinter Conference each year and because of the support for the 1996 Conference tendered by Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education Director Cheryl Keenan.

✖ Testimony at the recent hearings for re-authorization of the Federal Adult Education Act was given by a number of Pennsylvania adult educators including JoAnn Weinberger, Executive Director of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia, and Dr. Allan Quigley of the Penn State Center in Monroeville. Ms. Weinberger delivered testimony co-operatively prepared by PAACE and the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Literacy (PSCAL) and Dr. Quigley testified on the General Educational Development (GED) program.

✖ Welcome to James Shindledecker, new Southeast Area Advisor for the ABLE Bureau. The Bureau has re-aligned the counties in various areas throughout the state and, to avoid confusion with Staff Development Regions, is now referring to the Northeast, Northwest, Southwest, Southeast and Delaware County/Philadelphia Areas. Re-alignments were established by Regional Programs Section Chief Don Lunday on the bases of number of programs and persons served.

✖ Corrections Education Bureau Director Bill Mader reporting at the recent PAACE Board meeting of the serious effect on 1,200 to 1,500 adult students in correctional facilities throughout Pennsylvania who will no longer be eligible for federal financial grants to continue their education. The cutback was the result of amendments to the federal Crime Bill and Mr. Mader notes the Department of Corrections is holding discussions to decide whether or not post-secondary programs should be continued. He emphasized the cutback does not affect city or county corrections facilities' adult students.

✖ Our best wishes and those of all BUZZ readers to MARTHA FRANK who announced her retirement in October. Martha is fondly remembered as literacy and regional advisor and seemed to be in all places all the time providing just the right type of "technical assistance" and common-sense advice that was needed. ∎

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## ADA Update

Topics will include Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Disability Management, Abilities Education Technology Reading Seminar, Centre County Human Services Planning and other information concerning the Americans With Disabilities Act.

**Dates and Locations:**
December 6, 1994
MONROEVILLE
December 8, 1994
HARRISBURG area
December 9, 1994
READING
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For registration information call the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs (717) 787-5177.

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## Maryland AACCE
## Call for Papers

The Maryland Association for Adult, Community and Continuing Education will hold its Spring Conference at Catonsville, MD May 4 and 5, 1995. Buzz readers are encouraged to submit proposals to present. Contact Laura E. Weidner, Catonsville Community College, 800 South Rolling Road, Catonsville, MD 21228.

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## Reflections of a Fledgling Advisor
### by Jim Shindledecker
### Southeast Area Advisor

Hi. My name is Jim Shindledecker and I'm the new Adult Basic Education Advisor on the block. The idea for this, my first BUZZ article, started to develop some four to six weeks after I began here at ABLE. But the catalyst that really lit the proverbial light bulb in my head was a statement made by our Section Chief, Don Lunday, during a staff meeting in late October. He said, "The key to using and understanding the new evaluation policy (and proposal writing) is for providers to come to the administrative workshops." These workshops will be held at various sites throughout the Commonwealth during the period of January 23 - February 3, 1995.

I was hired as a temporary employee to take up some of the slack created by the work backup that occurred during late spring and early summer. I have been somewhat of a floater so far, helping with proposals in both the Northeast and the Southeast areas. I will be assisting Dale Mace with his on-site evaluations this year.

I began work on August 22 and was given a concentrated training session by Dale during the first week. During the next weeks, Chuck Holbrook (Northeast Area Advisor) took over my training with emphasis on a lot of O.J.T. (on-the-job-training).

This brings me back to the main point of this article. There is a lot to know about the application process, and it is easy to misinterpret one or more of the details involved. Mistakes cause problems for both of us that translate into inconvenience, increased work load, and lost time.

You can (and should) take advantage of our help by attending the Administrative Workshops in your area early in 1995. You will be receiving information regarding dates and times.

**"IT CAN BE A VERY VALUABLE EXPERIENCE FOR YOU."**

I hope to meet you at some of these workshops and look forward to seeing you at the Mid-Winter Conference in Hershey on February 8, 9, and 10. ∎

# GED: MOTIVATION, RETENTION, SUCCESS

## BY MARY LOUISE GALL

Motivation and retention of the student in a GED program are a necessity. As a teacher, tutor, or administrator in a GED program, it is imperative to understand what the GED test consists of and the knowledge and skill required to successfully pass the test. Many GED educators have stereotyped ideas of what a student must know in order to be successful in attaining his/her immediate goal – passing the GED test. The immediate goal and successive goals of the student must be explored. The test is not a test of trivia and facts, or even individual stand alone skills. The GED test is a test of critical thinking and reasoning skills. If the GED educator understands the make-up of the GED test and what is required to successfully pass the test, motivating the student to attain this goal becomes much easier. If the student is motivated, his/her retention in the program follows.

### Meaningful Testing

Many students are turned away from GED programs because of the initial testing process. The student wants to know his/her chances of passing the GED test. Test the student with meaningful tests for the GED. Entry level testing is important to retention. The student does not profit from a negative review of his/her basic skills. GED predictor or practice tests will give a good idea of areas where work is required. Remember, many GED students aren't used to success, they are used to failure and expect to fail. If the GED student has some early success in class, the student is more apt to return to the class. Many GED educators need to throw away the 'red ink' and start with positive motivations. No one likes to do those things in which he/she is not successful.

### GED Test Content

The GED test is really a series of five multiple-choice tests. The writing skills section test consists of sentences with something that may be wrong in their content. One of the answer choices fixes the sentence. Another requirement of the writing skills test is a handwritten essay on a given topic.

The social studies, science and interpreting literature and arts sections of the test are reading comprehension tests. The first two consist of a blend of long passages followed by three to five questions and short passages followed by one question. Many of these questions are based on graphs, diagrams, cartoons, or charts. The answers are almost always in the text of the material. Almost no prior knowledge of the subject is necessary.

The interpreting literature and arts test takes its selections from novels, plays, reviews and poetry. The ability to read, analyze and apply what has been read is tested. As the student learns to read the selections to answer the questions rather than to memorize or remember information, he/she gains confidence in his/her ability.

### Practice Reading

A key concept in reading comprehension is familiarity with the style of the writing. If the student reads and answers questions similar to those found on the GED test, he/she will be less intimidated by the actual GED test. There are many books with reading passages with questions similar to the GED test. Although no specific facts are needed in the social studies, science and literature and the arts tests, some general knowledge of the subjects is helpful. Reading these articles in the GED format is a key to acquiring that general knowledge. As the student continues to score better on practice exercises he/she becomes more motivated. More and more practice exercises enhance that general knowledge more than memorizing.

### Be Test Wise

Eliminating wrong answers on a question is a good strategy for all sections of the test. Many of the answer choices can easily be eliminated by a systematic series of questions that the student learns to ask himself. The answer to the question becomes a choice of two or three rather than a choice of five possibilities.

The mathematics section of the test is mostly composed of arithmetic problems that might be met in everyday life. Again, graphic materials are used extensively. Word problems are quite evident. Many of the problems do not require solving, but preparing the setup for the solution.

Estimating the answer in the math section of the test is another good strategy. As the student learns to set an upper and lower limit to the possibility of the answer to a problem, some of the multiple-choice answers may be eliminated. Again the student is provided with a more successful chance of choosing the correct answer.

### Confidence Is Important

Each of the strategies mentioned above provide the student with a positive attitude toward the GED test and education itself. As the student gets more confidence in himself, he/she seeks more opportunities to use his/her newly gained skills. These strategies rely heavily on critical thinking and reasoning skills.

The student is motivated by his/her newly found skills and is encouraged to persevere. Using this method of teaching many programs encourages students, who would otherwise give up, to continue with classes.

Motivating the student to continue his/her education after passing the GED test is an important part of a GED program. Learning should be fun, productive, and meaningful to the student. If the student can be encouraged to do his/her best on the test, he/she can usually be encouraged not to stop there. The adult education program, tutor, teacher, and staff need to be there to help the student who desires to continue. Other students see the results of successful students and become more motivated. The student is the most important factor in any program.

*Mary Louise Gall is well-known throughout the state for her extensive experience in adult education and her presentations at Mid-Winter Conferences, Fall Workshops and Regional Staff Development activities. She is employed as an adult education instructor by the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit #5 in Edinboro.* ■

# Adult Educators Need to Learn about 'Marketable Skills'

*The following appeared in a recent issue of the news-letter of the Region 1 Staff Development Center. It was written by Dr. Richard Gacka who has extensive experience in adult education and always looks at issues affecting our profession in an insightful, usually unique, way.*

One advantage of my job is that I get to do lots of different things. During the past year, the IU has been very active in developing Tech Prep and Youth Apprenticeship programs and hopefully will be a lead agent in implementing the School to Work Transition Act. So what? What in the world does that have to do with Adult Education, you ask. The possible answers to your confusion are:

A. *"More than you think."*

B. *"More than you might like."*

C. *"It might be the new home for Adult Ed."*

D. *"It ain't going to be business as usual."*

E. *"All of the above."*

The right answer is "E" and, as a group, adult educators had better move beyond their myopic viewpoint and get a glimpse of reality. Adult Ed is only one piece of a much broader educational agenda.

I had the occasion to attend the literacy conference in Harrisburg last April and left firmly convinced that many traditional adult educators simply could not (or refuse to) see the "big picture." The whole program relied on well intentioned emotional arguments completely unsupported by valid data or logic. When one's daily experience in the field suggests that functional illiteracy is increasing, a critical agenda might be to identify those skills which make an individual employable and provide programs to develop those skills. Yes, I must confess, I admit it, I don't believe that volunteer tutors are the only answer to the problem of adult illiteracy. I don't even believe that illiteracy by itself is the real problem. Perhaps we need a new self-help group modeled after AA, maybe AEA (Adult Educators Anonymous), so individuals who have a different view of adult education have a forum for their opinions. Based on what I observe, the real problem is the ever increasing level of functional adult incompetence, in part because the standards are getting higher and as a result formerly competent people who were always functioning near the edge are finding it hard to stay in the game. How we can help give these people the wide range of skills they will need to succeed is a question that needs to move into focus. We aren't only in the business of teaching reading, and our clients aren't with us only because they can't read – as much as some traditionalists would like such a neat but over-simplistic answer.

The people who work in the field of adult education are going to need to learn what "prerequisite marketable skills" are, how they are developed, and how they can help clients to overcome the barriers that prevent such skills from being obtained. The adult educator of the future will need an understanding of economics, psychology, language, medicine, technical training, criminal justice, law, and many other areas, but more importantly how all of these elements fit together. They are going to need to see illiteracy as the complex multi-causality syndrome that it is, and prepare themselves to work as part of a team effort to move the individual forward. Adult Education may well find itself to be a small potato in the large field of employment preparation services. Perhaps the results won't be any better, but one thing is clear, we're going to go down that road before we find out.

During the coming year you can expect to see an emphasis in staff development on such things as objective skill assessment and alternative assessment strategies, skill monitoring and portfolio assessment, "applied" techniques of teaching (reading, communication skills, mathematics, and interpersonal skills), "work hardening," the behavioral/attitudinal correlates of poor academic skills, and a range of pending legislation which is going to force adult education to come into the mainstream of social-welfare programming.

From what I see coming down the pipeline, it's going to be a very interesting year. It's not just death and taxes that are inevitable, you had better add "change" to that list.

*Well . . . how do you respond to this timely challenge? Both Dr. Gacka and "What's the Buzz?" would like to hear from you. You may contact Rich at Northwest Tri-County IU #5, 252 Waterford Street, Edinboro, 16412 (814) 734-5610 and be sure to write us at "What's the Buzz?", Box 214, Troy, PA 16947 (FAX - 717-596-4222).* ■



*Mary Louise Gall, adult education instructor, and Dr. Richard Gacka, Director of the Northwest Tri County Intermediate Unit #5 Adult Education Program.*

> *"Business groups tell us that our economy is threatened by an ignorant, unskilled and apathetic workforce Many Pennsylvania employers claim that lack of a sufficiently skilled or committed workforce is limiting their ability to introduce new processes and technology or to expand current production."*
>
> *– from a survey of Pennsylvania employers*

# ABLE Bureau Realigns Staff and Regions

The Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE), under the leadership of Bureau Director Cheryl Keenan, continues to evolve so as to focus staff efforts and energies on ways to better serve ABLE service providers throughout the Commonwealth.

Staff Assignments and telephone numbers are as follows:

**Director:** Cheryl Keenan (717) 772-3737
      Secretary - Tracy Malick
    Administrative Assistant - Audry Walter
    Budget Analyst - Richard Stirling
    Secretary - Tracey Sullivan (717) 772-3885

**Special Programs and Projects Section:**
    Chief: Ella Morin (717) 787-5532
        Secretary: Beth Bates
    Director of Staff Development: Helen Hall
    Special Projects Advisor & GED Administrator: Larry Goodwin
        GED Manager: Anita Emery (717) 787-6747
        GED Program Technician: Mary Jane Corl

**Regional Programs Section:**
    Chief: Don Lunday (717) 787-6344
    Northwest Advisor: John Sloan
    Southwest Advisor: Abbei Brawley
    Southeast Advisors: Dale Mace and Jim Shindeldecker
    Northeast Advisors: Chuck Holbrook
    Philadelphia & Delaware Counties: John Zhong
    Research & Evaluation Chief: Bill Murphy (717) 783-4333
        Secretary: Caryn Watson

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### REGIONAL REALIGNMENTS

**NORTHWEST Counties:** Armstrong, Beaver, Bradford, Butler, Cameron, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lycoming, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Sullivan, Tioga, Venango, Warren.

**NORTHEAST Counties:** Bucks, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Montour, Northampton, Northumberland, Pike, Schuylkill, Snyder, Susquehanna, Union, Wayne, Wyoming.

**SOUTHWEST Counties:** Allegheny, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fayette, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, Somerset, Washington, Westmoreland.

**SOUTHEAST Counties:** Adams, Berks, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Montgomery, Perry, York.

**PHILADELPHIA & DELAWARE Counties**

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# IT'S A DATE!

**December, 1994:**

1: "Adult Numeracy Instruction: New Approaches" Videoconference; 1-3 p.m. THIS WILL BE "DOWNLINKED" AT A NUMBER OF REGIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT CENTERS. Contact your Center or the National Center on Adult Literacy, 3910 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111; (215) 898-2100.

5: Region 7 Staff Development Workshop: "Management Information Systems"; PSU Allentown Campus, Fogelsville. 12:30-2:30. Presenter: Sheila Sherow. Contact: Ann Koefer (610) 758-6347.

9: Staff Development Region 1 Workshop; "Career Choices and Employability Skills"; Presenter: Marshall Karp; at the Avalon Inn, Erie; 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Contact Bootsie Barbour (814) 454-4474.

9: Region 4 Staff Development Workshop: "New Techniques for Math and GED Instruction; Goodwill Literacy Initiative, 8:45 a.m. - 12. Presenter: Scott Weber, South-western Publishing; To register call (412) 661-7323.

14: Region 2 Staff Development Workshop: "Teaching ESL: Total Physical Responses for Beginners and Other Approaches for Advanced ESL Students." 411 South Fraser St., State College; 5:30 - 9; Speaker: Holly Shaffiee, Mid-State Literacy Council; call Gail Leightley (814) 359-3069.

**January, 1995:**

19-21: 13th Annual National Conference on Technology, Reading and Learning Difficulties; San Francisco. Call 1-800-255-2218 or contact Diane Frost (510) 222-1249.

**February, 1995:**

8-10: 30th Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference, Hershey; Contact PAACE, Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

10: 8-9 a.m. Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC) Meeting: Hershey.

15-17: 1995 Annual Lifelong Learning Conference; "Innovations in Higher Education Technology and Workplace Literacy"; San Diego. Contact: National University Research Institute, 4025 Camino del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108.

22-26: National Association for Developmental Education 19th Annual Conference; Chicago; Contact Julia N. Visor, University Center for Learning Assistance, 4240 Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240 (309) 438-7100.

23-24: First International Conference on Women and Literacy; sponsored by the Georgia State University Center for the Study of Adult Literacy; Atlanta; Contact the Center at Georgia State University, University Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30303-3083; (404) 651-2405.

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**Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter**

# "What's the Buzz?"

Mailed December 5

# What's The BUZZ? ™

## IN THIS ISSUE . . .

## The EQuAL Teleconference

# EQuAL IS HERE

EQuAL is part of the "systems" approach to adult basic and literacy education which has its roots in the National Literacy Act of 1991: "to enhance the literacy and basic skills of adults, to ensure that all adults in the United States acquire the basic skills necessary to function effectively and achieve the greatest possible opportunity in their work and in their lives . . ."

The key words? BASIC SKILLS . . . FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY . . . WORK.

### The Project EQuAL System Components

1. An ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION process for the ongoing collection and analysis of student and program data.

2. A state MONITORING process for the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) to use in identifying local program needs and ASSESS whether programs meet federal and state guidelines.

### The EQuAL Teleconference

We spoke with some viewers of the teleconference held November 21 who felt the EQuAL Teleconference raised more questions than it answered - - they're right. As we understand it, the EQuAL Project is designed to raise relevant questions about a system of STATEWIDE STANDARDS and attempt to provide answers through a study of what programs achieve and how to measure it. The EQuAL project is designed to develop a system through: Review (of program quality measures and standards developed by local programs); Development (of

EQuAL . . .

Educational Quality

for

Adult Literacy

procedures for collecting assessment and other data and for the use of this data in managing programs and assisting learners). Plans call for the establishment of 10 test sites for project activities in 1994-95 (they will be identified in January) and for additional sites to be established in 1995-96 and 1996-97.

### The Outcome?

Ron Fronzaglio, Director of Adult Basic Education Programs for the Allegheny Intermediate Unit in Pittsburgh, introduced the Teleconference on November 21 by stating the EQuAL project would develop new Statewide Performance Standards for adult education and literacy providers and also develop a Statewide Evaluation System of local programs.

Cheryl Keenan, Director of the ABLE Bureau, noted the EQuAL project will create an Accountable System through increased knowledge of what we are doing in adult education in Pennsylvania and where we need to go.

She noted two of the Program Improvement components of the EQuAL program that will be instituted this year are a Revised Program Application (be sure to attend one of the series of Administrator's meetings scheduled for January and February, 1995), and Monitoring Enhancement of local programs with the collection of information as to the use of data for local program management (now you know why your area advisor is spending lots more time during the on-site visit). The information will be used to develop and validate Statewide Standards with the eventual goal being enhanced staff development and technical assistance.
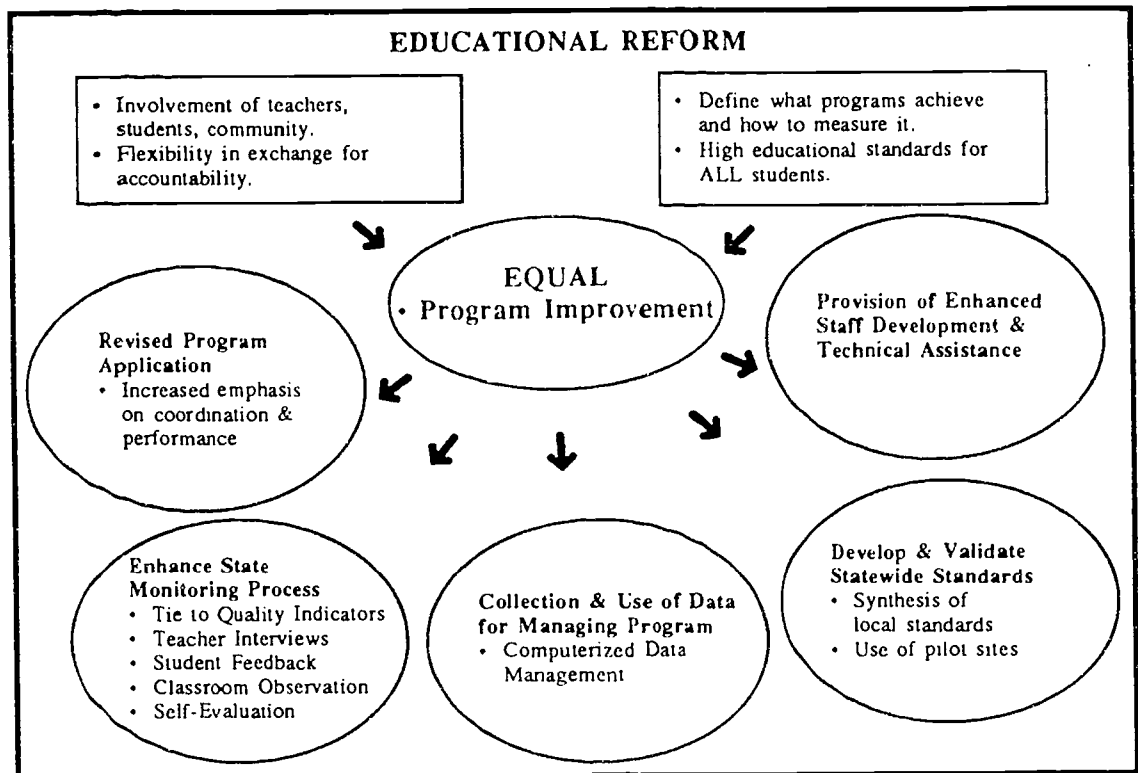
The EQuAL Project is being implemented by Cosmos Corporation of Bethesda, Maryland with a Section 353 grant from the ABLE Bureau. Project Director **Judith A. Alamprese** noted during the Teleconference the need for more specific information about the effects of the use of federal monies to support adult education and also the need as to how adult learners use the skills they have learned.

Ms. Alamprese identified **Learner Assessment** (individually and as groups) as a key to Program Evaluation to determine the effectiveness of local programs.

The third member of the Teleconference Panel, representing the 13 service providers on the EQuAL Advisory Council (also on the Council are representatives of the Departments of Welfare and Education), was Dr. Linda McCrossan, Executive Director of the Adult Literacy Center of the Lehigh Valley in Allentown. Dr. McCrossan explained that EQuAL "provides the OBJECTIVITY that we need to explain to the community, funding agencies, and others what we are doing and it also provides us with an opportunity to participate in what is going on. Knowledge and Accountability provide the foundation for better program practice."

Videotapes of the EQuAL Teleconference are available from a number of regional staff development centers. Copies may be purchased for $10 from the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (800) 446-5607, ext. 216. ❖

## EDUCATIONAL REFORM

- Involvement of teachers, students, community.
- Flexibility in exchange for accountability.

- Define what programs achieve and how to measure it.
- High educational standards for ALL students.

**EQUAL**
- Program Improvement

**Revised Program Application**
- Increased emphasis on coordination & performance

**Provision of Enhanced Staff Development & Technical Assistance**

**Enhance State Monitoring Process**
- Tie to Quality Indicators
- Teacher Interviews
- Student Feedback
- Classroom Observation
- Self-Evaluation

**Collection & Use of Data for Managing Program**
- Computerized Data Management

**Develop & Validate Statewide Standards**
- Synthesis of local standards
- Use of pilot sites

## EQuAL Teleconference Questions & Answers

*Following the EQuAL panel presentation, viewers at the various downlink sites and members of the audience at the originating Distance Learning Center in Gibsonia had an opportunity to question panel members. These are some of the representative questions and panel answers.*

Q. *from Lucille Aloyisi of the Westmoreland/Fayette Private Industry Council: "How will the information from the onsite monitoring visits be used?"*

A. "The monitoring process is an integral part to all of EQuAL's parts. It lets the state see the strengths and needs of programs so we can provide appropriate staff development and technical assistance to programs."

Q. *from Don Block, Executive Director of the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Initiative. "How can we have statewide standards when we have students of all ability levels and all program types?"*

A. "There will be some variations, but there are presently more similarities than differences. We will be considering hours of instruction and other differences."

Q. *from Manuel Gonzalez, Northampton County Community College: "Is some type of system in the works to mechanize the transmission of data from the local programs to the ABLE Bureau?"*

A. "There have been efforts in the Bureau to mechanize data collection. One of our problems is that some programs have the capability of sending us data by mechanization (and some do not). A Section 353 project is developing software for the computerized transmission of data to the Bureau and we hope eventually to have every program using this system. However, we must accommodate all programs and some do not have this ability right now."

Q. *from Sandy Strunk, Lancaster/Lebanon IU #13: "I am concerned that statewide standards may impact the diversity of the populations we serve. I would like to hear about the other states that Cosmos has worked with."*

A. "Pennsylvania is one of a few states in which local programs developed t ir own standards. In the other states very broad, statewide standards were developed at the state level. Standards which do not restrict, but give programs feedback as to how they're progressing will be less complicated but will give us the data needed.

"The ABLE Bureau looked at other state efforts when developing standards and we hope through the pilot process the standards become a tool, not a burden to local programs." ❖

# 10th Penn-Ohio Conference

## CROSSING BORDERS . . .

During the past decade many areas of adult education have changed. New topics such as those demonstrated in the pre-conference Technology Sessions and the Saturday Carousel Sessions of the 10th Penn-Ohio Adult Education Conference held in November have taken their place along with more traditional topics.

TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATIONS were available to "pre-conference" attenders and these ranged from the very technical "Introduction to Internet for Adult Education" by John Stachowiak to a "Beginners/Buyers Guide to the Personal Computer" by Dr. Rich Gacka. Both presenters are with IU #5 in Edinboro which has an extensive Technical Services component.

### Highlights

John Stachowiak is an Associate Administrator for Technical Services with IU #5 and, although we got the feeling his technology presentation was to be geared toward the computer novice in adult education, he soon got into the jargon: World Wide Web — WWW, Gopher, ARAPA, etc. Experienced "Users" present at John's session enjoyed a tour through the Internet and usable explanations of various information systems and how to access them. Even beginners picked up a few ideas ("start with America On Line for $9.95 per month and access Internet and other systems"). John also distributed an excellent introduction to the Internet titled "Global Learning Resources".

Rich Gacka's "Beginners/Buyers Guide" session was much more basic and gave beginners in the computer - adult education game some basic definitions, descriptions of computers and peripherals, and some "General Rules of Computer Frustrations" (e.g. "One week after you buy a new computer it will be obsolete, will not run the 'cutting edge' software, and will be worthless on trade-in — if there is such a thing").

John Stachowiak and Rich Gacka may be contacted at IU #5; (814) 734-5610.

## Penn/Ohio State Directors Speak at Dinner

The Friday night dinner session featured Cheryl Keenan, Director of Pennsylvania's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, and her opposite in Ohio, James Bowling (Mr. Bowling, incidentally, is a "What's the Buzz?" reader and says he looks forward to his issue each month).



At the 10th Penn-Ohio Conference from left, Dr. Richard Gacka, IU #5 Adult Education Director and Suzanne Bernadini, President of the Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education. Dr. Gacka and Ms. Bernadini are the founders of the Penn-Ohio Conference. Wearing the Penn State University cap is Cheryl Keenan, Director of Pennsylvania's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) and wearing the Ohio State University cap is James Bowling, Ohio State Director for Adult Basic and Literacy Education. Mr. Bowling presented Ms. Keenan with the PSU cap in recognition of Penn State's defeat of OSU in football.

As the host state, Ohio set the pattern for the Directors' remarks which were built around Ohio's adult education acronym PACT (Professionalism, Accountability, Collaboration, and Technology).

Director Keenan noted that Pennsylvania has a number of systems and programs in place to enhance each of the four PACT areas including the advancement of Professionalism with university ABLE courses of study in pre-professional training; in-service and staff development training; and contextual learning to assure that teachers learn as they teach by using action research, etc. She also noted two Sec-

tion 353 projects which are ongoing in Pennsylvania. Tana Reiff of Lancaster is bringing together information relating to adult education teacher competencies which will be used to structure training opportunities. Mary Gall of IU #5 is developing a registration process for adult education teachers who demonstrate competencies; Ms. Gall explained her project as one of the 13 carousel sessions on Saturday.

Ms. Keenan noted **Accountability** is mandated by the U.S. Education Act and Pennsylvania has responded by initiating some of the recommendations coming from the PA 2000 meeting last Spring. An example of this response is the EQuAL program. "We cannot build programs to counteract illiteracy by ourselves," said Director Keenan as she noted the importance of **Collaboration** in Pennsylvania adult basic and literacy education. "Each program must be part of a Human Service Collaboration," she explained.

Ms. Keenan noted the recent Technology Summit as an example of Pennsylvania ABLE's commitment to **Technology** in adult education and explained this is one of the most powerful tools we can use in staff development.

Next year's Penn-Ohio will be in Pennsylvania. Using the example of this year's conference we can recommend it as one of the high points of ABLE in Pennsylvania. ❖

## The ABLE Tech Net

If the title of this article leaves you wondering what it's all about, welcome to the world of TECHNOLOGY.

We cannot remember any time in adult basic and literacy education that so few knew so much about so much . . . and so many wondered what it was all about.

In our June, 1994 issue we noted information and comments from the "Technology: New Tools in Adult Literacy" teleconference held April 28 and periodically we have printed information about the use of computers in program management and computer assisted instruction. Our May, 1995 SPOTLIGHT article will deal with Technology and Adult Education.

The level of awareness as to computer use, the use of calculators to teach math (or numeracy to use the current "Buzz" word) and other examples of "low-tech" use in adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) are pretty well understood by most teacher/tutors/counselor/administrators. But what in the world is **Internet**? We know PC is personal computer, but what is a **TCP/IP**? And how about a **PPP** connection???

Well, help is on the way. Beginning last month "What's the Buzz?" initiated a monthly column by Ben Burenstein (the adult education computer maven at Drexel University). Ben will attempt to lead you gently into the world of Internet, etc. and help you develop strategies for using the **new technology**. The goal? To show *Buzz* readers how to develop an awareness of what "hightech" is all about and how the world of computers and computer-based communication networks, bulletin boards, etc. can help you do a better job in adult basic and literacy education. ❖

## Towards a Unified Field Theory . . .

# Pennsylvania's Technology and Literacy Summit

### by Ben Burenstein, Drexel University

On October 26 and 27 Pennsylvania took a historic step towards integrating computers and other high technology into the state's adult literacy programs. Through a Section 353 grant, the Pennsylvania Department of Education sponsored the **"Technology Summit for Adult Basic and Literacy Education"** in Harrisburg. Facilitated by staff from Drexel University, thirty adult education professionals met to begin the process of developing a statewide technology plan for adult basic education. The plan's purpose is to help guide PDE decision-making about how to best support the introduction of new technologies in ways that will help agencies be most effective and efficient.

Many ABE, GED, and ESL programs use high technology in some form. Administrators use spreadsheets to do their budgets, teachers use videotapes for staff development, and learners work on computerized tutorials designed to improve their math or reading skills. But due to financial constraints, much of the technology is donated, especially computers. Because of this, there is a hodge-podge of equipment out there. Some agencies have only one computer, which may be from 1985 or earlier. Others have one Apple, one IBM, and two Commodores, no software, and no staff who know how to use them. Inexpensive training opportunities are scarce for educators. A **coherent statewide plan** could help agencies use resources most efficiently for administrative purposes, and most effectively for teaching and learning.

Participants came from regional staff development centers, literacy provider agencies, universities and research institutions, and intermediate units. Numerous PDE staff from the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) including Cheryl Keenan, Bill Murphy, Helen Hall, and Don Lunday participated.

> "There is a hodge-podge of computer equipment out there."

John Fleischman, Director of the Outreach and Technical Assistance Center (OTAN), from Sacramento, California, was a special guest at the Technology Summit. He developed an on-line computer network devoted to adult basic education which is available to all the adult literacy agencies in California. He shared his experiences including the problems, successes, and costs associated with the introduction of such a system.

The discussions explored how to use high technology in three large responsibilities of ABLE: Administrative, Staff Development, and Student Instruction. Each group worked to develop a definition for a baseline level for technology use for agencies in Pennsylvania, and then to describe a three-year plan that would lead to the optimal use for technology in each of these areas.

Networking, the use of computers and telephone lines to send information back and forth and to communicate using such services as the Internet and America On-line, was a big topic of conversation. It was seen as relating to all three responsibilities. How convenient it would be to enter out student data directly on computer, and send it directly to Harrisburg over the phone - a goal for some agencies for 1995-96. Or to be able to look at a file listing all available grants in the country. Or, no matter where you are, to be part of a statewide staff development session via teleconferencing - already taking place.

The general sense of the conference was that if we can implement technology successfully, we will be able to best serve learners needs in the world of today. The ABLE Bureau's support of this process is vital. Many potential difficulties need to be overcome, especially obtaining resources and training staff. But all attendees expressed a strong commitment to keeping technology on the agenda in Adult Basic and Literacy Education. ❖

## Spotlight on Special Learning Needs

*Unfortunately many adult educators look upon the challenges presented by Special Learning Needs Adults as problems. And, unfortunately, if the total learning needs of a Special Needs Adult are to be met by most of our present ABLE programs, there is usually no quick nor simple nor uncostly solution to the problems.*

*Does every adult learner have a "Special Learning Need"? A review of the literature and discussions with adult educators who attempt to meet the individual needs of each student would lead us to believe the answer is "yes"; that in some way, a "Special" program of support and educational services is required for every adult learner if he/she is to reach their full potential in our adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) programs.*

*However, there are many adult learners for whom the "traditional" classroom or tutoring experience is just not appropriate. These "Special Needs" adults require sometimes a minor, sometimes a major revision of program services to meet their needs.*

*It is this latter group of adult learners who present the greatest challenge to ABLE teachers, tutors, counselors and administrators and it is this group about which this month's SPOTLIGHT attempts to furnish information.*

*In the few pages that follow we present lots and lots of sources of information to assist you in meeting Special Learning Needs. We do not present solutions to your program needs, instructional needs, financial needs which most programs must address if they are to provide the same quality of services to Special Learning Needs Adults as they do to their "usual" students.*

*Each adult basic and literacy education program must develop their own methods and activities for dealing with Special Challenges.*

*Referring to the information sources we note will help.*

## "What's the Buzz?" – – An Information Resource

*Special Learning Needs is a concern to ABLE practitioners and over the years we have printed numerous articles relating to that topic. We know many readers save their copies of The Buzz for future reference and all copies are available at AdvancE, 1-800-992-2283.*

*February, 1984:* "Adult Educator's Guide to Learning Disabilities": sources of information and a listing of the types of Learning Disabilities.

*February, 1988:* "The Learning Disabled Adult Learner . . . and Adult Basic Education":
* The American Council on Education estimates there are nearly two million learning disabled adults in the U.S.;
* A project conducted at Penn State concludes: "We usually think of a learning disability as a mild disorder, yet it doesn't appear to go away and it seems impervious to traditional school interventions."

Also in this issue is an explanation of the term "learning disability" and a checklist of behaviors:
* difficulty in reading, spelling, using numerical concepts;
* has poorly formed handwriting, may print, inconsistent slant - spaces words unevenly;
* trouble listening;
* easily distracted;
* trouble understanding or following directions;
* confuses similar letters such as b and d, p and q;
* confuses order of letters (was for saw, teh for the);
* omits or adds words when reading aloud;
* confuses similar numbers (3 and 8, 6 and 9);
* has severe difficulty sticking to schedules;
* appears clumsy or poorly coordinated;
* seems disorganized in space (confuses up and down, right and left);
* seems disoriented in time (early, late, poor use of time);
* displays excessive anxiety, anger or depression;
* misinterprets subtleties in language, tone of voice, social situations.

This issue also contains a full-page article by Dr. Dale R. Jordan, a foremost authority on learning disabilities in adults. Dr. Jordan identifies and explains the following characteristics of learning disabilities:

* Loose thought patterns - inability to maintain tight, well organized memory patterns;
* Poor listening;
* Poor literacy skills;
* Poor directionality - - relies on visible landmarks rather than thinking in terms of North, South, etc.
* Poor time awareness.

*March, 1992:* "Tips on Teaching Adults with Learning Disabilities." An article from Online with Adult and Continuing Educators (newsletter of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education - - AAACE). ❖

# Literacy Programs and the ADA

### by Paula Silver, Director of Education, Inglis House, Philadelphia

The purpose of this article is to present an abstracted introduction to selected facets of the (ADA) Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 and to offer suggestions for making accommodations for students with disabilities in an educational setting. Copies of the full 90 page Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 may be obtained at no cost from:

> U.S. Senate Subcommittee
> on Disability Policy
> 113 Senate Hart Office Bldg.
> Washington, DC 20510

The (ADA) Americans With Disabilities Act was signed into law on July 26, 1990. It signifies a documented commitment to full and equal participation of persons with disabilities via civil rights legislation. There are approximately 43,000,000 persons with disabilities living in the United States. The ADA mandates equal opportunity for these individuals in the areas of employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

For the purpose of this article, I will highlight two provisions that relate to agencies, institutions, and organizations that provide services (such as Adult Literacy) inclusive of examinations (such as the GED) for secondary and post-secondary education.

**Title II, Section 202: subject to the provisions of this title, no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity.**

**Title III, Section 309: Any person that offers examinations or courses related to applications, licensing, certification, or credentialing for secondary or post secondary education, professional or trade purposes shall offer such examinations or courses in a place and manner accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative accessible arrangements for such individuals.**

It is rele ant to note that the 1990 law of the ADA was spawned by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 where the idea of accommodation and the subsequent procedures and policies for meeting compliance under this statute have been established and facilitated for over 15 years.

**Reasonable Accommodations:**

When making reasonable accommodations to provide instructional services and/or examinations to persons with disabilities, it should be emphasized that the same accommodation may be used by individuals with different disabilities and that individuals with the same type of disability may require different accommodation. **Thus, accommodations for each person should be selected and implemented on an individual basis** with the two broad guidelines being a fusion of maximum support in the least restricted environment possible and practical.

Reasonable accommodations for the purpose of administering a GED examination could include one or more of the following: an architecturally accessible testing site, distraction free space, a geographically comparable alternative examination location if needed, test schedule variation, extended time, scribed exam component or components, sign language interpreter, adaptive equipment, and/or modification of test presentation inclusive of format. In Pennsylvania, GED tests are available in braille, large print, and audiotape versions.

Instructional and testing services for students with disabilities do not have to be difficult, complicated or expensive. However, service planning and delivery do require assessment by trained and/or experienced staff, ongoing evaluation, interdisciplinary approaches and adequate time for proper implementation. Inglis House, a Wheelchair Community in Philadelphia, servicing adults with physical disabilities age 17 and older, has hosted, since 1976, a comprehensive on-site multi-level education program. Program components include Adult Basic Education, GED preparatory classes, Computer Literacy, specific skill learning workshops, and two on-site accredited college programs via Community College of Philadelphia and Neumann College of Aston, Pennsylvania.

**Educational and Developmental Services:**

Empirically developed, what follows is a brief framework for determining the need for both type and quantity of educational and developmental (i.e. the continuing education focus of the program) services to persons with disabilities.

1. Identify and confidentially document students who require support services due to visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, learning disability, and/or other disabilities.

2. Determine needed support services and develop an individual plan of action for implementation. Select only the accommodations appropriate for each individual student.

3. Clarify student responsibilities inclusive of the student assuming responsibility for his education program and for fulfilling the educational requirements of the program.

4. Consult, as needed, with appropriate community resources. This can be helpful in coordinating additional services, i.e. specialized guidance and counseling via a social worker or vocational counselor that may complement the student's educational mission and its components.

5. Conduct on-going evaluation of the program, holistically and discretely, inclusive of curriculum, service delivery, counseling, special materials and methods, etc.

Time does not allow an in-depth treatment of each area; however, the aforementioned aspects related to compliance of the ADA as it relates to equal opportunity education for persons with disabilities are some of the salient and crucially important ones. ❖

# TIC TAC TOE MATH − −
## An Alternative Method for Learning Problem Adults

TTTM is a method developed by Dr. Richard Cooper, Director of Learning disAbilities Consultants in Bryn Mawr.

Workbook #2 provides the studer.t with exercises designed to enhance the integration of the program into any math instructional program; Workbook #3 shows the student how to use TTTM with fractions.

### TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM.

Dr. Cooper is presently involved with a Section 353 project to develop a curriculum packet that would enable trainers to effectively teach adult educators and volunteer tutors how to teach Tic Tac Toe Math.

### THE PROJECT NEEDS YOUR HELP.

So as to base these materials on the needs and experiences of adult basic and literacy education practitioners, we are asking *Buzz* readers to complete the questionnaire on the other side of this page and return the completed survey to Dr. Cooper as soon as possible.

"What's the Buzz?" will print the survey results and more information about training sessions in later issues.

# Tic Tac Toe Math "Train the Trainer" Project
## 1994-1995 Section 353 Project Survey

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE # _____ FAX # _____

1. Do you consider yourself...

   a) a math teacher　　　　c) fair with math　　　　e) avoiding math
   b) good with math　　　　d) frightened of math

2. How did you first hear about Tic Tac Toe (TTT) Math?

   a) a workshop　　　　c) TTT Instructional Guide　　　e) other
   b) a TTT video　　　　d) a TTT workbook

3. Were you able to learn Tic Tac Toe Math?

   ___ Yes (proceed to Question 4)　　　　___ No (proceed to Question 9)

4. How long did it take you to grasp the ideas and be able to teach them? (Please attach a separate sheet of paper)

5. Are you able to teach the Tic Tac Toe Math system?

   ___ Yes　　　　　　　___ No. Why not? (Please attach a separate sheet of paper)

6. Are you able to use/teach the complete Tic Tac Toe Math system? (Check all levels you feel competent using &/or teaching.)

   ___ Building single digit grids　　___ Multi-digit grids　　___ Division
   　　(including odd & even concepts.　___ Multiplication　　　___ Fractions
   　　summing to ten and visual patterns)

7. How do students respond to your instruction? (Please attach a separate sheet of paper)

8. Do you teach with any variations in:

   a) odd & even concepts　　c) single digit grids　　e) division, multiplication or fractions
   b) patterns　　　　　　　d) multi-digit grids　　　f) other

   (Skip to Question # 11)

9. If you were not able to grasp the concepts used in Tic Tac Toe Math what prevented you from being able to do so? (Please attach a separate sheet of paper)

10. Are you still interested in learning Tic Tac Toe Math?

   ___ Yes　　　　　　　　　___ No

11. Are you willing to participate in a Pilot Workshop for developing a Train the Trainer Curriculum?

   ___ Yes　　　　　　　　　___ No

### Please return this survey to:

## Center for Alternative Learning, P.O. Box 716, Bryn Mawr, PA 19101

# Bibliography on Special Learning Needs

*by Cheryl Harmon, Adult Literacy Resource Specialist*

Listed below is a sampling of materials at AdvancE which relate to adult basic and literacy education and special learning needs adults. They are listed by project title, filing index and project site. Please call AdvancE at 1-800-992-2283 if you are interested in free loan of these or other materials.

CONTINUING THE EXPLORATION OF BOOKS: A FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM FOR CHALLENGED ADULTS. AE 3025-983. Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Center.

Program of reading development for adults to learn use of local libraries, book selection and techniques for reading. A follow up to 1992-93 Section 353 by the same agency: Exploring the Wonders of Books: a Family Literacy Program for Challenged Adults. (AE 3025-946).

CURRICULUM FOR LEARNERS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES. AE 3025-985. Mid-State Literacy Council.

"Idea Book" developed supplementary curriculum materials for use by tutors with adults who have developmental disabilities.

EXPLORING THE PAST: SENIOR LITERACY MODEL. AE 3025-863. Greater Erie Community Action Committee.

A "chronicle" of experiences of older adults for use in Head Start classes. Seniors learned computer skills to compile their stories.

FAMILY LITERACY FOR PARENTS IN BRIDGE HOUSING. AE 3025-865. Literacy Consortium of Allegheny Co. Family Literacy in Bridge Housing. AE 3025-992. Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh/PLI.

Projects directed at improving family literacy of sheltered families through on-site delivery of reading materials.

HELPING LEARNING DISABLED ADULTS THROUGH SPECIALIZED TUTORIAL TECHNIQUES. AE 3025-870. Reading Area Community College.

Alternative techniques for instructors to help adult students transfer literacy skills to daily life.

LEARNING DISABILITIES WORKSHOP. AE 3025-950. Lackawanna County Junior College.

Videotape of workshop presented by Dr. John Harvey on the behavioral and physical attributes of adults with learning disabilities.

SERIES OF SECTION 353 PROJECTS BY DR. RICHARD COOPER CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE LEARNING: IMPROVING SPELLING SKILLS IN ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES. AE 3025-1001. STAFF DEVELOPMENT COURSE ABOUT LEARNING PROBLEMS IN ADULTS. AE 3025-912. STAFF DEVELOPMENT COURSE ON LEARNING DISABILITIES. AE 3025-1032. STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS ABOUT ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES (1993 and 1994 Projects). AE 3025-1034; AE 3025-947.

LITERACY INITIATIVES FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG DEAF CHILDREN. AE 3025-943. SHARING LITERACY MODELS: DEAF ADULTS, DEAF CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES. AE 3025-1031. Western Pennsylvania Center for the Deaf.

Series on literacy skills for families with hearing impairment in either adults, children or both.

LITERACY PROJECT FOR ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES. AE 3025-878. Chester County Intermediate Unit 24.

Metacognitive strategies to improve reading and written expression of adults with learning disabilities.

SECOND TIME AROUND FAMILY LITERACY. AE 3025-907. LaSalle University Urban Studies Center.

Report on literacy partnership among college students, caretakers and school district staff to increase literacy skills of the caretakers.

SENIORS: CURRENT EVENTS AND CONSUMER AWARENESS. AE 3025-908. Tuscarora IU 11 Adult Education.

Report describes curriculum and workshops developed on subjects of interest to seniors.

STEPS TO SUCCESS. AE 3025-1038. Alle-Kiski Literacy Council.

Report on a process developed to assist residents in a shelter obtain literacy skills for application outside the shelter.

TOPICS FOR LEHIGH COUNTY SENIORS. AE 3025-932. TOPICS FOR LEHIGH COUNTY SENIORS II. AE 3025-1047. Lehigh County Community College.

Curriculum on basic skills for older adults.

USING STAFF DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE RETENTION OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS. AE 3025-935. Lycoming County Library System/Adult Program.

Report on how to improve tutors' abilities to work with students.

VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND ADULT EDUCATION HANDBOOK. AE 3025-940. Adult Literacy Center of the Lehigh.

Directory of state agencies, description of requirements of the ADA and glossary. ❖

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# Information Sources for ABLE Practitioners

In most cases these publications are available from either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers — Western Pennsylvania: 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216; Harrisburg: AdvancE, 1-800-992-2283.

**A Handbook for Tutors and Instructors of Disabled Adults**

"Adult Basic Education and General Educational Development Programs for Disabled Adults" is the title of a handbook printed and produced by the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

The booklet covers problems with hearing acuity, vision, deafness, speech and language impairment, learning disabilities, orthopedic impairments and epilepsy.

**Deaf Adult Literacy Tutor Handbook:** Project #98-2049. Copyright 1992, The Center for Community and Professional Services, at the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf in Philadelphia (215) 951-4718. Designed for use by persons tutoring hearing impaired adults, the handbook provides general information about: adult learners; deaf adult learners; language, communication and literacy; deafness and deaf culture; communication tips; teaching strategies; and responsibilities and characteristics of the tutor.

**The Center for Deafness:** Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf in Pittsburgh has completed a number of Section 353 projects dealing with adult basic and literacy education for the deaf.

Project #98-0050 titled "Workforce Literacy for Hearing-Impaired Employees" provided workforce literacy for deaf/hearing impaired employees as an adjunct to the job placement program at the Center on Deafness.

**Intention Deficit Disorder** is the title of a presentation to the 1994 Philadelphia Conference of the National Association for Adults With Special Learning Needs (NAASLN) by Dr. Richard Gacka, Psychologist and Director of Adult Education for IU #5 in Edinboro. In his presentation Dr. Gacka defines "Intention Deficit Disorder" as: "a diverse group of concomitant cognitive functions including such processes as selection, purpose, valuation, choice, planning, self-evaluation and concentration."

He describes the characteristics of Selective Attention, Erratic Focus, Distractibility, Reduced Response to Feedback, etc. and how they impact upon the adult learning experience. Included are "Implications for Adult Education Instruction" and a Behavioral Checklist of Intention Deficits. Dr. Gacka may be reached at (814) 734-5610.

**GED Test Accommodations for Candidates With Specific Learning Disabilities** is the title of a booklet printed and distributed by the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS) to inform GED administrators, GED Chief Examiners, adults with disabilities, and professionals who certify GED candidates with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) as to the regulations and procedures GEDTS has in place to meet the special needs of SLD certified test candidates while safeguarding the integrity of the GED test.

The information in the booklet will be important to persons working with adults preparing for the GED test. GEDTS is at One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Specific questions concerning "special" administrations of the GED in Pennsylvania should be addressed to the local test examiner or State GED Examiner Larry Goodwin at (717) 787-6747.

The HEATH Resource Center, One Dupont Circle, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036-1193 also has a number of publications relating to learning disabilities and post-secondary education including a catalog, National Resources for Adults With Learning Disabilities, which includes 58 organizations available to provide information. ❖

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The *best* source of information relating to adult learners with Special Learning Needs is *William R. Langner*, with the U.S. Department of Education. Bill has been a frequent contributor to The Buzz, has been a presenter at Pennsylvania fall workshops and was recently a presenter at the Philadelphia NAASLN Conference. You may reach him at Room 5076, R.O.B. #3, Washington, DC 20202.

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## ADA Has Little Impact on PA ABLE

"What's the Buzz?" surveyed a cross-section of nine adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) programs throughout the state to see what effect the Americans With Disabilities Act has had on their program. The programs represented nearly 5,500 adult students with 6% of their students having Special Learning Needs due to handicaps.

**Little Effect.** All but one of the programs indicated the passage of the ADA had little effect on their program and they have not had to restrict other budget items to provide for Special Learning Needs.

Fifty percent of the programs surveyed have noticed an increase in the number of disabled adults seeking their services, but all the programs feel they were satisfactorily meeting the needs of Special Needs Adults prior to the passage of the ADA and continue to do so.

**Staff Development.** Most of the respondents felt there was a lack of knowledge in the adult education community concerning the ADA, but most also indicated their staff is being afforded opportunities to participate in activities designed to help them meet the needs of handicapped adults.

Most also felt some type of additional staff development activity centering around the requirements of the ADA would be appropriate. ❖

# Computerized Student Data Collection

**Dr. William Murphy** is Research and Evaluation Chief for the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education and, as such, is responsible for tabulating and preparing information on adult students as reported by local programs.

At the recent Penn-Ohio Conference, Dr. Murphy discussed and answered questions about the new computerized adult student data collection system to be initiated by the ABLE Bureau in the next two years.

According to Dr. Murphy, "The provision of student data to the Bureau on computer disk was initiated by Jo Ann Weinberger of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia. As long ago as 1991 it became apparent we would have to standardize a data base and organize a system if the concept was going to work."

Earlier attempts to report student data on computer disks were made by other adult education programs throughout the state, but each program seemed to have its own system and none was compatible with the systems at the Department of Education.

"There were some technical problems," said Dr. Murphy, "but 90% of the problems were organizational."

This year the Center for Literacy is developing a Macintosh and a PC data base for adult student data in a program called FoxPro. The program is relatively uncomplicated to use by clerical personnel who will use a list of instructions for data entry.

In addition, it is hoped intermediate units using a second system called FileMaker Pro will have a support system produced by IU #5 and Dr. Rich Gacka. "Standardization is a must," said Dr. Murphy. "It is a nightmare if we receive 300 sets of data with 300 different formats."

When asked if programs would receive additional funding to purchase hardware and software to handle the new reporting requirement, Dr. Murphy said, "You can use monies from your present budget to purchase computers, but it must come from your administration budget. My feeling is you can purchase a system for around $500 - - the FoxPro program is $99. You can go to any company that is throwing out old computers; you don't need a state-of-the-art computer for this system; a 286 operating system will work. You're not going to get any extra money for this new student data collection system."

It was pointed out that programs are limited to a 5% expenditure of their budget for administration which leaves very little for computer purchases.

When asked when the new system will be required, Dr. Murphy noted that the ABLE Bureau hopes to put the system into use in two years. "We hope to have at least three trained people throughout the state who will offer technical
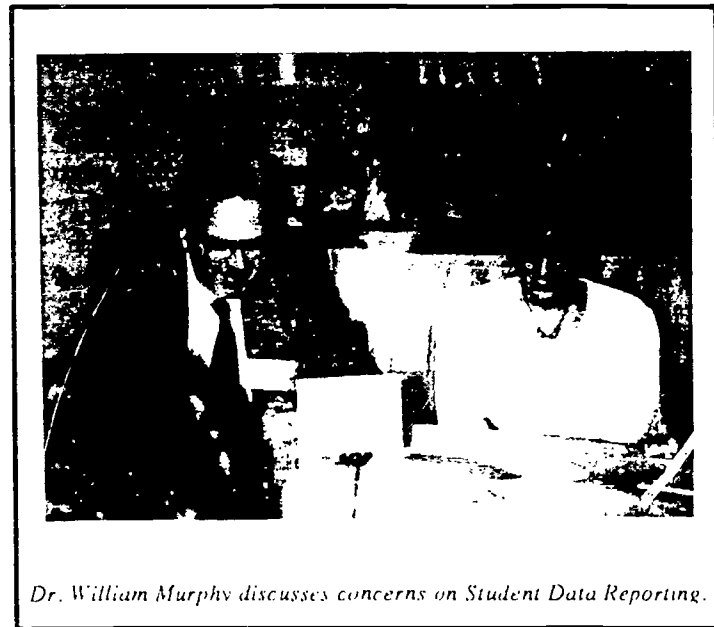


*Dr. William Murphy discusses concerns on Student Data Reporting.*

*"You don't need a state-of-the-art computer for this system."*

assistance to programs to develop the data base we require and the system for reporting this data."

Other questions from adult educators attending the sessions and answers by Dr. Murphy:

Q. "How often will we have to send the data to the Bureau?"

A. "Just once a year."

Q. "What will be the penalty for programs which do not send data in this format?"

A. "This has not been decided yet."

Q. "For a student that continues from year to year, how often do you report the data?"

A. "Intake data will be reported once; close-out data will be reported each year."

Q. "Are you also willing to work with FileMaker?"

A. "I am reluctant to extend our system beyond the standardized program. FoxPro should be able to take care of the problem."

Closing comment by an attendee: "I don't have any problem with the concept, but I do have problems with the fact we're robbing Peter to pay Paul to get money for this. Also, we don't always have computer-trained people at small agencies who could run this program."

Dr. Murphy distributed copies of an 11-page brochure showing codes for the system's input, a copy of a new Student Intake/Data Form and SPSS (Statistical Package Social Studies) Data Base III translate commands and other information which will be relevant to the new system.

Dr. Murphy may be reached at the ABLE Bureau (717) 783-4833. ❖

# People and Programs in PA ABLE

* The National Literacy HotLine (1-800-228-8813) reported "a significant increase in the number of calls from Pennsylvania" as a result of the September Statewide Literacy Awareness Campaign. Congratulations to all the literacy councils which participated.

* Manny Gonzalez at Northampton Area Community College tells us they have had a significant increase in their ESL population of persons with little or no written tradition in language. This makes ESL instruction much more difficult.

* As we mentioned last month the prestigious COABE (Commission for Adult Basic Education) National Conference will be held in Pennsylvania in June of 1996. The Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference will not be held in 1996 in deference to the COABE Conference. So plan to use the 1996 Midwinter travel money to go to the COABE.

* When the new postal rates go into effect we can finally use those 30¢ Frank C. Laubach stamps with a 2¢er for first-class postage. We were pleased to see the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center uses them on the materials they send.

* The Regional Staff Development Center for Region 1 has moved and Bootsie Barbour, Center Coordinator, tells us sharing a building with other Intermediate Unit (Northwest Tri County IU #5) programs will be a real advantage. All you *Buzz* readers in the Northwest section of the state may now reach Bootsie at (814) 866-3775; 670 W. 36th Street, Erie.

* Another Pennsylvania program is mentioned in the "Models" booklet as one of nine National Commendations to other 1994 Finalists. Congratulations to Edie Gordon's Development Center for Adults in Pleasant Gap, Centre County.

* One to One News, the newsletter of Sherry Spencer's Bradford-Wyoming Counties Literacy Program in Northeast Pennsylvania, notes a new tutor just completing the Programs' Training Workshop is the youngest tutor they have ever trained - he's in the fifth grade! We know of high school tutor-trainees, but this must be a record!

* A volunteer tutor in the Goodwill Literacy Initiative Program (GLI) was recently featured in Mercy Hospital's (Pittsburgh) employee publication for her work with GLI as a tutor in the Allegheny County Jail Annex. Janice Wirth is employed in Mercy's Radiology Department and completed her GLI literacy training at the hospital in 1992. GLI volunteers employed at Mercy Hospital have trained over 135 tutors since 1991 and Pittsburgh City Council recently recognized Goodwill Industries and Mercy Hospital for "a working relationship in which everyone benefits."

* Meliza Jackson has been in the adult education program at the Western Psychiatric Institute in Pittsburgh since 1980 and she writes us that she is leaving the program to become Eastern Regional Director for the International Education Forum, an agency which arranges placement with host families for international students.

* We noted in our October, 1994 issue JoAnn Weinberger's Center for Literacy (CFL) in Philadelphia being awarded one of ten 1994 Secretary of Education's Awards for Outstanding Adult Education and Literacy Programs. The Department of Education recently released a booklet titled "Models of Excellence in Adult Learning" outlining the achievements of the 10 national winners. ❖

## Linking Literacy and Learning Disabilities

*LINKAGES* - - A Newsletter from the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities (ALLD) Center

The premier issue of LINKAGES (Summer, 1994) deals with "Self-Esteem: Issues for the Adult Learner".

Included in this issue are articles titled:

"How Not to Feel Stupid When You Know You're Not: Self-Esteem and Learning Disabilities" (Recognize your strengths and weaknesses; Know what accommodations you need; Invent your own strategies; and Be able to ask for help when you need it).

"Breaking the Low Self-Esteem Cycle" (What literacy programs can and must do is establish a climate in which adult learners can develop the confidence in their own potential that underlies self-esteem).

Every adult educator should be on the Linkages mailing list. The newsletter is FREE from the Center at 1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., 9th floor, Washington, DC 20009-1202; (202) 884-8185. ❖

## Author! Author! PAACE To Honor Member Authors

The Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) will honor at the Mid-Winter Conference those PAACE members who have been published in books or journals.

This is an annual affair which permits the Association to give recognition to "published" members as well as affording other Mid-Winter Conference attendees the opportunity to become acquainted with some of their colleagues' achievements.

PAACE members wishing to have their efforts celebrated or who know of a member who should be recognized please call Mary Kay Peterson at (610) 891-2220.

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## From The A.B.L.E. Bureau

## Administrative Workshops

### . . . and you better be there!

The Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (A.B.L.E.) has scheduled a series of seven regional workshops throughout the state to explain "significant changes" in Section 322 and Act 143 funding applications and guidelines.

All workshops are scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

HARRISBURG: Tuesday, January 24, 1995. Alumni Lounge (Cooper 204), Harrisburg Area Community College, One HACC Drive.

SCRANTON: Wednesday, January 25, 1995. Nazareth Hall Student Center (Crystal Room), Marywood College, 2300 Adams.

PHILADELPHIA: Thursday, January 26, 1995. Winet Student Life Center, Community College of Philadelphia. Near 17th and Spring Garden, across from the Bonnell Building. Parking is available in the garage adjacent to the Winet Building.

NORRISTOWN: Friday, January 27, 1995. Auditorium, Norristown Area High School, 1900 Eagle Drive.

ALTOONA: Tuesday, January 31, 1995. Board Room, Ground floor, B. Building, Altoona Area High School, 6th Avenue and 15th Street.

PITTSBURGH: Wednesday, February 1, 1995. Auditorium, Bidwell Training Center, 1815 Metropolitan Street.

SAEGERTOWN: Thursday, February 2. 1995. Administration rooms, Saegertown High School (located behind the elementary school). Saegertown exit off I-79, Rt. 198, on right (East). ❖

## Significant Changes In ABLE Program Applications

These changes will be among other revisions of the application and guidelines for 1995-96 Section 322 and Act 143 proposals:

* 1. The requirement for an agency to consolidate separate 322 activities (ABE/GED/Community) into a single application.

* 2. Some of the current fiscal restrictions will be eliminated.

* 3. Additional emphasis will be placed on past performance and projected outcomes of the project.

* 4. A new three part budget and a new form for program descriptions will be used.

* 5. Application dates have been moved up to ensure grant contracts as early as possible.

* 6. Application Guidelines will be mailed in mid-January. Application packets with necessary forms will be available at the workshops. ❖

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### Program Application Deadlines for 1995-96

JANUARY 27, 1995:
Section 353 Letters of Intent due.

MARCH 10, 1995:
Section 353 applications due.

MARCH 17, 1995:
STATE ACT 143 applications due.

MARCH 31, 1995:
SECTION 322 applications due.

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## Section 353 Projects

The Pennsylvania Department of Education announces the availability of funds under the Adult Education Act, Section 353 for Special Experimental Demonstration and Staff Development projects for Adult Basic Education for Fiscal Year 1995-96.

The objectives for the grants are to promote special projects that carry out the purposes of the Act and which involve innovative methods, systems, materials or programs that may have national significance or be of special value in promoting effective programs. The objectives also involve programs of adult education done in cooperation with other Federal, State or local programs which show unusual promise in developing a comprehensive or coordinated approach to the problems of persons with educational deficiencies. The objectives also include the training of persons engaged in, or preparing to engage in, programs carrying out the purposes of this title.

The priorities for FY 1995-96 have been established through suggestions and recommendations from adult educators in the Commonwealth and persons in other state and federal offices. The priorities are published in the Announcement in three general categories: special experimental demonstration projects for statewide or regional impact; staff development for statewide or regional impact; and mini grants to assist in adoption or adaptation of previous projects or to answer a local need.

The Bureau requests that an interested applicant submit a letter of intent by January 27, 1995, stating the priority to be addressed by the proposed project. The Bureau will provide Guidelines and other necessary documents to those who submit their letter of intent. The applications are due March 10, 1995. They will be reviewed and recommended for funding by a 353 Readers' Task Force at the end of March and successful applicants will be notified after that time. Contact person for the Bureau is Ella M. Morin, Chief, Special Programs and Projects Section, at (717) 787-5532. ❖

# It's A Date!

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**JANUARY, 1995:**

**6:** Motivating the Adult Learner; Region 1 Workshop; Bel Aire North, Erie, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Contact Bootsie Barbour: (814) ⁴54-4474.

**9:** Tic-Tac-Toe Math: Teleconference; Presenter: Dr. Richard Cooper; 12-3 p.m. Contact Bootsie Barbour.

**11:** Teaching ESL Region 2 workshop (rescheduled from December 14); 411 South Fraser, State College; 5:30-9 p.m. Call (814) 359-3069.

**19-21:** 13th Annual National Conference on Technology, Reading and Learning Difficulties; San Francisco. Call 1-800-255-2218 or contact Diane Frost (510) 222-1249.

**20:** Share Fair: Effective Materials in ABE/ESL; Lehigh University; 9:30-11:30. Contact Jane Ditmars (610) 758-6347.

**24:** ABLE Administrative Workshop; Harrisburg. See page 11.

**25:** ABLE Administrative Workshop; Scranton. See page 11.

**26:** ABLE Administrative Workshop; Philadelphia. See page 11.

**27:** ABLE Administrative Workshop; Norristown. See page 11.

**27:** Section 353 Letters of Intent due.

**30:** Using Management Information Systems and Computer Software Customization; Penn State-Allentown at Fogelsville; 12-2:30 p.m. Contact Jane Ditmars.

**31:** ABLE Administrative Workshop; Altoona. See page 11.

**FEBRUARY, 1995:**

**1:** ABLE Administrative Workshop; Pittsburgh. See page 11.

**1-2:** Learning Disabilities Region 2 workshop; SCI Rockview; 1-4:30 p.m. For inmate para-teachers and SCI teachers.

**2:** ABLE Administrative Workshop; Erie/Saegertown. See page 11.

**8-10:** 30th Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference, Hershey. Contact PAACE, Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

**10:** Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC) Meeting; Hershey; 8-9 a.m

**14-17:** Third Annual Conference on Diversity; Jacksonville, Florida. Contact Elizabeth Cobb (904) 381-3443.

**15-17:** 1995 Annual Lifelong Learning Conference; "Innovations in Higher Education Technology and Workplace Literacy"; San Diego. Contact National University Research Institute, 4025 Camino del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108.

**15-19:** National Association for Multicultural Education; Fifth Annual Conference; Washington, DC. Contact Jill Moss Greenburg (301) 657-7746.

**21:** Cultural Diversity Training; Teleconference; Presenter: Christopher Brown; 4-5:30 p.m. Contact Bootsie Barbour (814) 454-4474.

**22:** Writing Across the Curriculum: Making It Work for Workforce Skills; Teleconference; 12-3 p.m. Contact Bootsie Barbour.

**22-26:** National Association for Developmental Education 19th Annual Conference; Chicago. Contact Julia N. Visor, University Center for Learning Assistance, 4240 Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240 (309) 438-7100.

**23-24:** First International Conference on Women and Literacy; sponsored by the Georgia State University Center for the Study of Adult Literacy; Atlanta. Contact the Center at Georgia State University, University Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30303-3083; (404) 651-2405.

**27:** Learning Disabilities Region 2 workshop; SCI Muncy; 9 a.m.-4 p.m. For inmate tutors and SCI teachers.

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## Midwinter Conference, February 8-10, 1995

### 30th Midwinter To Be Extra Special!

Debra Shafer, Chairperson of the February 8-10 Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference, tells us this year's Conference will be **Extra Special** in celebration of three decades of providing the best Conference for Adult Basic and Literacy Education practitioners in Pennsylvania.

In addition to a wide range of well-informed presenters, the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) will provide a film/video program strand, a pre-conference activity centering around a Supervising Trainer Workshop sponsored by Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC), a post-conference issues session addressing Domestic Violence, and The Marketplace with publisher's representatives to provide you with samples and discuss how their publications can meet your instructional needs. With the revitalization of the five Program Divisions (ABE/GED, ESL, TLC, Business and Industry, and Continuing Higher Education), there will be a concentration of concurrent sessions of special interest to each Division.

The 1995 30th Anniversary Mid-Winter Conference will be Great! Plan to be there. For more information call your PAACE regional representation: WESTERN PA: Judith Aaronson (412) 481-9005; CENTRAL PA: Barbara Van Horn (814) 863-3777; EASTERN PA: Mary Kay Peterson (610) 891-2220 or write PAACE at Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105. ❖

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**Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter**

# "What's the Buzz?"

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# What's The *BUZZ?* ™

FEBRUARY, 1995          VOLUME 14, NUMBER 6

WELCOME TO THE 30TH MIDWINTER ADULT EDUCATION CONFERENCE

## IN THIS ISSUE . . .

Fostering Leadership In Adult Literacy

# PSCAL sets priorities for 1995

The Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) is an organization of persons from various segments of the Pennsylvania community who are concerned enough about the problems of adult literacy in our state to do something about it.

PSCAL began four years ago and one of its first projects was to provide financial support (with a grant from the Gannett Foundation) to the formation of 28 local Literacy Coalitions.

With membership from business and industry, communications, education, state government, and other types of organizations, the State Coalition continues in its efforts to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and encourages broad-based partnerships to ensure literacy opportunities for all Pennsylvanians.

PSCAL functions *with no federal, state nor local government funding* with financial support provided by private organizations and individuals.

Officers for 1994-95 are President - *Joanne Shane Plummer* of the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare, Vice President - *Kathy Charochak* of Mellon Bank, Secretary - *Annette McAlister* of Commonwealth Libraries and Treasurer - *JoAnn Weinberger* of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia.

At its recent quarterly meeting on December 1, 1994, members of the Coalition heard reports on a number of Literacy Advocacy activities throughout the state including the Mellon "Marketing Literacy" conference and

First Lady Michele Ridge Attends CFL Bee



*Pictured here at the second annual corporate/celebrity spelling bee and silent auction sponsored by the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia are, from left, Eliot Shelkrot, Director of the Free Library of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania First Lady Michele Ridge, JoAnn Weinberger, Executive Director of the Center for Literacy, and Cheryl Keenan, Director of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education. The event raised over $45,000 for CFL and involved an auction of donated items which ranged from airline tickets to autographed items from celebrities such as Elizabeth Taylor and Bill Cosby.*
Our thanks to CFL's Rebecca Donham for the photo and information.

the "Call to Action: Mobilizing for Adult Literacy" Conference held in May.

Chairperson of the PSCAL Community Literacy Planning Committee, *Cheryl Keenan*, Director of the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, reported the Committee

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would meet shortly to begin planning their efforts to develop literacy advocacy activities on a community linkage level.

A report was heard from Pennsylvania 2000 Adult Literacy Task Force Staff Director **JoAnn Weinberger** which included information about activities of the Task Force and news that an Executive Summary of the "mobilizing for Adult Literacy" is available by contacting Ms. Weinberger at the Center for Literacy, 636 South 48th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143.

*Priorities for 95-96* for the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy will center around the continuation of advocacy and shared awareness communications activities including the development and distribution of publications relevant to groups concerned with Literacy in the Commonwealth. The latest activity in this regard is the development of a LITERACY GLOSSARY which contains more than 60 definitions and 100+ acronyms and abbreviations being widely used in Pennsylvania literacy circles, but not necessarily understood nor recognized by persons outside the adult basic and literacy education field (some also are not understood by persons in the field).

Other priorities included a continuation of Ms. Keenan's Committee's activities in Community Literacy and, in light of the marked success of the May, 1994 Conference, planning for statewide conferences possibly in 1995 and 1996.

To receive publications from the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy including the new Literacy Glossary, copies of the *PSCAL Bulletin* the Coalition's newsletter, and "Issue Alerts" giving Coalition's positions, contact PSCAL's support administrator, **Becky Flurer**, FORE-SIGHT, Inc., 502 Ellen Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011 ❖

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## A SOFTWARE REVIEW

# WordSmart Vocabulary Builder F

*Reviewed by Edie Richards,*
*Western Pennsylvania Adult*
*Literacy Resource Center, Gibsonia.*

The computer program *WordSmart Vocabulary Builder F* was great fun to play even though we could not get the sound on it. We called the manufacturer and they could not remember how to solve that problem although they did say they would let us know if they remembered. (We have since contacted the manufacturer-Smartek Software, 1-800-858-9673 -- and they tell us "all the bugs are out of the program").

The sound would have enhanced the program since there were no diacritical markings for pronunciation or syllabication of words and part of it involved the sound.

The program consisted of the following parts: Talking word list, Audio discussion, Flash cards, Matching, Completion, Laser review.

It is a program meant for people of a high reading level rather than adult students and part of the program is based on speed in getting the answer. I enjoyed it a great deal even without the sound and it proved to be a challenge.

Technical Information for *WordSmart:* 10 volumes ranging from grade 4 through PhD. 2,000 words per volume. Can be customized by adding any words including those in other languages. Offered in DOS, Windows, Macintosh, and CD-ROM. Eastern Sales Representative is Robert Rhodes. ❖
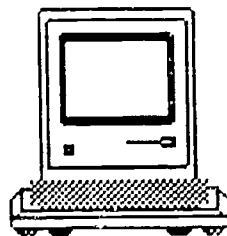
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# Assessing Quality in Family Literacy

Family Literacy, just as programs in ESL, Workplace and other "specialized" areas, has unique characteristics which many times do not lend well to traditional evaluation formats in adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) programs.

Therefore we were pleased to receive a copy of *Family Literacy Program Quality Self Study* which is being marketed by Steck-Vaughn and was developed by the National Center for Family Literacy using concepts of quality programming which resulted from several years of visits by Center trainers to family literacy program sites.

*Purpose:* The instrument is intended as a self-assessment guide for intensive, center-based family literacy programs that include the four components of: adult education for parents; early childhood education for children; a parent information/support group; and regular opportunities for parent and child interaction. Although this "ideal" type of family literacy program is not typical of many programs in Pennsylvania, the guide may be used, with revision, by most family literacy programs to set up a self-assessment. For lack of the same type of instrument in Adult Basic Education, General Educational Development, etc. we can see this instrument being used as a foundation for any adult education program's efforts to identify strengths and needs.

*Structure:* The Guide presents an outline of an "ideal" family literacy program and, through a series of 31 categories ranging from instructional approaches to integration of components, elicits responses to a number of specific program characteristics.

For many years, through advisor checklists to Characteristics of Program Quality and now to EQuAL, we have felt some type of self-evaluation system giving programs discretion to insert unique evaluation criteria would have a positive impact upon local programs. Perhaps the *Family Literacy Program Quality Self-Study* is a start.

Steck-Vaughn's Pennsylvania sales rep is **Ron Ray (800) 531-5015.**

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# Numeracy Skills in Adult Literacy

Most of the adult educators throughout the state with whom we have talked were somewhat disappointed by the Numeracy Teleconference held December 1st, 1994. The general consensus of dissatisfaction seemed to be more with the presenters, instructors and format of the teleconference than with the concept of Numeracy Skills in Adult Literacy.

One of the big questions from adult basic and literacy practitioners is: "What are the differences between 'numeracy' and math. We've been teaching math in our adult education and literacy programs for years. Why all the fuss now?"

The best explanation we have found of the differences (and similarities) between math and numeracy comes from **Iddo Gal**, Director of the National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL)'s research project on adult numeracy: "The central challenge is for planners and practitioners to recognize that *numeracy education* should encompass much more than what has been traditionally included in 'math' education. Numeracy educators need to develop integrative mathematical, literacy, and problem-solving skills which lead not only to skills that appear to work within the classroom, but also have a positive impact upon learners' daily mathematical practices."

The National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL) is rapidly becoming one of the outstanding research outlets in adult literacy. In the October, 1993 issue of their newsletter, **NCAL Connections**, Dr. Gal introduces a monthly feature by asking the question, "Are We Ready to Handle the Adult Numeracy Challenge?"

Dr. Gal notes the adult education community has paid little attention to numeracy provision in working with adult learners and that professional literature in the field does not provide much information or assistance to adult educators wishing to develop programs of numeracy skills.

The June, 1994 issue of *Connections* reports on the literacy symposium entitled "Enhancing Numeracy Skills in Adult Literacy Programs" held as part of the International Reading Association Conference in February, 1994.

Among other participants in the discussion were Rose Brandt and Catherine DeLong Smith of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia who discussed the challenges involved in implementing numeracy instruction in CFL's learner-centered programs.

As CFL's program directors and teachers reflected on their existing math curriculum, they recognized a discrepancy between the richness and contextuality characterizing their reading/writing curriculum and the limited scope and constrained range of opportunities for adult students to learn real mathematics.

> "We've been teaching math in our adult education literacy programs for years. Why all the fuss now?"

The discrepancy resulted partially from learners' narrow expectations for what math learning should include, and partially from adult educators' unfamiliarity with the view of math learning as relevant, contextualized, and essentially linked to overall literacy.

According to Dr. Gal there are four primary reasons for regarding numeracy as an essential component of overall literacy:

1. mathematical tasks and ideas are common in everyday work and life.

2. many everyday or work activities integrate math and language elements.

3. mathematical knowledge helps in "reading the world" and in thinking critically.

4. language plays a role in learning mathematics.

*NCAL Connections* is a free publication available from the National Center on Adult Literacy, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111 (215) 898-2100, Internet e-mail:- mailbox@literacy.upenn.edu ❖

# PA 353 Project on Family Numeracy

Dr. Barbara Mooney of the Washington Greene Community Action Corporation in Waynesburg completed a Section 353 project (99-4019) which developed materials of basic numeracy concepts and skills for adult students in ABLE classrooms and tutoring sessions.

Activities were provided to adult students designed to foster the development of the concepts and skills with their young children. These activities were compiled into packets which include directions and materials needed to teach the numeracy concept. The packets were used with adult students in ABLE classes and HeadStart and EvenStart groups.

The project found the materials to be a "good resource for volunteers and staff who worked with adults having young children. The activity packets will enhance the adult's ability and confidence to teach and learn math. The report and materials from this project are available from either of the state's Adult Literacy Resource Centers: The Western Pennsylvania Center (1-800-446-5607, ext. 216) and AdvancE in Harrisburg (1-800-992-2283).

The project was evaluated in the December, 1994 issue of *FOCUS* which is a project of Dr. Sherry Royce. *FOCUS* involves a panel of adult educators in rating exemplary Special Projects. It is available without charge by writing Dr. Royce at Focus Publications, 1938 Crooked Oak Drive, Lancaster, PA 17601. ❖

$$34 + 12 = 46$$
$$12 \times 12 = 144$$
$$42 \div 6 = 7$$
$$24 + 13 = 37$$

# Technology | Going On-Line: The Future Is Now

by Ben Burenstein, Drexel University

Are you on-line? How do you get on-line? What does it mean to be on-line, and what does it mean to you? This month's article describes some of the hardware and software necessary to go on-line with your computer, summarizes some on-line services that are available, and explores how you might use this exciting technology now and in the future.

### Hardware and Software

In my November article I noted that Input and Output are two major parts of any computer system. (The other parts are the central processing unit, memory, a program, and a user.) Information can be put in with keyboards, mice, and cameras and come out through monitors and printers. "Going on-line" means attaching your computer to a telephone line and having input and output go through that line. Nearly every computer manufactured since 1983 has the capability of going on-line with the assistance of a modem (rhymes with "load 'em").

A modem takes the information that is electronically encoded in your computer and modulates it so that it can be sent out along a regular telephone line and demodulates it when information is sent back to you. Modems work at different speeds. The speed is known as the baud (rhymes with Claude) rate. This is the maximum number of changes per second in the electrical signal and determines how fast information will flow through the wires. If you only have a small text file to send (upload) and receive (download) 300 baud is okay. In today's multimedia environment, however, people regularly send and receive pictures, movies, and sound files along with text, and to avoid having your computer running all night (running up phone charges) the speediest modem is worth having. You can have an internal modem built into your computer, or an external modem attached to a port on the back of your computer and then into the phone line. You connect it with a regular telephone cord to your regular wall jack. Unless you have a technical specialist available, you should probably get a dedicated (separate) line (perhaps sharing it with your fax machine) rather than trying to run it through a switchboard if you work in an agency with a Centrex phone system.

To make it do anything, though, you still need a telecommunications program. If you join an on-line service you usually get their proprietary software. If you need to buy a program separately, consult an experienced user, a magazine, or me at the Office of Computing Services, Drexel University, Philadelphia 19104. Frequently this software will come with your computer or modem.

### Once You're Connected to the Wall, Now What?

The simplest thing you can do is connect directly with another computer. Follow the directions to start the software. Set up the software to upload or download information with the computer and modem with which you want to connect. Either computer can dial out and the other will automatically answer the phone and seek to recognize the protocol the caller modem is using (commonly called a "handshake"). While the handshake is taking place you may well hear the high-pitched squealing that fax machines make. This is normal. Since computer text is easily translated to a common format called ASCII, it is also an acceptable way to translate information from different computers such as a Macintosh and a DOS-based machine.

### The Internet

Rather than this direct connection, most people use an on-line service. There are many of these services. Universities, corporations, and some schools and public libraries have and can provide access to the oldest and biggest service called The Internet. These institutions pay a fee and then allow members of their community to access the Internet for free or a small charge. There are estimates that from ten to twelve million people have access to the Internet from more than forty countries, with nearly half a million new users added each month. When Vice-President Gore mentions developing a National Information Infrastructure, the Internet is highly likely to be one of its components.

Commercial services are available if you do not have direct access to the Internet. America Online, CompuServe, GENIE, Prodigy and The WELL have many of the capabilities of the Internet and are not very expensive. Apple, IBM and Microsoft Corporations are all in the process of setting up services as well - - they think there will eventually be big money in having control of the distribution of information resources. Most have monthly charges of between $8 and $10 that provide you with 5-10 hours of service and some additional costs if you go beyond that time. They all have local access numbers so there are no long-distance charges. To use them, you simply activate the appropriate software and then select which capability you wish to use. In Pennsylvania, PennLink and Learning Link are both services run by state entities available to educators for relatively inexpensive once per year fees. While they are not yet as "slick" as the commercial services, they have the potential to be very valuable resources.

### What Can You Do?

There are dozens of different capabilities that might be meant by the phrase "on-line," but several of them are by far the most common.

1) E(lectronic)mail, as opposed to the Post Office (known to network aficionados as "snailmail"), is free, delivered instantaneously anywhere in the world, and encourages easy responses and storage of messages. You can send messages to individuals or groups of people. There are several groups of literacy learners sending messages to each other.

For adult students, what greater demonstration of the use of writing to communicate could there be? And what could be more reinforcing to encourage a little writing every day than a prompt reply from a learner from across the country? This is also a way for those who work in ABLE, who frequently feel isolated, to become part of a nationwide (or worldwide) conversation. My E-mail "address" is burensbd@dunx1.ocs.drexel.edu

2) Chats are real-time typed conversations among groups of people. Every Monday night on America Online at 9 or 9:30 there is an Adult Literacy chat about topics of interest to practitioners and administrators, sometimes hosted by or featuring "luminaries" in the field.

3) Technical and Professional Resources are readily available, though sometimes it takes a little practice to sort through the plethora of information. Card catalogs and research databases from many universities, the Library of Congress, the British Museum, ERIC, government agencies, and newspapers and magazines are all there. Sometimes you can only find or read titles, other times you can download whole articles. Some of these additional services charge above the cost for the on-line service, so it is important to carefully figure out the quickest way to the information you need.

The National Center on Adult Literacy has a "server" with a wide variety of information pertinent to administrators and practitioners, including its research documents and papers. Other servers have information on available grants, descriptions of agencies, lesson plans, demographic statistics, government initiatives, conferences, and contact people.

These are only some of the major resources available on-line. In my March article I will list some others. There is a tremendous variety of information available if you take the time to learn to telecommunicate. And it is a great place for you to share the insights that only you have developed from your unique experiences. The technology is becoming increasingly accessible, and who better to become familiar with the latest ways of exploring electronic communication than those of us who are charged with helping others gain command over printed information? ❖
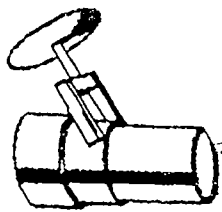
## "Give me your talented, your rich, your huddled masses yearning to speak English . . ."

By Sandy Strunk, Chair,
PAACE ESL Program Division

Not since the early part of this century when America experienced its last great wave of immigration have we Americans been so thoroughly confused and downright cantankerous about the role of immigrants in American culture. In California, a state that must cope with a third of the nation's new arrivals, Proposition 187 threatens to deny schooling and medical care to illegal immigrants and their children. Governors in Florida, Texas, Arizona and California are taking the U.S. Government to court for "its continuing failure to enforce its own immigration laws." Eighteen states have already adopted "official English" statutes in an effort to "defend our common language". The Republican Party's Contract with America would cut off many federal benefits, including welfare, to legal immigrants. Clay Shaw, incoming chairman of the House Ways and Means subcommittee on human resources recently defended this position saying, "The inscription at the base of the Statue of Liberty was written before welfare." Americans, it seems, are tired of the tired, fed up with the poor, and deeply concerned about the preservation of a common language.

As a nation of immigrants, this is a tough stance to take toward a group of individuals who are, more or less, in the same boat as most of our ancestors. Yet, immigration is a complicated issue fraught with economic, linguistic, legal and cultural implications that defy simplistic solutions. With the number of immigrants topping one million this year, many Americans are questioning the nation's ability to assimilate the influx.

For many people, the economics of immigration is at the heart of their discomfort. Last year, illegal immigrants cost taxpayers about two billion dollars for incarceration, schooling and Medicaid. States such as California, Florida and New York that shoulder most of the burden have made it clear that they lack the financial resources to bankroll current federal immigration policy. Yet, while it is important to understand the tremendous economic burden immigration places on a few states, it is just as important to recognize that nationally, immigrants generated a surplus of $25 to $30 billion dollars through payroll and property taxes. That they have become economic scapegoats across the nation may have less to do with economics than with the fact that they are disenfranchised from the system and therefore safe targets for politicians championing welfare reform.

Since 1983 a group known as U.S. English has spent millions of dollars to promote English as the official language of the United States. The popularity of this position is evident from the Official English campaigns in more than forty states. However, in an effort to preserve a common language, are we, in fact, fostering dissension rather than supporting unity? U.S. Census figures indicate that ninety-eight percent (98%) of U.S. residents over the age of four speak English "well" or "very well." Further, according to a report prepared by the National Center for Education Statistics, more than eight-five percent (85%) of children from language-minority homes become dominant in English, and their children rarely speak anything else. In December 1994, a federal appeals court declared Arizona's Official English law unconstitutional, saying that although a state may encourage the use of English as a common language, it cannot outlaw other languages. "Free speech includes choice of language," according to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. If this is the case, the issue shifts from legislating language to funding English classes for immigrants.

Defining American culture is not an easy task. In a recent commentary, William Raspberry wrote, "virtually anybody can become an American. To see just how extraordinary a fact that is, imagine hearing anyone -- black, white or Asian -- saying he wants to 'become Japanese.' It sounds like a joke," American culture is changing at a rate that leaves many of us desperately seeking stability. In 1940, seventy percent (70%) of U.S. immigrants came from Europe. In 1992, fifteen percent (15%) came from Europe, thirty-seven percent (37%) came from Asia and forty-four percent (44%) from Latin America and the Caribbean. "Without fully realizing it," writes Martha Farnsworth Riche, director of policy studies at Washington's Population Reference Bureau, "we have left the time when the nonwhite, non-Western part of our population could be expected to assimilate to the dominant majority. In the future, the white, Western majority will have to do some assimilation of its own."

America has many issues to grapple with as it struggles to redefine its national identity. The temptation to latch onto simplistic solutions for complex issues is a constant danger. Portraying immigrants as the enemy may have few political costs, but it is also mean spirited. We might do well to remember that since 1901, thirty percent (30%) of U.S. Nobel prize-winners have been immigrants. Perhaps the enemy within is not the horde of immigrants flocking to our shores, but our own xenophobic reaction to inevitable cultural change. ❖

# Assisting the Limited English Proficient Non-Reader

## by Dr. Manuel Gonzalez, Northampton Area Community College

In most programs throughout the state, the typical ESL class includes students of varying levels, presenting difficulties for the instructor to meet the needs of the new readers. Only a small percentage of adult educators are knowledgeable in the area of non-native non-readers, and their level of expertise needs to be raised to match the needs of the students whom they encounter.

The ESL population in the Commonwealth is growing. At Northampton Community College we noticed an increase in ESL students who were very under-educated in their native language. Many of the students had come from war-torn areas and had never attended school. A large percentage of the students were from the Native American populations of South America. The Native American students did not speak Spanish as a first language, but as a second language. Their native language was Quechua, the language of the Incas. Most of the students had never attended formal schooling. They were unable to recognize letters and sometimes numbers. Before this program we began to teach them English by placing the printed word in front of them. This was very intimidating. We often lost these students early on. We wanted to develop a program to keep these students coming to class.

> "We see bilingual instruction not as a method of maintaining the native language, but rather as a vehicle to learn English and to become literate."

Northampton Community College's Adult Literacy Department created a curriculum and resource manual entitled "Assisting the Limited English Proficient Non-Reader." This program was designed to begin the non-native non-reader in the educational process. The program is very basic, providing simple, easy to learn lessons for non-native non-readers. We also relied on the use of bilingual instructors. Because all of the students had some understanding of Spanish, many of the lessons were bilingual.

At Northampton, we believe that the final outcome of a program should be the mastery of the English language and culture. But, we are increasingly looking at the use of bilingual instruction for the non-native non-reader population. We see bilingual instruction not as a method of maintaining the native language, but rather as a vehicle to learn English and to become literate.

Lessons included using the arts and music as a vehicle of instruction. Students also developed personalized picture dictionaries. We bought each student a disposable camera. They took pictures of objects in their homes and of their families. These pictures were then turned into a personal picture dictionary in English. They first wrote the words, then wrote sentences, and eventually paragraphs. Many of last year's students are enrolled in beginning ESL this year. ❖

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# ESL at WPALRC is not just alphabet soup

## by Chris Kemp, Adult Literacy Resource Specialist

According to the 1990 census, over 670,000 adult residents of Pennsylvania speak a language other than English at home. Increased immigration challenges English as a Second Language programs. Each ESL student presents a unique profile of proficiencies, needs and goals. As a result, ESL program services range from survival vocabulary to TOEFL preparation prior to university application.

The resource centers at AdvancE and the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Center (WPALRC) support ESL practitioners by supplying a wide variety of instructional and professional materials, including Pennsylvania-produced Special Demonstration Projects

* **ELM Branches Out,** (AE 3025-861) produced by Northampton Community College, integrates a competency based language and life skills curriculum with the MELT competencies.
* *What Does That Mean* (AE 3025-893), a video produced by South Hills Literacy Improvement Center, teaches American idioms.
* **The 1994 ABLE Curriculum Guide: A Resource for ESL Practitioners,** edited by Sherry Royce, reviews published materials and is "must" for any ESL practitioner's library. Copies are available through AdvancE and WPALRC. For this project, publishers donated over 200 materials for review and provided complimentary copies of featured materials to the resource centers.

While shelf collections at AdvancE and WPALRC differ, both contain a variety of published materials. **English a la Cartoon,** edited by Dr. Albert H. Small, teaches language and culture through 101 hilarious cartoons. **Foreign and Second Language Learning: Language Acquisition Research and Its Implication for the Classroom,** by William Littlewood, presents recent research concentrating on effective approaches to teaching. **Recipes for Tired Teachers,** edited by Christopher Sion, gathers teaching activities from more than 40 teachers from all over the world.

A separate collection of vendor materials and Special Demonstration Projects addresses citizenship test preparation. The Alemeny Press/Prentice Hall Regents **Handbook for Citizenship** includes a text and audio cassette. **Guide to Prepare for New Written Citizenship Examination: A Guide for Beginner Level ESL Students,** (AE 3025-925) includes two sample tests with the curriculum. While it was designed to prepare students for the written test, it is helpful to students preparing for the oral exam.

Matching individuals to appropriate instructional and supplemental materials poses special challenges for ESL instructors. Study skills, life skills or vocational materials (not specifically identified for ESL populations) may be useful for individualizing instruction. Call 1-800-445-5607, ext. 216 to obtain a complete listing of WPALRC materials. ❖

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## Technology in ESL

FORUM is the newsletter of the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE). Fully realizing the discussions presently dealing with differences and similarities between Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language, we, nevertheless, find some interesting ESL-relevant items in FORUM.

The Fall, 1994 issue deals with a number of topics relating to the uses of TECHNOLOGY:

* "Educational Technology Enhances the LEP Classroom" makes some general observations equally relevant to all areas of adult education based on the attributes of the technologies (multisensory learning is more effective, technology enhances cooperative learning, etc.).

The article also identifies some implications of educational technology for LEP students:

—Speaking: Dialogues can be used in ESL classes to develop speaking skills.
—Listening: Interactive videodisc and CD-ROM programs can provide excellent listening comprehension activities.
—Reading: Reading skills can be developed using computer-assisted instructional programs ranging from word recognition to reading comprehension.
— Writing: Word processors are ideal for composition or free writing practice. Some are bilingual and some may be used interactively.
—Culture: Video-based activities are well-suited for observing cultural diversity in a live context.

NCBE has a significant database of focus papers, program information guides and research in bilingual education.

For information about these ESL information sources including the FAX newsletter from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA), contact NCBE at 1-800-321-6223.

Using Computers With Adult ESL Literacy Learners is the title of an ERIC Digest (EDO-LE-90-08). It was prepared by the National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education (NCLE)'s Center for Applied Linguistics (1118 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037).

The authors note the importance of the use of microcomputers is now recognized by ESL researchers and practitioners and provide an overview of the ways in which various types of computer software and instructional strategies can be used effectively with adult ESL literacy learners.

They continue with the following points:

—Drill and practice software provide functional and communicative experiences that better serve learners' needs and help to develop language skills.
—Adults generally have positive attitudes toward computer use and are eager to acquire computer skills for the workplace.
—In spite of the progress that has been made in hardware and software development and toward integrating computers into adult ESL language and literacy instruction, the effectiveness of computer-assisted instructional (CAI) approaches is largely dependent on the ability of instructors to choose, adapt, and use computer programs effectively.
—The instructional strategies used with learners are as important to successful learning as the quality of the software and hardware used.
—Much of the software and many of the instructional approaches now in use focus either on language learning or on literacy development but do not combine the two.
—There is relatively little software designed expressly for adult ESL literacy learners, especially those with low-level English language and reading skills. ✣

## Family Literacy In ESL

The Fall, 1994 issue of the newsletter of the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) contains articles dealing with the working relationships which can be developed between Family Literacy and ESL.

The first article is by Dr. Gail Weinstein-Shr, a presenter at the first ESL Summer Institute at Lehigh University, who is now at San Francisco State University.

Reaching Out to Bilingual Families: In her NCFL article Dr. Weinstein-Shr notes that, "As our communities become increasingly diverse, it will become the rule rather than the exception for family literacy program planners to find bilingual families among those who may benefit from intergenerational programming." She recommends that program directors wishing to involve parents for whom English is not a native language: 1. Learn about the structure and characteristics of the community where target families are members; 2. Learn about the language, literacy and educational profiles of communities and community members; and 3. Learn about the most pressing concerns of adults in their role as parents.

Successful Implementation of Family Education Programs Within Native American Cultures Analyzed is the second of the Family Literacy/ESL articles in the NCFL newsletter and makes the point that successful implementation of models in Indian Schools depends upon one critical factor: Program goals and delivery modes must fit into the cultural norms and culturally-appropriate pedagogy and andragogy.

An editorial in this issue of the NCFL Newsletter emphasizes the importance of exploring the culture of ESL learners. "Culture cannot simply be defined by our ethnic background. It is also family, religion, profession, interests, gender, child-rearing practices, educational background, where we live, the food we eat, our individual uniqueness and more."

Contact the National Center for Family Literacy (their 4th annual conference will be April 23-25, 1995) at NCFL, Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 W. Main St., Louisville, KY 40202. ✣

## . . . And There's Still More!

# For your reading pleasure in ESL

### Here's what can be done . . .

We suggest you "Action Research-ers" might want to consult the following: **ESL Informational Bulletin**; distributed to state literacy resource centers by Ron Pugsley, Acting Director of the US Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy. The final ESL informational bulletin contains state updates, information about some ESL populations, and information about ESL resources such as **The ESL Technology User's Guide** available from the Northwest Regional Literacy Resource Center, 1701 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98122.

**1994 ABLE Curriculum Guide: A Resource Listing for ESL Practitioners.** Produced by Dr. Sherry Royce with a Section 353 grant, the Guide uses the rating format made familiar by *Focus* along with a short description of more than 60 ESL publications. Available from either of the State Adult Literacy Centers: Western Pennsylvania 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216; Harrisburg AdvancE 1-800-992-2283.

**Pennsylvania ESL Programs: A Guide to Innovative Practices.** Published in 1989 by the Division of Adult Basic and Literacy Education and AdvancE. Describes 10 ESL Programs throughout the state with general program descriptions, instructional methodologies, materials used and special features of each program. Contact AdvancE.

**Practices Used in English As a Second Language Classes for Adults.** Distributed by the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education in 1988. Describes 26 ESL units of study, program practices, etc. and gives contact persons. We don't know where this is available, but will lend you our copy. Box 214, Troy, PA 16947

**Helping ESL Students in English-only Classes.** An article in the October/November issue *Reading Today* the newsletter of the International Reading Association. Describes appropriate approaches, meaningful activities, settings and models. Contact IRA, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714.

* **Hands-on English** is a small, independent publication that started in 1991. The editor is a former ESL teacher and one of the features is a page of ESL classroom ideas exchanged by readers. The November/December, 1994 issue has letters from Mary Callahan of the Wyoming Valley Literacy Program in Kingston, PA ("We found a collection of ESL poetry in a Dover Thrift Edition for $1"), and Marsha Kennedy from Pittsburgh ("Love this helpful magazine/newsletter! It's helped me with ideas and given me courage!"). **Hands-on English** is full of usable classroom activities like crossword puzzles, idea files, reading activities, classroom activities, etc. It's $16 with permission to photocopy for class use. Address: PO Box 256, Crete, NE 68333.

* Another ESL publication mentioned in **Hands-on English** is **Impact!**, a monthly newspaper designed especially for intermediate and advanced ESL students. Every issue covers a variety of current events and general interest topics. A glossary on each page assists the student with difficult words and idioms used in the articles. For a free first issue (we don't know the cost of a subscription) call 1-800-850-3239.

* **LifePrints,** a series of ESL instructional books published by New Readers Press, Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210. Three levels of materials including student book, audiotape, Teacher's edition and Teacher's Resource File at each level. Includes a volume on assessment.

* **Prison ESL now Section of Correctional Education Association.** Contact: Ellen Polsky, chair, ESL Bilingual Education SIG, CEA, International English Center, University of Colorado, Campus Box 63, Boulder, CO 80309. ❖

Many Action Research projects have been undertaken with funding provided by the regional staff development centers. Here are synopses of two such ESL projects funded through the Region 6 Center in Harrisburg, Coordinator Paula Smith.

**Phase I, and Phase II, ELM Project.** These Action Research projects were carried out by **Sandy Darchicourt, Ann Kulgavin** and **Mary Weller.** At the time of the Practitioner Action Research Projects, all three were working in the ESL program at Immigration and Refugee Services of the Catholic Charities, Harrisburg Diocese.

The practitioners used the competency-based curriculum "ELM (English Language Matrix) Branches Out" which was developed as a Section 353 project (#98 3044). The ELM curriculum was used to assess individual needs, place students in groupings according to need, provide instruction at three levels of competency, and post-test at the end of each thematic unit to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project.

In Phase II the researchers expanded the materials being used beyond those developed in the ELM project and utilized a wider variety and greater amount of materials based upon student needs.

The **$300 Stipend** received for the project was used in Phase I to compensate the practitioners for their time spent in planning and implementing the project. This included, among other activities, making pretests, preparing charts, photocopying ELM materials, reviewing the ELM project, and establishing a library of materials. In Phase II the award was used to purchase materials.

**Results** of the project were, according to the final report, "very positive". Of the ESL students who began in the classes and completed the program the average success rate for 8 units was 84%.

Action Research Pays Off — try it! ❖

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## ... And More Information Sources

# ESL and the American Dream

In November, 1992 the SOUTHPORT INSTITUTE began in investigation of English as a Second Language Service for adults in the United States. The investigation concluded in December, 1993 and although the report, **ESL and the American Dream**, does not really tell an ESL practitioner much he or she doesn't already know, it does give the study of ESL a legitimacy which brings lots of information together and makes specific recommendations for ESL in the future.

*ESL AND THE AMERICAN DREAM (Available from the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis, 820 First Street, N.E., Suite 460, Washington, DC 20002).*

The report identifies the reason for the "Disappointing performance of ESL service in this country" as being due to ESL being "a neglected backwater of our educational system."

After describing the need for ESL programs, some general characteristics and instructional modes of ESL programs and a description of funders and providers of ESL programs, the report goes on to ask the question: "Does ESL Work?" (conclusion: many programs work surprisingly well).

**ESL and the American Dream** also asks the question "Why has ESL service for adults in the United States been so severely neglected?" (it has no strong and reliable advocates).

Chapter 7 of the report deals with The Politics of ESL and points to **Immigrant Bias** ("Whenever high rates of immigration correspond to economic downturns, anti-immigrant sentiment flourishes), **a need for leadership** ("there are virtually no leaders in the ESL field as a whole"), **Federalism** ("The net result of this federal-state standoff is that, in ESL, as in many other intergovernmental programs, administration, oversight, innovation and concern for quality of service are seriously deficient).

These three factors, when combined with what the report calls **"Weak Constituencies"** ("Constituencies that lack the resources to advocate their own cause generally receive second-rate public services"), and **"The Adult Education Bind"** ("ESL has been relegated to second-class status within the adult education world"), have led to a program "that is poorly positioned to gain public support."

Somewhat more constructive than the messages coming from **ESL and the American Dream** is its companion piece **Sparks of Excellence: Program Realities and Promising Practices in Adult ESL.**

This handbook identifies various categories of importance to ESL (Testing and Assessment, Staffing Issues, etc.), identifies some promising practices in that area, and makes some recommendations for remedying at least some of the problems connected with each category.

A third important publication in ESL from the Southport Institute is a background paper, **The Use of Technology in Adult ESL Programs: Current Practice-Future Promise.** The paper uses the term technology in the broadest sense and presents benefits and challenges of technology use in ESL along with information about commonly available technologies, the extent of the use of technology, the nature of that use and promising program models.

*Editor's Note: We find it difficult to rationalize the descriptions of the 1992-93 study of ESL Southport Institute with the comments the Institute made in its 1989 publication* **Jump Start.**

*In that final report of The Project on Adult Literacy are such statements as: "Fortunately, the ESL field is far ahead of most of the rest of the adult education effort"; "ESL is the success story of the basic skills field," etc.* ❖

## A Section 353 ESL Project

**by Margaret Welliver,**
**Director of Adult Education,**
**State College School District**

DISCOVER PA (#98-4009) was developed by the staff of the State College Area School District (SCASD) English As a Second Language (ESL) program. DISCOVER PA was field tested with over 45 upper level ESL students who had moved to State College, Pennsylvania in 1993-94.

The Student Workbook was designed to improve language skills and foster confidence and independence while learning about the community and the state of Pennsylvania. The activities, which included local field trips, were developed for use with the PA travel guide which is available by calling 1-800-Visit-PA.

The project results were reviewed by twelve members of the ESL/ABLE staff who recognized the adaptability of the materials for lower level ESL classes, ABLE programs and GED preparation classes. Detailed lesson plans in the Instructor's Manual allow easy adaptation of the content to any community and program. The workbook and manual were designed to be easily reproduced.

Call AdvancE at 1-800-992-2283 or the Western Adult Literacy Center at 1-800-446-5607 to request a review copy.

# Training Prepares Tutors to Teach Adults with Special Learning Needs

### by Lori Dubrawka

The Pottstown YWCA Adult Literacy Center received a 353 grant to update volunteer tutor training based upon our concerns about the large number of English-speaking adults with minimal literacy skills contacting the program. Traditional reading series were not proving to be effective for most of these learners.

I was hired to refocus tutor training. I also teach a basic skills class to adults through the Berks Community Action Program and have coordinated a literacy program in another state. Over the years, I have learned a great deal from teachers, speakers and learners about teaching adults who have learning problems.

According to a 1989 Department of Labor Study, 50-80 percent of all learners in adult education probably have learning disabilities. Since so few literacy providers test for specific disabilities during the initial intake, I wanted to create a tutor training that would prepare tutors to teach adults who may have a variety of learning problems.

The training focused on four main ideas: multisensory learning, review, teaching language structure, and visualization.

### MULTISENSORY LEARNING

It is the brain that learns to read, not the eyes. The brain processes sounds, not the ears. The eyes, ears, hands and mouth are pathways to the brain. At least one pathway carrying information must . .ach the brain for learning to occur. Traditional schools – ones learners dropped out of – often focus almost exclusively on the visual pathway. If that pathway happens to weaken, information may never reach the brain. Multisensory learning focuses on listening to information, touching, feeling, manipulating information and looking at information.

### REVIEW

This is not to be confused with teaching material that is too easy, or that has already been mastered.

I advocate teaching ideas so they are truly understood. Present material in more than one way before moving on. Review it often.

According to Tony Buzan in **Use Both Sides of Your Brain,** if information is learned and not reviewed within 24 hours, 80 percent of it is forgotten. And though we all know that adult education is not about memorizing facts, building on concepts taught in previous sessions is crucial for successful learning.

In short, it's better to teach five concepts really well, than to "cover" 20 concepts that may be mostly forgotten.

### TEACH LANGUAGE STRUCTURE

I asked previously trained tutors if their learners could read nonsense words such as vit or sug, or would they guess, even when told it was not a real word, and try to make it into a real word?

I have worked with many adults who had memorized their way up to scoring at the fifth or sixth grade equivalent level on standardized tests such as the TABE, Slosson Oral Reading Test and others. They could spell "receive", "woman" or "sign", but misspelled short, phonetically regular words such as cot, dab or sob.

I do not advocate simply teaching sounds in isolation. I suggest multisensory, direct teaching of sounds and sound segmentation to the point of automaticity. Letters form syllables, syllables form words. This is not what every learner needs, but it will most likely benefit learners who read at a very low level.

There are several multisensory, structured language programs designed for adults such as **WORDS** by Louise Skinner/Diane Tucker-LaPlount (Prentice Hall Regents), **Wilson Reading System** by Barbara A. Wilson (Wilson Language Training) and **Step by Step** (Minnesota Learning Disabilities Association.)

### VISUALIZATION

At the same time I address language structure, I address visualization. After all, if learners can decode, but can't attach meaning, what good is it?

I teach tutors to begin with listening exercises. Vividly describe a concrete object such as an apple. Ask learners to picture it. Progress to reading descriptive prose to them. Then, have them read descriptive sentences and allow them a silent moment to "replay" in their heads what they read. Finally, have them retell it in their own words. Move to longer passages as they get better at visualizing, replaying and retelling. Initially this will slow down their reading, but gradually, once learners are able to visualize longer chunks of text at a time and visualize automatically as they read, speed and understanding will increase.

Tutors who were frustrated with materials and techniques they were using previously report that multisensory instruction, additional review, visualizing and teaching language structure have made them more effective tutors. Learners report that the pace of their tutoring sessions is much more comfortable and productive. ❖

> "I wanted to create a tutor training that would prepare tutors to teach adults who may have a variety of learning problems."

# Newsletter Roundup

• *Passport to Legal Understanding* is the newsletter of the American Bar Association's Commission on Public Understanding About the Law (PUAL). A recent issue featured two articles with information about topics many adult learners seem to encounter: Domestic Violence and Selling a Home. Both articles stress awareness of the legal issues and provide practical advice. The article "Essentials of Selling a Home" is printed in both English and Spanish and the ABA encourages reprinting of articles for distribution to adult learners. It's free from PUAL, ABA, 750 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611.

• According to a recent issue of *all write news* from the Adult Literacy Resource Institute in Boston, the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education (MCAE) had thousands of postcards printed and distributed to frustrated adult students who were placed on waiting lists for adult basic and literacy instruction. The postcards read: "I'm waiting for my chance to attend an adult basic education program. I recently went to the _____ Program in _____ to sign up and was placed on a waiting list of _____ people. We need more funding for adult basic education in Massachusetts so programs like this can serve more people like me who want and need adult education. Thank you." The cards were mailed to state legislators.

• *Multicultural Messenger* is published monthly by the People Publishing Group of the International Multicultural Education Association, 230 West Passaic Street, Maywood, NJ 07607. Subscriptions are $97. In a recent issue the cover story deals with the economic reasons why Asian American academic success has emerged as a topic of concern in educational reform of the 90's. The article notes the mixed messages in the media about why certain groups succeed in school while others do not. Other features each month are "Where the Resources Are" (funding opportunities) and a listing of publications and other resources available in multicultural education.

• *GED Items* is a free newsletter we have mentioned numerous times. A recent issue dealt with the topic "Who Took the GED Tests in 1993" and points out the year was the second highest in numbers of individuals taking the test. 1980 was the highest total with 816,176 test candidates; 1993's total was 790,165. The largest national geographic representation was from the South with 36% of the total test-takers, next Northeast and Northcentral with 20% each and last the West with 18%. Nationally, 71.4% (488,838) of the test-takers passed. According to State GED Administrator Larry Goodwin, this compares with a 72.7% pass rate in Pennsylvania. **GED Items** is available from the GED Testing Service, One DuPont Circle, NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036-1163.

• *Pennsylvania Rural Health News* is "a resource exchange for rural health professionals from the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health" and is free from The Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health, the Pennsylvania State University, 7G Armsby Building, University Park, PA 16802. The Fall, 1994 issue has an article titled "Tech Connections" and notes the National Public Telecomputing Network (NPTN) has received a grant to work with members of local rural communities to establish electronic networks. Twenty electronic community networks in rural areas are planned, each offering citizens free or low-cost access to electronic mail, a broad range of professionally produced information services, and the Internet. The selection process is expected to begin in January, 1995 and a call for applications has been made to governments, schools, libraries, and other rural institutions. For more information, contact NPTN's headquarters at (216) 247-5800 or via e-mail at info@nptn.org

This looks like a great opportunity for community linkages and, perhaps, for some electronic services which rural adult education programs might not have budgets for or access to.

• *The American Journal of Distance Education* is published three times a year by the American Center for the Study of Distance Education, The Pennsylvania State University, 403 South Allen Street, Suite 206, University Park, PA 16801-5202. A recent issue dealt with interaction in distance education, satellite-based language learning, collaborative learning among women, and an analysis in distance education research.

• *The Math Practitioner* is published by the Adult Numeracy Practitioners Network and edited by Ellen McDevitt of Carlow College's (Pittsburgh) Office of Community Education. It's new and geared toward practical needs as well as establishing a networking locus for adult numeracy practitioners. In the second issue there is an interesting article by Marty Gilchrist of the Roanoke, VA public schools, which notes the growing demands on literacy tutors to extend their services to encompass numeracy instruction. Another article tells how to access an Internet list for adult numeracy practitioners. The I-Net address of the list is majordomo-@world.std.com

To get your name on **The Math Practitioner** mailing list write Ellen McDevitt, Office of Community Education, Carlow College, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

• *Reading Today* is the newsletter of the International Reading Association (IRA), 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714). In the January, 1995 issue there is an article describing "Reading in the Mall" — organizing shopping mall projects in an effort to inform parents and community members of the variety of literacy activities available. Suggestions are reading corners, information booths, mallwide literacy fairs with programs in a region participating. The article also outlines 10 suggestions for a successful reading mall experience.

In the same issue is an intriguing article relating to "Finger Spelling"- counting the letters of 4, 5 and 6 letter words on the fingers. Might be a good alternative method for special learning needs adults. ❖

# Literacy in the Time of Cynicism

by Dr. Allan Quigley, Penn State at Monroeville

Last November, I was one of several who gave testimony in Nashville at the Reauthorization Hearings for three Acts currently up for legislative reconsideration. Namely, **The Carl D. Perkins Act, The Adult Education Act,** and **The National Adult Literacy Act of 1991.** These three are the financial life blood of our field's sponsored programs.

The most significant issue for us today, in my opinion (and it hasn't changed since November), is the rise of *cynicism* in our society. Cynicism in general and cynicism towards literacy education in particular. I noted to the hearing's panelists that literacy has lost its momentum as a media issue, as a public issue, and as a political issue. While history shows that the cycle of literacy interest has always come around again — usually in connection with a declared "crisis" such as the economy or a war — the entire cycle can take a while.

At Nashville, I asked the panel to consider that, in 1980, the **New York Times,** together with all major popular magazines in America, carried 11 major stories on literacy. By 1988, the total had climbed to 34; then interest began to fall. By 1993 the total had dropped to 16. And, halfway through 1994, the total was **just one article.** Literacy is "old news." I asked the panel to consider the fact that the ETS **National Literacy Survey** released two years ago should have precipitated a national outcry and debate. I would have done so in an earlier decade. Instead, nothing. A short flurry of articles, no debate, no real outcry, no policy changes. The public and the politicians were basically silent.

I especially wanted to draw the panel's attention to the bad press the GED program has received in recent years. To me, this is yet another indication of invasive public and political cynicism. A study released by Cameron and Heckman over a year ago from the University of Chicago challenged the value of the GED, particularly with respect to its worth in helping graduates receive higher incomes after receiving the diploma. The Chicago study was instantly picked up by the media and seen across front pages of America's newspapers. Since that attack, the GED testing service and several scholars have shown the Cameron and Heckman study to be seriously flawed, both in its method and in the researchers' assumptions about the goals of the GED. The rebuttal got no press. Like so much of the media's impact, a bad taste was left with no bromide to follow.

Worse, I argued, the notification for the Reauthorization Hearings in the government's own **Federal Register** said, "Studies focusing on the skill levels, economic outcomes, and postsecondary education experience (of the GED) have yielded inconclusive and sometimes contradictory re-

sults." (Vol. 59, No. 181, page 48370). "Where are these **studies?**" I asked the panel. "Why plural?" I knew of only one, the Cameron and Heckman study which had been devoured by the press.

Pressing on, I knew what the response would be to my closing suggestions to the panel, but I went ahead anyhow. First, I asked the panelists to sponsor public hearings like the ones they were hosting in Nashville so the public, students, employers, schools, whoever, could have a voice in literacy's future. Raise interest. Bring success stories forward. Get the debate on NALS started. Bring the interest in literacy back up — for the good of the nation. No

> "We can never make significant strides in literacy education without a solid infrastructure of permanent, trained, professionals . . ."

response. Pressing ahead, I then argued that we can never make significant strides in literacy education without a solid infrastructure of **permanent, trained, professionals** in practitioner leadership positions. "Good will is not enough. In fact, sometimes it does more damage than good," I said. I argued that we can't make a serious impact on illiteracy with only volunteers and part-time staff who are constantly worried if they'll have a job next year. Unlike any other national education enterprise, we have a hole at the top, I argued. No response. One did ask: "Where would the added resources for permanent staff come from?" "Well," I began again, like Don Quixote, "from new money generated by a public debate, or from a federal-state match, or . . ." — the panelists' eyes glazed over.

Please don't misunderstand. I'm glad we have the people we have in federal positions, such as those on the panel. But what should one say to such a panel? What other options are there? Literacy education has traditionally flourished when public sympathy for our "cause" is high. Foolishly, perhaps, I closed by saying: "We've had wars on crime and wars on drugs. We need a war on cynicism. This is your job, and ours." As I see it, the GED and the adult programs we have are far from the quick fixes that people often seem to want. But neither are they the insipid, "of contradictory value," failed programs the **Federal Register** and the media seem to want to make of them. Let's learn and teach about our successes. Let's find better ways to do things. So there it is. I said it then and I'll say it again: "We must wage a war on cynicism." Now, if only someone were to listen . . . ❖

# People and Programs in PA ABLE

* And it's PITTSBURGH for the 1996 Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) National Conference. The COABE committee selected the City of the Golden Triangle for its conference hotel accommodations, scenery and historical sites and convenient transportation. See you in Pittsburgh in May or June, 1996.

* We recently received some information from **George** and **Victoria Rutledge** with the **Adult Education Program for IU #12 in York** about an ABLE Storytelling Manual produced as a Section 353 project in 1993-94 (98-4027).

The project developed an audio-cassette tape version of the book "Ghosts of Gettysburg" and George notes the tape and book produce some "very interesting history lessons" in ABE and GED classes.

Another adult educator with the Lincoln IU, **Meg Neiderer,** composed the keyboard background and there is now a sequel to the "Ghosts" tape. Meg tells us selected stories from Mark Nesbitt's *"Ghosts of Gettysburg"* and a sequel are available at a number of tourist stops in the Gettysburg/Hanover area and are on the National Park Service Catalog. For ordering information you may contact Meg at Visionary Music. PO Box 274, Hanover, PA 17331.

* The **Gettysburg Migrant Program** and the **Greater Erie Community Action Even Start Program** were recently mentioned in the newsletter of the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL). In presentations across the country NCFL's training staff often discusses the importance of teamwork. Staff members at Gettysburg developed a combination English/Spanish description of TEAMWORK; the Erie group put together a rap version.

* A number of persons attending the Penn-Ohio Conference commenting to us on the excellent presentation by **Ed Darnell,** Director of the Quality of Life Learning Center in Erie. The program works with at-risk, out-of-school youth providing counseling and instructional services on a highly individualized basis. Testing for the program is done by **Bootsie Barbour,** Coordinator of Regional Staff Development Center #1.

* The Spirit, the newsletter of The **Mifflin County Library's Adult Literacy Program,** contains an excellent article on dyslexia containing information and comments of **Dr. David Werner,** spokesperson for the Pennsylvania Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology. Mifflin County Library's Literacy Coordinator is **Cathy Forsythe.**

* **Diana Statsman's Scranton Council for Literacy Advance (SCOLA)** is implementing a program of quality procedures and as part of the program surveyed their 109 volunteer tutors to determine tutor attitudes, suggestions for improvement and staff development needs. 97% of the tutors responding to the survey felt their tutoring experience was positive and about the same number felt the experience had a positive effect upon the student(s).

* The January, 1995 issue of **Reading Today** from the International Reading Association (IRA) contains an article by **David Morgan** of Warrington, PA, telling of his personal experiences "turning on" to reading during rehabilitation after having a brain tumor removed. Mr. Morgan graduated from St. Joseph's University in English and is now a master's candidate in Rider College's reading/language arts program. The book that turned him on? — "The Catcher in the Rye."

A letter from one of our readers . .

## English: the Official Language

"I have been tutoring for eight years.

I firmly believe that the Official Language of The United States is and should remain English.

Our ancestors came from many different places in the world. When they came to The United States, they learned to speak English. Most did it on their own.

The English Language is part of our American Identity, and immigrants should be informed about learning to speak English.

I even feel it may help to reduce some of the crimes that are committed by immigrants."

– Willard Long, Frackville, PA

* **ASPIRA of Pennsylvania,** a member of the national ASPIRA group which works with persons of Puerto Rican and Latino heritage, recently had a visit from the new Philadelphia Superintendent of Schools, **David Hornbeck. Emanuel Ortiz,** a member of ASPIRA, was recently elected Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Community College of Philadelphia. ❖

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**February, 1995:**

**8-10:** 30th Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference, Hershey. Contact PAACE, Box 3796, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

**9:** PROMOTING ADULT LITERACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING Teleconference; 1-3 p.m. Presenters: **Dr. Lew Perelman**, expert on the learning enterprise and the imperative for adult ฃ.rn-ing; **Leslye Arsht**, President of the Coalition for Goals 2000, and others. For downlink information and information about purchasing videotapes of the Teleconference, call the National TeleLearning Network, 1-800-432-3286.

**9:** CONSTRUCTING EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: RETENTION STRATEGIES FOR CAMPUS DIVERSITY: Teleconference; 1-3 p.m. Contact: PBS Adult Learning Service (800) 257-2578.

**9:** PAACE Program Divisions Presentations, 9 a.m. at the Midwinter.

**10:** 8-9 a.m., **Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth** (TLC) Meeting; Hershey.

**10, 24 and 25:** IMPROVING STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF ADULT STUDENTS through the ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS. Pre-senter: Dr. Allan Quigley. Credit course from Penn State sponsored by Region 6 Staff Development Center. Contact Paula Smith (717) 232-0568.

**15:** 7th ANNUAL MULTICULTURAL FORUM; VOICES FROM THE DIVERSE WORKFORCE. Teleconference; 1-4 p.m. Contact PBS Adult Learning Service (800) 257-2578.

**15-17:** 1995 Annual Lifelong Learning Conference: "Innovations in Higher Education Technology and Workplace Literacy"; San Diego. Contact National University Research Institute, 4025 Camino del Rio South, San Diego, CA 92108.

**15-19:** NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: Washington, DC. 5th annual conference. Contact Jill Moss Greenburg (310) 657-7746.

**17:** WORKING WITH AT RISK YOUNG ADULTS; Erie. Presenter: Edward Darnell. Contact Bootsie Barbour (814) 866-3775.

**21:** CULTURAL DIVERSITY TRAINING; Teleconference; Edinboro; 4-5:30 p.m. Contact Bootsie Barbour (814) 866-3775.

**21:** KET Live Teleconference; A PRAGMATIC MODEL FOR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES; 4-5:30 p.m. Contact Paula Smith, Region 6 Staff Development Center (717) 232-0568.

**22:** WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM; Teleconference; 12-3 p.m. Contact Bootsie Barbour.

**22-26:** National Association for Developmental Education 19th Annual Conference; Chicago. Contact Julia N. Visor, University Center for Learning Assistance, 4240 Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240; (309) 438-7100.

**23-24:** First International Conference on **Women and Literacy**; sponsored by the Georgia State University Center for the Study of Adult Literacy; Atlanta. Contact the Center at Georgia State University, University Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30303-3083; (404) 651-2405.

**March, 1995:**

**14-18:** 10th Annual Conference on **Technology and Persons with Disabilities**; Los Angeles. Contact Harry J. Murphy, Center on Disabilities, California State University - Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge, CA 91330.

**17:** Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC) Meeting; 1-3 p.m.; Damon's Meeting Room, State College. Contact Linda Herr (717) 584-3824.

**28-April 1:** TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) Twenty-Ninth Annual Convention. Long Beach, California. Contact TESOL, 1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 836-0774.

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# Looking for Free Literacy Programming? . . . Try PCN

Despite serving 34 television affiliates and more than 900,000 subscribers, the excellent literacy/adult education television programs which are available free from the Pennsylvania Cable Network (PCN) may be the best kept secret in Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education.

ABLE programs which have used instructional videotapes know the high motivation level and effective instruction which are present when adult learners watch "the tube". The following adult education/literacy programs are now showing on your local PCN station:

**On Your Own.** Basic reading, writing and math with study guides available. Monday through Friday from 11-11:30 a.m.

**Helping Adults Learn.** Produced by Penn State; Monday through Friday at 4 p.m.

**GED on TV.** The KET-GED series has just been renewed for another year. English version: Monday through Friday at 12 noon. Spanish version at 12:15.

**Touching the Future.** at 4:15 p.m.

Some of these programs may be taped and used in your classrooms.

For more information about PCN channels in your area contact PCN, 401 Fallowfield Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011 (717) 730-6000. Also request the free programming guide, **PCN Vision.** ❖

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# What's The **BUZZ?**™

## In This Issue . . .

## The ABLE Road Show . . .

### They Came, They Talked, They Were Great!

It might have been the subject matter: the revised regulations and guidelines for program proposals for 1995-96. But most persons with whom we talked who attended one of the Administrative Workshops were glad they had come—and grateful for the clear and cogent presention by Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) Bureau personnel who tried to make the application procedures clear and understandable.

We attended the workshop held at Marywood College in Scranton and presenter Don Lunday, Chief of the Bureau's Regional Programs section, (ably assisted by Sonny Sloan and Abbei Brawley) made the following points concerning six areas of importance:

1. Bureau organization: As Buzz readers are aware, the ABLE Bureau has seen a number of personnel changes during the past year. There still may be some confusion in some state adult educator's minds concerning the differences among **Area Advisor** regions (there are five of them), **Staff Development Center** regions (there are nine of them) and areas served by the two **State Adult Literacy Resource Centers.** For a complete list of present area advisor assignments, see December 1994's Buzz, page 14.

*At the Marywood College Administrative Workshop, ABLE Bureau staff members, from left: Richard Stirling, Budget Analyst; Abbei Brawley, Southwest Advisor; Don Lunday, Regional Programs Division Chief; John Sloan, Northwest Advisor; Ann Diffendall, Administrative Officer; Chuck Holbrook, Northeastern Advisor.*

2. EQuAL: For an outline of the new initiative, Educational Quality for Adult Literacy, see the January, 1995 issue of **The Buzz.** According to Mr. Lunday, "Our primary focus is program management to better serve your clients. We hope to have the data that is collected tied directly to your program." He also made the point that, in the future, each program's performance-based management system will be tied to the application process. The 1996-97 applications will have to address Recommendations for Program Improvement found in 1994-95 on-site monitoring reports.

3. Consolidation Rationale: The new application process consolidates all federal and all state program proposals from one agency (school district, community-based organization, etc.) into a single application for each source of funding (federal or state). Mr. Lunday said the rationale was to reduce time to get each program funded, to re-

**The ABLE Road Show,**
**cont. from page 1**

duce the time spent evaluating proposals by advisors, to reduce time spent preparing proposals by applicants, and to decrease the administrative efforts of both the Bureau and the Program applicant.

4. Multi-year Funding: According to Mr. Lunday, "This is on the wish list of the Bureau," and is definitely a goal for the future. Because of administrative and funding issues, however, multi-year funding will not be initiated this year. The federal budget situation is especially uncertain and there is even a question as to whether Adult Education will be a separate category in the future.

5. Funding Levels: This was put into the category of "bad news" because of an anticipated reduction in federal support for Adult Basic and Literacy Education in Pennsylvania for 1995-96. Because the reduction will be small, the Bureau hopes to absorb the loss without cutting programs. The Bureau priority will be to continue successful programs at the present funding level. Prospects for new and/or expanded programs are not good, but programs may still file these applications. State Adult Literacy Act 143 funding is expected to be at the same level as 1993-94.

John "Sonny" Sloan, Northwest Advisor, discussed some of the application guidelines and made these points:

1. The program application may contain up to three letters of support. However letters of support are not a requirement and more than three letters are discouraged.

2. A travel budget request calling for reimbursement in excess of 25¢ per mile must be accompanied by a Travel Rate Authority document. Organizational Board meeting minutes are the best documentation.

3. Equipment such as computers may be purchased. However, the cost must be listed as an administrative cost and proposals for computers costing more than $500 must be accompanied by a Computer Purchase Letter. Ceil-

ings on total administrative costs (including computer purchases) are 5% of the funding for federal projects and 10% for Act 143 grants.

4. Secretarial and Counselor hour limitations are no longer in effect. The number of secretarial and counselor hours per program should be based upon the program's determination of what is necessary for the program.

5. The Budget Detail sheet requires only total hours and total salaries of personnel; the hourly rate by individual is no longer required.

6. Former budgetary limits on supplies and texts are no longer in effect.

7. In the narrative section, programs must comply with instructions and limit answers and information to the spaces provided.

8. There is no limit on travel reimbursement to the midwinter conference, fall workshops, etc. Programs should maintain proper accounting of these expenditures in case of audit and/or final report requirements.

9. Contracts were mailed out with the applications.

10. Programs desiring the application forms on WordPerfect DOS disc should send a blank disk to Don Lunday, ABLE Bureau, 12th floor, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333.

As the final workshop speaker, Abbei Brawley, Southwest Advisor, discussed the narrative section of the application and generated some discussion as to the relative meanings of "recruited", "retained", and "enrolled". It was generally agreed the terms "recruited" and "enrolled" mean about the same thing to most programs and "retained" applies to those adults who attend the program for 12 hours or more or who achieve a goal. These categories should not be confused with "continuation" and "early separation" on the Student Data Form.

Most persons in attendance at the Administrative Workshop were impressed with the intent and attempts by the ABLE Bureau to "streamline" the application process and give programs more discretion in determining budgets.

One of the questions at the end of the workshop was asked by Joyce Kerrick, Director of the Region 3 Staff Development Center at Lackawanna Junior College in Scranton. Ms. Kerrick inquired as to the reimbursement of personnel from instructional funds to attend staff development activities. She was told this is permitted and in 1995-96 programs may budget for increases in staff time to include these activities.

It was emphasized that, since this is the first year programs may purchase equipment, discussion of the purchase with your regional advisor would be appropriate.

For clarification of this type of question and any other questions relating to the revised guidelines and program applications, contact your advisor at (717) 787-6344: Northwest - John Sloan; Southwest - Abbei Brawley; Central - Dale Mace and Jim Shindledecker; Northeastern - Chuck Holbrook; Philadelphia and Delaware Counties - John Zhong. ❖

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# The Cyril O. Houle Award

Dr. Fred M. Schied, Assistant Professor of Adult Education at Penn State, received the Cyril Houle Award from the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) and was recognized for this honor at the 30th Annual PAACE Midwinter Conference. PAACE is the state affiliate of AAACE.

The Houle World Award for Literature in Adult Education recognizes works that contribute significantly to the field's advancement and unity. Dr. Schied was recognized for his book, **Learning in Social Context: Adult and Workers Education in Nineteenth Century Chicago.** ❖

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## PDE State Update:
## Valuing Learners through Commitment to Quality

In the PDE update session at the 1995 Midwinter Conference, Cheryl Keenan, Bureau Director of ABLE, and Division Chiefs, Don Lunday and Ella Morin, reiterated the Bureau's commitment to high quality educational services for adult learners. The Update summarized key components of quality services, how the Bureau supports quality services, and the importance of accountability systems in the current political climate. The update also addressed recent Bureau initiatives to address continuous program improvement, accountability, and local program flexibility.

In discussing high quality adult education services, Ms. Keenan addressed the importance of valuing adult learners by providing important feedback to learners so they can make informed decisions about future educational and employment goals. She addressed the increasing diversity of the United States and the impact it is having on the adult education programs, school systems, and the workforce. "By taking the time to gain knowledge about diverse cultures, seeking information and participation from key individuals in their communities in program planning, and involving learners, adult educators can offer programs that build on individual differences as a strength and create an appreciation for the diversity of communities," she said.

In addressing accountability, the Bureau is emphasizing accountability on several levels. First and foremost, adult education must be accountable not only to its learners, but also to the community, its funders, and to policy makers. Increasingly, adult education is being asked to "demonstrate what happens to learners in adult education programs in terms of employment, family, and community outcomes." Mr. Lunday stressed portraying adult education in terms of its value to the average taxpayer.

The coordination of adult education programs and other human services can increase learner outcomes. The Bureau is working with the PA State Coalition for Adult Literacy to develop a local planning process to improve the coordination of adult literacy services within a community. Additionally, Ms. Keenan emphasized that, "linking adult education with the private sector will bind adult education with business and industry in a way that is consistent with other educational initiatives."

"Adult educators must have a devotion to continuous improvement. We cannot be satisfied with what is, but must always move towards improving our practices." Ms. Morin discussed the use of Section 353 funds and how those funds will be increasingly used to support initiatives having statewide impact for continuous improvement. In reviewing the priorities for 1995-96 she stressed the importance of learner outcomes, collaboration and coordination, and activities to support the new statewide initiative, Educational Quality for Adult Education (EQuAL).

The PDE State Update closed by recognizing all of the strengths upon which Pennsylvania has to build. Ms. Keenan recognized the early establishment of the State Literacy Resource system, summer institutes, regional staff development centers, and the work of Tutors for Literacy in the Commonwealth. "Pennsylvania is the home of pioneers in adult education in the areas of technology, learning disabilities, assessment and workforce education," she noted.

She also recognized the role of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education in bringing the 1996 National Conference of the Commission on Adult Basic Education to the state and noted other national conferences which have been held in our state. ❖

# Technology in Adult Education

by Ben Burenstein,
Drexel University

Last month I noted that there is a tremendous variety of information available in adult basic and literacy education if you take the time to learn to telecommunicate.

Over the months that I have been submitting an article on Technology and Adult Education to The Buzz, I have tried to introduce novices to the world of computers and computerized information and, in last month's issue, I mentioned a few of the major resources available online.

Here are some additional sources available to you in online areas:

* **Bulletin Boards** are areas where people send information and users read or download whatever they want. A bulletin board about literacy, for example, might have questions about the definitions of literacy and numeracy, postings of job offerings, or requests for participants in a research study.

* **Listservers** are like bulletin boards, except the information is automatically downloaded to members periodically. I am on several listservers: one on educational technology, another on homelessness, another on adult literacy. I frequently receive thirty messages per day, most of which are trivial, but occasionally there is a nugget of great value. National figures show up, and the quality of discourse on these servers is fascinating.

* **Software Libraries** are available from most on-line services. You can search for a specific piece of software, or get a listing of a kind ("vocabulary" or "grammar"), and then download whatever you want to try out on your own. ❖

# 30th Midwinter Conference Sets Attendance Record

Despite the "snow-out" of last year, the 1995 Adult Education Midwinter Conference held at Hershey last month set all-time attendance records. More than 700 adult educators from across the state met for three days of camaraderie, enlightenment and information and they were not disappointed.

The 30th Annual 1995 Conference reflected similar themes from the two co-sponsors of the Conference.

From the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the themes of Quality, Accountability and Coordination were reflected in the National and State Update Sessions as well as a number of concurrent sessions.

The Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) addressed the Conference theme of "The Question of Quality: Looking to the Future."

But the shining model of grassroots involvement in the professional organization was reflected in the significant role played by the five revitalized PAACE **Program Divisions** – ABE/GED, Literacy/TLC, ESL, Business and Industry and Continuing Higher Education.

In addition to division luncheons attended by more than 200 there were more than 10 concurrent sessions addressing each of the program division areas of interest and a special presentation by the division directors prior to the Keynote Address to the Conference.

The Adult Student Success Stories, more than 30 exhibitors in the Marketplace (lots of free samples, etc.), the Sessions in the Cinema with instructional and staff development films, the Technology Center manned by Ben Burenstein, awards and recognition of past and present PAACE officers (outgoing President Carol Molek, incoming President Debra Shafer), recognition of the state's top GED scorer (nearly 400 on the test), all of these and more gave all present an excellent opportunity to "fill the well" which one speaker said "we empty during the year as we serve our students".

## Keynote Speaker

The Keynoter for the Conference was Dr. Theodore Hershberg, Professor of Public Policy and History at the University of Pennsylvania. For those adult educators who find it difficult to relate public policy to their profession, Dr. Hershberg explained vividly from a historical and present-economics perspective some of the reasons why adult education may experience serious funding cutbacks as soon as 1996.

According to Dr. Hershberg the development of human capital (people, workers, etc.) must be recognized as the key to the United States gaining its former pre-eminent role in the global economy. Unfortunately, recent political developments would seem to indicate the country is moving away from this goal.

> "The term 'Literate Workforce' is now or may soon become an oxymoron."
> - Dr. Theodore Hershberg

PAACE is focusing its legislative efforts on the disposition of two resolutions passed by the Board of Directors. One calls for an increase in the level of funding for the State Literacy Act which has been at the same level for five years; the second calls for the reauthorization of adult education on the federal level as an entity for a block grant, rather than inclusion with other education and training programs in discretionary block grants which may see present programs suffering serious cutbacks in funds.

Despite the less than optimistic picture painted by speakers at the national update, Pennsylvania adult educators at the Midwinter Conference showed enthusiasm and the dedication which has served our profession so well in the past when the state financial support for literacy was zero and the federal funding was only about 8% of the present level. ❖

## A Tribute To Martha Frank

Attendees at the 1995 Midwinter Conference were given the honor of saying "hello" and "Thank you" to a lifelong educator, Martha Frank.

Martha was given a standing ovation when introduced to the Conference.

She recently retired from the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education after eight years with the Bureau. At the beginning she provided technical start-up assistance to 45 programs in 30 counties of Pennsylvania until she became Northeast Regional Adviser in July, 1987.

Mrs. Frank is certified as an elementary teacher and reading specialist, taught in the Adult Evening Schools of two districts, and taught Adult Basic Education and preparation for the General Educational Development Test for the Bucks County Community College.

She has served as a member of the Pennsylvania Adult Education State Plan Task Force and is a life member of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education. ❖

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# Awards and Recognition at the 30th Midwinter

## JoAnn Weinberger – Outstanding Adult Educator of 1995!

"A visionary in her field, promoting the highest quality instruction, and making meaningful linkages with a wide range of organizations."

"A tireless crusader for Adult Basic and Literacy Education. She is knowledgeable, effective and a distinct pleasure to work with."

"She has touched the lives of many thousands of Pennsylvanians on all sides of adult literacy."

"The breadth of her impact has been as a teacher, a policy-maker, an administrator, a researcher, a public servant and a citizen."

With these accolades from persons in education, industry and the media, Dr. Allan Quigley of the Penn State Monroeville campus and the winner of the 1994 PAACE Outstanding Adult Educator Award, introduced the 1995 Outstanding Educator of the Year, **JoAnn Weinberger**, Executive Director of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia.

Ms. Weinberger has had a varied background in public policy, government, education and literacy and presently directs the largest community-based literacy organization in the country with an annual budget of $1.5 million serving more than 2,500 adult students each year.

*1995 Outstanding Adult Educator, JoAnn Weinberger, Executive Director of the Center for Literacy, receives award and applause from David Dentler, Elizabethtown College, PAACE newly-elected Second Vice President (far left), and Michael Vavrick, Bloomsburg University, PAACE First Vice President.*

Before coming to the Center for Literacy Ms. Weinberger had extensive experience as an independent consultant, Director of the State Library System, Director of the Department of Education's Comprehensive Policy Development and Public Affairs Program for Basic Education, Higher Education and Libraries, Deputy Secretary for Quality Management and Assistant to the Director of Research for Better Schools in Philadelphia.

The Center for Literacy, which she heads, won the 1994 U.S. Secretary of Education's Award for Excellence in Adult Education. ❖

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## 1995 ABLE Success Students

Congratulations to the ten Adult Basic and Literacy Education students who were recognized as the Outstanding Students at the 30th Annual Adult Education Midwinter Conference and whose Success Stories were chosen to represent the nearly 60,000 ABLE students throughout the state.

Our congratulations also to the adult education teachers, tutors, counselors and administrators who helped these Success Students realize their dreams. In the words of one student: "With the help of the staff at the Adult Education Center I was able to do something I thought I could never do."

BUREAU OF ADULT BASIC A LITERACY EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
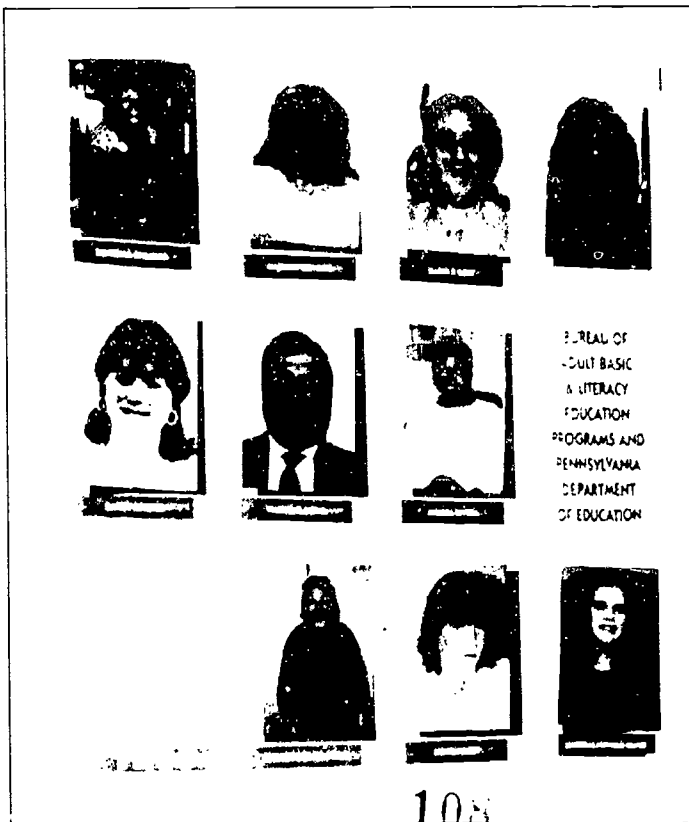
The 1995 Adult Basic and Literacy Education Outstanding Students: From left to right, top row - - **Romona Speaks**, Center for Literacy, Philadelphia; **Marilyn G. Howard**, Northwest Tri-County IU; **Daryl F. Solt**, Mid-State Literacy Council and IU 10 Development Center for Adults; **Carmen Hernandez Duncan**, Clarion County Literacy Council.

2nd row - - **Sandy Bender**, Tuscarora IU 10; **Walter H. Long**, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council; **Julissa Rivera**, Eagleville Hospital.

Bottom row - - **Christine Castro**, The Lighthouse; **Helen Priest**, Cumberland Valley School District; **Michelle Nichole Yantz**, Luzerne County IU 18. ❖

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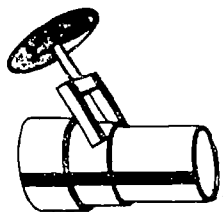
# Instructional Strategies and Assessment

*"Learner Assessment and Program Evaluation must become integrated into the day-to-day operations of a literacy program, involve many categories of 'stakeholders' and use a wide variety of methods to capture a wide range of outcomes."*

—Susan Lytle and Marcie Wolfe,
*"Adult literacy education: Program evaluation and learner assessment"*, ERIC information paper #338.

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Unfortunately, too many programs and too many instructors in adult basic and literacy education have, in their haste to meet assessment mandates, adopted tests which have little relevance to program outcomes, student activities and thus, **Instructional Strategies** within a program.

This is not to imply the short-term goal of accountability is irrelevant and should not be considered when ABLE programs consider instructional and curricular development. Local programs are beginning to realize more and more how the results of their efforts on behalf of adult learners must be quantified to be understood by policy makers (and program funders).

In the book **Enhancing Adult Literacy**, A Public Policy Guide developed as a tool for governors and their staffs, a series of five questions are posed as suggestions for the development of an informed adult literacy policymaking process:

1. What are we trying to teach and why?
2. Who are we trying to teach?
3. How should the information be conveyed?
4. Who should convey the information?
5. How do we know that the skills have been learned?

The Guide concludes: "The issue of sponsorship, or how the program should be supported and financed, thus becomes one of implementation rather than design and should not be addressed until after the questions of design have been answered. (Enhancing Adult Literacy, available from The Council of State Policy and Planning Agencies, 400 North Capitol, Room 291, Washington, DC 20001)

It is not much of a leap for local adult basic and literacy education programs to use these five questions as a guideline to the development and implementation of their local program design, including instructional strategies and assessment.

As we began to compile information for this SPOTLIGHT feature, we attempted to avoid material which dealt solely with assessment and tried to locate sources which would provide adult educators with some guidance in developing congruent policies and activities in both instructional strategies and assessment.

It wasn't easy, but we feel some of the materials in this feature will help point the way to meaningful, practical programs of assessment developed for the benefit of instructional improvement rather than just for accountability.

## Portfolio Assessment in Adult Literacy Education

### By Hanna Fingeret, Literacy South, Durham, NC

This report on the use of portfolio assessment appeared in **Mosaic: Research Notes in Literacy** from the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy in April, 1994.

The author identified four major periods of decision-making to assist ABLE instructors who are considering Portfolio Assessment as an answer to the dilemma of developing assessment programs which measure the effectiveness of strategies, especially in learner-centered, whole language instruction.

1. Decide if portfolio assessment is consistent with your approach to instruction and assessment. Clarify your beliefs about literacy and their relationship to instruction. Clarify the purposes of assessment.
2. Decide areas in which you will implement, the types of materials to include, criteria for choosing and assessing material.
3. Implement portfolio assessment by introducing the concept to your students, creating folders and journals.
4. Evaluate the process and revise it for future use.

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# Introduction to Evaluation

### by Ronald W. Solórzano

#### Educational Testing Service (ETS), Pasadena Office

A commonly overlooked aspect of program management in adult literacy programs is evaluation. One reason is that many program managers see evaluation as coming from the "outside" and a nuisance that has to be experienced every so often to placate funders and skeptics. This perception is not unwarranted since, in many cases, funders and policy makers rarely see the advantage of program evaluation for local program change or benefit but rather as a means to justify their investment in a "successful" program.

Both of these perceptions add to misconceptions about program evaluation. Practitioners who assess learners with instruments that are not necessarily related to instructional methods used but rather to outcomes deemed important to funders or politicians can seriously underestimate program effects. Subsequently, the funder has a false perception of what really is going on in the program by misinterpreting test scores, grade-level improvements and other progress measures.

Therefore, in order to be beneficial, program evaluations should be useful to local programs and as such, local programs should become more involved in the process. Evaluations that document interventions such as instructional activities or recruitment campaigns can be used at both the program and learner level.

At the program level, evaluations could provide useful information about the implementation of activities (characteristics, frequency and duration), timelines and reasons why certain activities were not carried out as planned. In many cases, there are good reasons why certain implementation tasks are not carried out. When viewed from this perspective, it is clear that implementation (formative) evaluations could provide information to programs in a manner that can be useful to them in determining modifications or in eliminating particular strategies or interventions.

At the learner level, programs need some type of baseline data about learners, whether they are based on anecdotal information, initial goals, literacy habits, attitudes, portfolio of accomplishments, pre-test scores, etc. These measures of progress should be updated regularly over time. If this is done, program staff will have ongoing measures of learner progress that can be used to track critical periods of success that might be related to some period of time or special intervention. Additionally, the most recent measure of progress could be used as a proxy for post-test data in the event that learners leave unexpectedly.

If program staff view evaluation in this manner, they will have their fingers on the pulse of their program. When local literacy programs carefully monitor activities and maintain updated records on the successes and failures of these activities, they have set the parameters of the evaluation. They will not be in for surprises when evaluation results are interpreted. In fact, good program managers are the first (not the last) to know when their programs are successful or not.

*From The ABLE Professional Development Guide for Adult Literacy Practitioners.* ❖

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FOCUS on Excellence is a publication which rates Section 353 projects. It is edited by Dr. Sherry Royce and is available through either of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers. Information about the following projects pertaining to Instructional Stategies and Assessment appeared or will appear in one of the 1994-95 issues of FOCUS:

Learner-Centered Alternative Assessment of Student Progress: April, 1995.

Modifed Assessment for Adult Readers: April, 1995.

Teach Your Children: Learning Differences: December, 1994.

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## Developing Instructional Design . . . A Step-by-Step Guide to Success, by Dr. Geri E.H. McArdle

This book, which is available on free loan from the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (1-800-446-5607, ext. 216) or for purchase from Crisp Publications, Inc. (1-800-442-7477), is a very basic, sometimes simplistic, outline for "creating an instructional design, developing learning objectives, selecting an instructional approach to your topic, preparing lesson outlines, and managing the learning experience." It may be a useful guide for programs looking for staff development materials dealing with instructional strategies.

The author, Dr. Geri E.H. McArdle (Training Systems Institute, Johns Hopkins and Harvard) takes the reader step-by-step through the design process beginning with a definition of "Instructionai Design" ("using a systematic process to understand a human performance problem, figuring out what to do about it and then doing something about it"). She then goes through the steps of **Planning** (formulating objectives, analyzing, planning activities, etc.) through **Preparing** (lesson plans, etc.), **Conducting** (presenting, developing, dealing with problems, etc.) and ending with Step 4, **Evaluating**.

Dr. McArdle tells readers to "keep in mind the need for 'evaluation' as they plan their instructional design". The book outlines some "non-traditional" evaluation/testing methods (measure performance, evaluate group projects including problem solving, using open discussion and classroom or small group questioning).

**Developing Instructional Design** is part of Crisp's "50-minute book" series. There are some 14 titles in the series dealing with adult literacy. Catalogs may be crdered from the number above. ❖

# Assessment and Lesson Planning

*The following is excerpted with permission of the publisher from Chapter Eight of* TUTOR: A Collaborative Approach to Literacy Instruction.

Literacy lessons should begin instruction focused on each learner's expressed needs. **Instruction** should yield **Assessment** information which should be used to develop plans and/or refine existing plans.

From this point of view, **assessment is the close examination of a student's progress toward his or her goals.** The evidence of that progress is in the collected records and work samples of the student's reading and writing. **Assessment** is the process of collecting and reviewing the information, whereas **evaluation** involves the judgments made about the quality of the work. Progress, then, is noted as there is evidence of positive change in the quality of the samples collected.

## Informal Assessment

If you need to measure student progress for a program or funding agency, you will want to do some type of formal assessment. However, for weekly tutoring sessions, to show specific accomplishments and to help you plan your lessons, you might find more informal, easy-to-do assessments helpful.

## Portfolio Assessment

Keep samples of your students' materials in folders or portfolios. A student-centered, multi-measure portfolio assessment includes:

1. Writing samples.
2. Notes on student's strengths and needs.
3. List of student's long-term and short-term goals.
4. Record of materials read.
5. Record of student's attendance.
6. Personal word list.
7. Progress reports.
8. Student's self-evaluations.

## Using Assessment for Lesson Planning

In the remainder of this chapter, you will be given instruction on how to translate learner-centered goals and your assessment of each student into objectives for learning. You will learn how to plan lessons that, while flexible, progress in a logical manner toward accomplishment of each learner's short-term and long-term goals.

## Using Goals to Plan Lessons

A long-term goal is a destination — the distant city, the far mountains. Short-range goals are the sign posts along the way that help measure progress toward the ultimate goal.

If one of your student's goals is to use a telephone book competently, your list of objectives might look like this:

- Alphabetize names through three letters.
- Use guide words on the page.
- Alphabetize first names.
- Explain abbreviations used in a phone book.
- Find categories used in the yellow pages.
- Find other sources of information in the phone book.

The practical result of task analysis is the setting of an objective for a particular lesson. What you and each learner will want to accomplish by the end of the lesson determines what you'll teach.

## Identifying Appropriate Material

Student interest is of primary concern in planning lessons. It is important that your students be involved in selecting books and other materials that will be used for either instruction or for recreational reading.

## The Lesson Plan

You and your students have identified a short-term goal and specific objectives that lead to that goal. You probably have a good idea what skills you want to work on, based on your prior work with each student.

After you choose the topic, select the skills to practice, the materials required, and the instructional activities. Your lesson planning will then follow naturally and will be composed of the following parts:

1. Assessment.
2. Instruction.
3. Evaluation.

Feel free to allow student performance during the lesson to determine what skills you cover. For example, you have listened to students read. You have seen their writing. You have planned a lesson based on their interests. You want to talk, read, and write about that topic. You have planned to work on word patterns. However, as this lesson progresses, a student writes a five-sentence paragraph with no capital letters. In this situation, you might want to concentrate on capitalization in the lesson.

To design a successful lesson that assures progress, you must first know:

1. What interests your students.
2. What the objective of the lesson is.
3. What your students already know.

Informal reading inventories and structured questioning will give you information about each student's interests and what she or he wants to learn to read. But you must listen and observe carefully to gather information about how each individual learns best.

*Wrap Up.* At the end of each lesson, discuss your students' feelings about the session. Find out if there is anything they would have liked to do more of or anything they didn't like. Decide together what the objectives of the next lesson will be. Get their ideas for what they'd like to read next.

After your lesson, write notes about your students' progress on the day's lesson plan. Sometimes you can do this during the lesson; however, if your note-taking interferes with your students' concentration, do it after the lesson. Comments, evaluations, and future plans as agreed upon should also be written down immediately after the tutoring session.

The objectives of the next lesson will depend on your students' performance, interests, and needs. They will help you decide on techniques and materials to have on hand. Be sure students participate in the evaluation of the lesson. Ask what they enjoyed or found difficult. Be open to any suggestions the students may offer. Review progress often so that each student can see achievements.

The price of TUTOR (Literacy Volunteers of America, Publishers #91088) is $12.50 plus shipping and handling. To place an order call 1-800-LVA-8812. ❖

# Instructional Learning Strategies

by Cheryl Harmon, Adult Literacy Resource Specialist, AdvancE

*Instructional learning strategies can be found in all kinds of resources: newsletters highlighting teaching tips; Internet listservs and "chats"; textbooks; workshop handouts and in Section 353 federally funded demonstration projects. Listed below is a sampling of resources housed at the AdvancE State Literacy Resource Center. These items were selected for this issue because they have a general application to instruction of adult learners. For a more specific target audience, please call AdvancE at 1-800-992-2283 for a search. Any of these resources may be borrowed for four weeks. Section 353 projects (identified by AE) are also available at the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, 1-800-446-5607.*

Anita Pomerance; **Adult Literacy Handbook for Students and Tutors, 4th ed.**; Center for Literacy, 1993

CFL's handbook is a companion to CFL training workshops and a resource for adult literacy tutors and students in any program. Many subject areas are covered with specific instructional strategies to meet students' needs.

Barbara Gross Davis; **Tools for Teaching**; Jossey-Bass, 429 pp., 1993

This softcover reference textbook is directed to undergraduate instructors, but covers information that any educator of adults might want to know about class management including, use of media and technology, discussion vs. lecture strategies, and self-improvement.

Susan Imel, Sandra Kerka and Sandra Pritz; **More Than the Sum of the Parts: Using Small Group Learning in Adult Basic and Literacy Education**; Center on Education and Training for Employment, Ohio State University, 1994

This Section 353 project is a manual on the advantages of small group learning and a compilation of specific techniques for preparing for and facilitating small group learning.

William A. Draves; **How to Teach Adults** (courtesy of Region 1); Learning Resources Network, 1984

This small text is packed with a variety of suggestions for learning about adult students, preparing for classes and readying one's self to teach. Teaching techniques, particularly, are detailed for use of media, small group and lecture formats.

Heide Spruck Wrigley and Gloria J. A. Guth; **Bringing Literacy to Life**; Aguirre International, 1992

Previously covered in the "Buzz", as a source of instructional strategies, this text describes practices and approaches to several aspects of literacy including: native language in ESL literacy, technology in ESL literacy and assorted curriculum modules.

Amelia Belardo-Cox; **A Curriculum for Multicultural Populations: Teaching ESL from a Thematic Approach**; Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program Section 353, 1994, AE 3025-968

This project developed a field-tested, multicultural, multilevel curriculum using four language processes. Instruction in listening and speaking skills led to significant advancement by students.

Priscilla Carman; **Development of a Curriculum to Enhance Adult Learners' Higher Order Skills**; Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, Section 353, 1994, AE 3025-987

Research findings were adapted to develop a curriculum of information and strategies for adult educators to enhance the "higher order" learning skills of adults. The handbook defines higher order skills; provides resource names/agencies; and includes sample critical thinking exercises and student progress observations. (note: AdvancE has several reading series for use with students in the area of critical thinking)

Judith Rance-Roney & Jane Ditmars, Tana Reiff, editor; **How Adults Read**; New Educational Projects, Section 353, 1994, AE 3025-1000

The staff development curriculum is a revision of the previous textbook/sourcebook for small group or independent educator learning about adult learners. It is composed of 20 ready to use "keys" to instructional strategies, such as "opportunistic or teachable moment" instruction and incorporation of prior knowledge. Available in stock. ❖

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# From the 1994 Curriculum Guide for ABLE Practitioners

Adult Skills: Learning Styles Inventory (CAI), published by Educational Activites in 1990 and authored by Jerry Brown and Richard Cooper.

Setting: Class

| Purpose: | Components | Price |
|---|---|---|
| Academic | Text | --------- |
| Life Skills | Replicable Masters | Included in pkg. |
| Workplace | Teacher's Guide | Free |
| Family Literacy | Audio Tapes | --------- |
| | 2 disks IBM/Apple/MAC | $98.00 |

## READING: LEARNING STYLES

Recommended for all ABLE classes with access to a computer, this learning styles inventory helps teachers discover each student's preferred mode of learning and provides prescriptive information that enables instructors to select resources that match each learner's strengths.

Students rate 45 statements on a 4-point Lickert Scale. Tabulation of the responses results in a graph that identifies cognitive preferences. This CAI instrument can also calculate a learning style for the whole class so instructors can compare their own learning/teaching modality against the preferred class style. ❖

# INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES IN THE ADULT EDUCATION CLASSROOM

by Trish Clifton, National Adult Education Consultant, Steck-Vaughn Company

There are several areas to consider to make the adult education classroom a successful one. The good instructor considers the learning styles of individual learners, the activities to use to accommodate each learning style, and which instructional materials to choose.

## Learning Styles

There are three learning styles to consider:

1. Visual learners learn easily by viewing, watching and observing.

2. Auditory learners learn easily by listening.

3. Tactile-Kinesthetic learners learn easily by doing, experiencing. touching and manipulating.

To assess your students' learning styles, interview them first. Often students will know how they learn best. Adults bring a great deal of prior knowledge into the classroom and can contribute a lot to the development of their own curriculum. There are also several simple learning style assessments on the market which can be administered easily and give a fairly accurate assessment of a learner's primary and secondary learning styles.

Once you have determined the learning styles of the students in your class, the materials you choose and the activities you use should reflect these learning styles. By choosing activities that include all three learning styles as often as possible, you will be able to accommodate all learners in a group setting.

## Activities

Activities that work well with the visual learner are:

1. Model the skill to be taught.

2. Always introduce new vocabulary in written form.

3. Reading should be taught through sight words.

4. Use charts, graphs, maps and pictures.

5. Use visual aids such as flash cards.

6. When introducing new words, have the learners look at the word, close their eyes and visualize the words.

7. Encourage note taking and highlighting of key points.

8. Have visual learners outline passages.

9. Assign learners to write summaries after silent reading.

Activities that work well with the auditory learner are:

1. Introduce new material through hearing.

2. Use audio tapes so the auditory learners can hear the lesson or story as they read it.

3. Reading should be taught through phonics.

4. Directions should be given orally.

5. Have auditory learners work in pairs, reading to each other or discussing with each other.

6. Have students verbalize through panels, debates, discussions, brainstorming, oral question and answers and oral reports.

7. Have students listen to speeches, lectures, debates, interviews and oral readings.

Activities that work well with the tactile-kinesthetic learner are:

1. Have learners do and experience.

2. Introduce new skills through making, doing, interviewing, role playing, and acting.

3. Have learners touch or feel objects, temperatures, weights and distances.

4. Encourage the use of games and experiments.

5. Use manipulatives.

6. Have learners make collages, diaries, graphs, and models.

7. Use realia such as coupons, newspaper ads and application forms.

## Choosing Materials

If you choose materials that have been developed to accommodate all three learning styles, you will ensure success with all learners without having to bring in a lot of new activities on your own. For example, Steck-Vaughn's new **READING FOR TODAY** program was developed to accommodate all three types of learners. This program which teaches reading from the non-reader through level 6 uses both sight words and phonics instruction and contains exercises in each unit for each of the three learning styles. Also, Steck-Vaughn's new **REAL-LIFE ENGLISH** program for English As a Second Language classes considered all learning styles in its development. Choosing materials with care will reduce the amount of time you will need to spend to ensure your learners are learning under the educational conditions in which they learn best.

For all adult learners, when the instructor builds on their strengths without emphasizing their weaknesses, encourages, motivates, paces, recognizes all learning styles, interviews and sets realistic goals, and builds self-esteem, there will be success whatever the situation. ✤

# Newsletter Roundup

*To assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze, we are initiating a new feature — THE NEWSLETTER ROUNDUP, in which we will note the type of content and sometimes re-print edited articles of interest from varied adult education publications.*

● The July/August, 1994 issue of **Hands-on English** (a periodical for ESL instructors) has a list of "40 helpful hints and tips for making your ESL teaching easier and better!" #1 is "Join a professional organization"; #4 is "Get online"; #8 "Make friends with a librarian." For information about back issues and subscriptions, write PO Box 256, Crete, NE 68333.

● The November/December, 1994 issue of **GED Items** contains information about how to bring the *External Diploma Program* (EDP) to your area. In the February, 1991 issue of *The Buzz* we ran an article by Florence Harvey, Director of the then fledgling EDP program. According to Ms. Harvey EDP is "a competency-based, applied performance high school diploma program that credentials mature adults who have acquired their high school level skills through their life experience."

A Section 353 state priority for 1995-96 calls for implementation of the EDP in Pennsylvania. **GED Items** is free from the American Council on Education. Write Debra Louallen, GED Items, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036.

● "Should Adult Literacy Education Be a Right?" is the question posed in the recent issue of **all write news** from the Adult Literacy Resource Institute, 989 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. Writer David Rosen seeks practitioner and adult learner responses to whether adult literacy education, including free instructional and support services, should be a legal right. The same issue has interesting articles on the use of videoproduction in an ESL program and "Blindfolded Math" in which tactile and spatial relations abilities are used in a math exercise counting coins.

● Thanks to **Diane Inverso** for sending us monthly issues of **TESOL Matters**, the newsletter of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. In the latest December/January issue questions are raised about the status of ESL in the upcoming revision of adult and vocational education by the feds. Concern is voiced about providing adequate programs and resources in times of deficit reduction and whether Congress will realize that the most basic skill for employment and work opportunity is literacy. Another article in this issue relates to a new e-mail list for ESL and EFL (second language/foreign language) adult students to share information. For more information message "announce-sl@latrobe.edu.au".

● The **Journal of Reading** is the excellent newsletter of the International Reading Association (IRA) from which we have quoted many times in *The Buzz*. IRA has compiled over 45 articles about reading instruction for adult learners with suggestions specific to teaching adults at different levels, case studies, teacher research, examples of adult literacy tutoring, etc. Contact IRA at 1-800-336-7323, ext. 266.

● Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN) is a pro-active organization based in Washington, DC. Their newsletter is **The Ladder** and the September/October, 1994 issue mentions a number of materials of interest to adult basic and literacy education. One is an extensive review of the "GED On TV" series aired on public television channels for at-home instruction (from Kentucky Educational Television-KET-1-800-354-9067; another article tells of medical brochures written for persons reading below the high school level. A set of six brochures is $2 from the National Consumers League, 815 15th St., NW, Washington, DC 20005. For a subscription to **The Ladder** write PLAN at 1332 G Street SE, Washington, DC 20003.

● The December, 1994 issue of **Multicultural messenger** contains a number of articles refuting the "outrageous views of . . . 'The Bell Curve'" including an article titled "A Rising Backlash Against Multiculturalism." The article's author calls "The Bell Curve" a "racist book pretending to be science" and criticizes conservatives such as George Will (writing in **Newsweek**) as "insulting, unworthy . . . demonstrates the blatant outspokenness of anti-multiculturalists." **Multicultural messenger** is available from the Peoples Publishing Group, Inc. (800-822-1080).

● The December, 1994 issue of our sister newsletter **passage** — "Your workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter" contains an excellent feature article which should be of interest to every adult learner. Titled "Finding Success and Happiness On The Job" the author gives some self-help suggestions: develop as an individual; access special interests; feel challenged; help others in need; be creative. **passage** is available free by calling Bernadette Mangie or John Goberish at (800) 345-5443.

● Attendees at the 30th Midwinter Conference heard ABLE Bureau Director **Cheryl Keenan** refer to the importance of adult education programs forming linkages and partnerships with other organizations and agencies including those involved with the School-To-Work Opportunities Act. The November/December issue of **Northwest Report** published by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500, Portland, Oregon 97204, contains a Special Report on the topic. One article describes a European Study Tour which includes exposure to "dozens of policies and practices that speak directly to needs and issues that we in the United States are only beginning to decipher." ✦

# Literacy AmeriCorps Pittsburgh Is Here!

### by Y. Denise Caldwell, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council

President Bill Clinton's new national service project, AmeriCorps USA, is underway and we are part of it!

Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council and seven other literacy agencies from around the city are participating in the national program by "hiring" twenty-two members to work as one-to-one tutors, teaching assistants, student and tutor support group leaders, recruiters, interviewers, mentors and more.

The National Institute for Literacy selected Pittsburgh as one of four cities in the nation which would host this program. Our city was chosen because it has strong, well-managed adult education programs and because there is a need for the expansion of these programs. The other literacy agencies in Pittsburgh chose GPLC to manage the project.

The other cities in Literacy AmeriCorps are Houston, TX, Seattle, WA, and New Orleans, LA.

There are more than 20,000 AmeriCorps members around the country. This "Peace Corps for America" is an innovative new way to rejuvenate volunteerism in America. The primary mission is to get things done, make a difference, expand opportunities and strengthen communities. The members are "volunteering" for one year and in exchange for that service, members receive a living allowance, an education award, health care and child care.
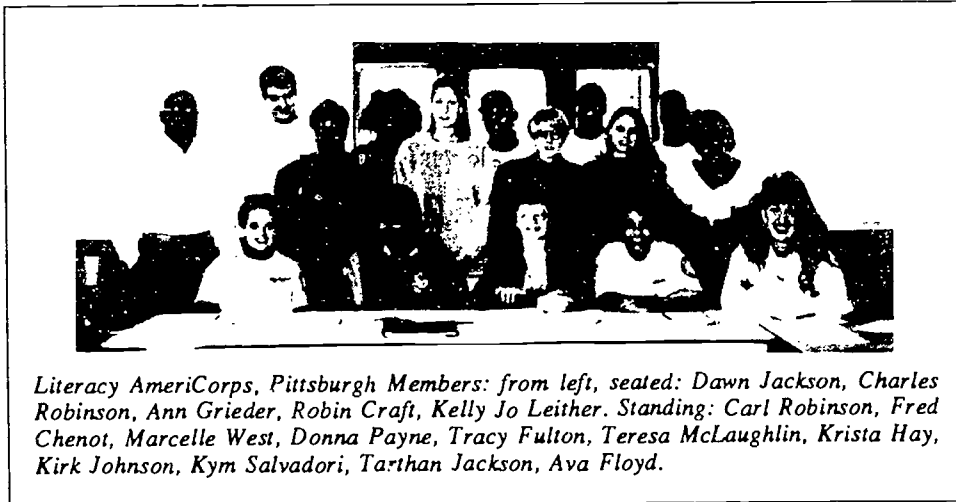
This year of service requires dedication, commitment to the agency's mission and an ability and a desire to do whatever it takes to make the program work.

The twenty-two Literacy AmeriCorps - Pittsburgh members are hard at work in seven literacy programs:

**Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council** has six members, **Ava Floyd, Ann Greider, Dawn Jackson, Diona Jones, Kelly Leither** and **Teresa McLaughlin**, assigned to five sites: East Liberty, Wilkinsburg, Rankin, Homewood and the Northside. They are teaching five classes, leading support groups, helping ten adult learners on a one-to-one basis and more.

**Goodwill Literacy Initiative** has four members, **Fred Chenot, Tracy Fulton, Kimberly Oliver** and **Kymberly Salvadori**, teaching three classes at their South Side office, in the Allegheny County Jail and in the Annex. They focus on Corrections and Family Literacy.

**Carlow College Office of Community Education** has **Robin Craft** and **Clara Scott** teaching four classes in Shaler, Oakland Campus and the Hill Campus in Bedford Dwellings.

**Bidwell Training Center** has four members, **Donna Grab, Juanita Harper, Deborah Kelly** and **Damion Jordan**, working one-to-one with adult learners enrolled in a variety of programs.

**Focus On Renewal** in McKees Rocks has **Krista Hay, Donna Payne** and **Carl Robinson** teaching adult learners and working in family literacy programs and ESL classes in McKees Rocks, Wilkinsburg, Rankin, and Duquesne.

**Tarthan Jackson** is at **Beginning With Books** and he rides in the Story Mobile where he reads to children, encourages parents to read to children and helps them identify quality books that they can borrow.

The **Allegheny Intermediate Unit** has one member, **Charles Robinson**, who is focusing on young adults in the Student Career Option and Placement Experience (SCOPE) program. He helps them identify careers and/or employment.

This project is a fine example of the growing cooperation among literacy programs in Pittsburgh.

In addition as requests pour in from around the country from people who wish to come to Pittsburgh to serve in this project, we realize that we are a part of a history making event.

This is an exciting and challenging opportunity for literacy, both locally and nationally. What we do this year, running from September 1, 1994, until August 31, 1995, will determine what happens with future AmeriCorps programs.

Literacy AmeriCorps - Pittsburgh is making a difference. ❖



*Literacy AmeriCorps, Pittsburgh Members: from left, seated: Dawn Jackson, Charles Robinson, Ann Grieder, Robin Craft, Kelly Jo Leither. Standing: Carl Robinson, Fred Chenot, Marcelle West, Donna Payne, Tracy Fulton, Teresa McLaughlin, Krista Hay, Kirk Johnson, Kym Salvadori, Tarthan Jackson, Ava Floyd.*

# People and Programs in PA ABLE

✻ **Pam Weinberg** of Harrisburg has authored a number of books including "You and Your Child's Teacher" which we reviewed in **The Buzz** a few years ago. One of her 1993 publications, "Your Home is a Learning Place," is getting lots of attention and has won an award from the American Public Library Association.

Pam and Esther Zabitz of the Susquehanna Valley Adult Literacy Cooperative just returned from presenting a series of five workshops on the book at a Chapter I, Portland Public Schools, Oregon Association of Compensatory Education in Portland.

✻ **Esther Zabitz** always has enthusiasm and creative ideas in literacy. One of her recent efforts was a parenting workshop for maximum security prisoners. Topics: How to write to your 5 year-old; what to say in a letter to your 11 year-old, etc. One incarcerated participant had ten children. Esther tells us 78% of prisoners had at least one parent who did time in jail.

✻ **Paul Yesko**, Supervisor of External Programs for Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh, writes to remind us of a 1990-91 Section 353 project which developed software designed to streamline reporting of student data. The Pittsburgh Literacy Initiative (PLI), which has combined with Goodwill Industries, developed a database in a menu-driven system and Goodwill Literacy Initiative still uses the basic form.

Dr. William Murphy, Research and Evaluation Chief for the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE), tells us that despite the technical expertise of the PLI program it was never used statewide because agencies preferred to use databases that they had developed themselves and were unable to adapt to the state prescribed format. Moreover, no arrangements were made for continued support and staff development. Now the software is obsolete.

✻ Congratulations to **Rose Brandt** formerly of **The Center for Literacy** in Philadelphia for being named Executive Director of the Philadelphia Mayor's Commission on Literacy.

✻ **Anita Emery**, former GED Manager in **Larry Goodwin's** State GED Administrator's Office, has retired.

✻ **Dale Mace**, former Central Area Advisor for the ABLE Bureau, has resigned. **Jim Shindledecker** is currently serving as advisor for the region.

✻ It was good to see some former "experienced" adult educators at the 30th Midwinter Conference. **Gordon Jones, Martha Frank, Jack Sittman, Clair Troy, Al Myers** and **Bob Staver** were among those enjoying the Conference.

✻ We read in the Tri-Valley Region 7 Staff Development Newsletter that **Joan Breisch** of the Literacy Council of Reading/Berks and **Mary Schmidt** with the Reading Area Community College have joined their program efforts with those of the area JTPA and Even Start programs to form the Berks County Literacy Coalition — a single brochure listing all services; a single phone listing, etc. There are lots of advantages to Coordinating Services!

✻ We are continually impressed by the "Dr. Computer Hints 'n Tips" column by **Dr. Barbara Woodruff** in the South Central Region 5 Staff Development Newsletter. Each month there are lots of good, practical ideas for adult educators, experienced and novices, in the field of computer technology. The January, 1995 column provides tips on "Trends in Software and Hardware Development." Good work, Barb!

✻ The Region 1 Staff Development Center newsletter recently featured the program at the **Literacy Council of Venango County. Director Maloy Beach's** program is described as "Exemplary". Maloy identifies the outreach services of the Council as being largely responsible for a marked increase in enrollment since 1990-91. The Council offers a jail literacy program, classes in Family Literacy, Life Skills Education and Employability Skills among its services. ❖

## Opportunity for ABLE Providers to Work with Local Cancer Control Coalitions

**by Barbara Van Horn, Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy**

For many adult learners enrolled in ABLE programs, the need and desire to improve basic literacy skills is but one of many challenges they face. Efforts to improve the quality of their lives also may include goals such as preparing for employment, enhancing parenting skills, or expanding knowledge about health care. ABLE providers have a long history of working cooperatively with job training and family literacy services in their communities to help adult learners achieve their goals. Now ABLE providers have a new opportunity to work cooperatively with community agencies focusing on a critical health issue.

**NALIC Cancer Control Coalitions.** Penn State University received a grant to develop and direct the Northern Appalachia Leadership Initiative on Cancer (NALIC). NALIC is a community-based cancer control project involving the Cooperative Extension Service and American Cancer Society. NALIC has formed community-based coalitions involving local residents as leaders.

**What Can You Do?** Contacting and becoming involved in a NALIC coalition is an opportunity for ABLE staff and adult learners to build new cooperative relationships with community-based organizations and agencies.

NALIC coalitions are being developed in twelve counties in Pennsylvania: Allegheny, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Forest, Indiana, Lawrence, Montour, Snyder, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Venango.

**For Additional Information.** Contact Barbara Van Horn at the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy for additional information or to order your free copy of the Kentucky Cancer Center materials. Call (814) 863-3777 or send an e-mail message to BLV1@PSU.EDU. ❖

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**Marc.., 1995:**

**14-18:** 10th Annual Conference on Technology and Persons With Disabilities; Los Angeles; Contact: Harry J. Murphy, Center on Disabilities, California State University-Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge, CA 91330.

**17:** DEADLINE FOR STATE ADULT LITERACY ACT 143 PROGRAM APPLICATIONS.

**17:** Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC) Meeting; 10-3. Damon's Meeting Room, State College. Contact Linda Herr (717) 584-3824.

**23:** GRANT WRITING: SAMPLE CRITIQUES, MATCHING FUNDS AND TIPS; Region 4 Staff Development Workshop; PIC Westmoreland/Fayette, 8:30 a.m. - 12. Contact Rachel Zilcosky, (800) 438-2011.

**28-April 1:** TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) Twenty-Ninth Annual Convention. Long Beach, California. Contact TESOL, 1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 836-0774.

**31:** Deadline for Federal Adult Education grant program proposals.

**31:** INTER-REGIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE: Regions 1 and 4. Troggio's, New Castle, 9-2:30. Carousel format with 7 different presenters; Contact: Rachel Zilcosky (800) 438-2011 or Bootsie Barbour (814) 866-3775.

**31:** TECHNOLOGY FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION, Region 2 (STAR) Staff Development Workshop; Clinton County Development Center for Adults Technology Center, Lock Haven; 9-3 A follow-up on the Technology Summer Institute; Contact: Gail Leightley (814) 359-3069.

**April, 1995**

**1:** REGION 3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT CENTER WORKSHOP, Keystone Junior College, Contact: Region 3 SD Center, (800) 458-2058.

**1:** LEARNING DIFFERENCES, PROBLEMS AND disABILITIES; Harrisburg Marriott, 8-5:30. Intensive Training Seminars, In-depth training, Instructional Materials. Contact: Center for Alternative Learning (800) 869-8336.

**1:** Due date for proposal submissions for Adult Literacy and Technology Conference, Philadelphia, August 4-5, 1995. Contact: Tom Andrzejewski or Chris Hopey, National Center on Adult Literacy, (215) 898-2100.

**5:** ADULT NUMERACY PRACTITIONERS NETWORK (ANPN); Pre-conference session for National Council of Teachers of Mathematics 73rd Annual Meeting; Cambridge, Massachusetts. Contact: Mary Jane Schmitt, Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148.

**6:** INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERIES: OPERATING SYSTEMS DECISIONS: Teleconference; 1-3 p.m. Contact PBS Adult Learning Systems (800) 257-2578.

**13:** WHAT WORKS? LITERACY TRAINING FOR THE WORKPLACE; This is a Free Videoconference produced by the National Center on Adult Literacy. 1-3 p.m. Contact PBS Learning Systems, (800) 257-2578 or your Regional Staff Development Center.

**23-25:** NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY LITERACY (NCFL) 4th ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE; Louisville, KY; Theme: "Creating Communities of Learners — Touching Tomorrow Today." Contact: NCFL, Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 West Main Street, Louisville, KY 40202.

**April 30 - May 3:** NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR CONTINUING/COMMUNITY EDUCATION 44th Annual Conference, Rochester. Contact: Sue Mendel Hausman, 1901 Sweet Home Road, Amherst, NY 11428.

**April 30 - May 5:** International Reading Association (IRA) 40th Annual Conference; Anaheim, CA; Contact IRA, 800 Barksdale Rd., Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714.

## Update on Computerized Data Collection

### William Murphy, ABLE Bureau, Research and Evaluation Chief

The January issue of the **BUZZ** reported on our two presentations on the conversion to student databases for reporting to ABLE. I would like to clarify some of the issues based on our conclusions from those conferences. First of all the penalty for not submitting student data in the appropriate computer format will be three sleepless weekends filling in bubble forms. Second, although we want programs to use our predesigned databases for data entry and reporting to us, these files can be read by the commercial database of your choice. That will allow you to design your own custom reports and forms outside of the officially designated offering. Third, programs who do not have their own computer capability can arrange to enter the data at another site which is computerized. Finally, I want to emphasize that data submission will be a one time event at the time of the July closeout. We will not want computerized student records earlier in the year.

In March, our office will survey all providers on their data submission plans for the coming fiscal year. At that time you should indicate if you intend to submit in a PC database format or continue filling out the scannable forms. In the latter instance you should indicate how many forms you will require for the coming program year. ❖

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**Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter**

# "What's the Buzz?"

# What's The **BUZZ?**™

# Multicultural Adult Education

## ... Still a Concern

### But are we *INTERESTED* or *READY*?

In the Abstract to her paper "Multicultural Education and Beyond: Expanding Principles of Adult Education to Incorporate Alternative Pedagogies," which was presented at the 1994 Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Education Research Conference, Dr. Jovita Ross-Gordon, Associate Professor of Adult Education at Penn State, makes the statement: "It would seem that adult education has the potential to play a critical role in educating adults for participation in a multicultural democratic society and reconstructing existing social, political and power relations toward the espoused ideals of such a society. Yet, an examination of existing literature raises the question of both our interest in and readiness to play such a role."

We would like to think that most ABLE programs in Pennsylvania have adjusted their curricula to assume a stance suggested by Dr. Ross-Gordon: " . . . to move beyond the approaches offered by the dominant discourse on multicultural education, to consider a range of pedagogical theories similarly concerned with issues of race, class and gender."

*Principles for Teaching and Learning*

Dr. Ross-Gordon concludes her paper with a composite of the principles for teaching and learning suggested by critical pedagogies she has identified:

1. active involvement of learners.

2. integration of learner experience.

3. power shared with learners.

4. teaching practices consistent with espoused support for transformative learning.

5. collaboration among students fostered.

6. students assisted to understand the processes of knowledge production and to act as knowledge creators.

7. developing a critical intellect which challenges all forms of oppression.

8. a holistic view of learning, including its affective components.

9. placing the culture of the student in a central, rather than a marginal position.

10. an emphasis on teacher re-education to increase teachers' awareness of their own biases and help them to lead more democratic learning environments.

Dr. Ross-Gordon provides a bibliography of 31 references in Multicultural Education - worthy of a look from adult basic and literacy educators continuing their quest to provide quality adult education to *all* adult learners.

Copies of the *Proceedings* are available on free loan from the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center – 800-446-5607, ext. 216. Ask for MGT-0125.

# Multicultural Fairness in the GED

In an article written by Laura A. Mullane of the American Council on Education and Stephen G. Sireci of the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS), the comment is made that "It is necessary to ensure that the GED Tests are fair and appropriate for all GED candidates, regardless of their backgrounds."

The article, which appeared in the September/October, 1994 issue of *GED Items* describes how preliminary test questions are scrutinized empirically via statistical analysis and subjectively by expert reviewers.

Trained consultants determine the appropriateness of GED test forms with respect to all identifiable sub-groups of GED examinees including such groups as African Americans, Asian Americans, American Indians, Hispanics/Latinos, persons with disabilities, and different religious or cultural groups.

Offensive, controversial or unfair material is reviewed using such issues as the portrayal of groups of people in stereotypical roles (females as "homemakers", African Americans as sports figures, etc.), culturally biased, sexist or offensive language and other problem areas are identified and weighed against the historical or literary significance of the material.

According to the authors, "Sensitivity review is an arduous process, but the end result, GED Tests that are fair and appropriate for all candidates, is well worth the effort."

*GED Items* is a free publication. Contact GEDTS, One DuPont Circle NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036. ❖

# Rural Multiculturalism. . . Think About It

We were interested to read in Vol. 5, No. 2 of the *Rural Adult Education FORUM* of a project called EMPIRE (Exemplary Multicultural Practices in Rural Schools). The article got us thinking about the multicultural characteristics of many adult learners in our rural adult basic and literacy education programs.

Urban areas are notable for their mix of adults with varying race, socio-economic and ethnic and other differences. However, many rural adult education programs are experiencing working with adults with these and other varying cultural differences. As persons from other countries and persons from cities or suburban areas move into rural areas the range of multicultural characteristics increases.

With the large rural population in Pennsylvania and with our rural populations being identified as one of the "target" groups in adult basic and literacy education (ABLE), it would be appropriate for adult education programs in rural areas to examine the instructional and support services available to meet the unique needs of their varying populations.

A subscription to *FORUM* is $15 from the Rural Clearinghouse for Lifelong Education and Development, College of Education, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506. ❖

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*all write news* is the newsletter of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute (989 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215) and in Vol. X, No. 3 is a review of three new library titles in multicultural literature.

Reviewer Lenore Balliro notes that all three are anthologies and meet her "litmus test" for classroom reading materials of "Would I take this with me on vacation to read?"

Each volume contains carefully selected pieces of writing and the works are placed in historical and social context.

The books are teacher friendly in that the preface to each unit includes an explanation of the characteristics of that particular genre, and each piece of writing includes a brief introduction to the author and text. Each selection is annotated.

Publisher is the Globe Book Co./Simon and Schuster. Titles are: "Chinese American Literature"; "Plains Native American Literature"; and "Mexican American Literature".

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# Myths and Misconceptions in Adult Literacy

Daniel Wagner, Director of the National Center on Adult Literacy (University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104), in a Policy Brief (931, ERIC # ED 360520) makes the point that the public has formed some *myths* and *misconceptions* about literacy and that "no substantive proof supports the 'grandiose' assertion that literacy changes the way humans think and their intelligence."

In this brief and another ("Literacy and Development: Rationales, Assessment, and Innovation" - - ERIC # EJ 466462), Dr. Wagner identifies some *Common Myths* that help to sustain the political and social support for literacy work:

* The U.S. Government has made major investments in Literacy.

* Literacy changes the way humans think, their logical abilities, and their intelligence.

* Literacy leads to human "modernization" and to the changing of attitudes about "development".

* Literacy fosters democratic ideals and increases national productivity.

* U.S. literacy is far worse than elsewhere.

* Increased public awareness has led to significant improvements.

* Better applications of technology will solve the problem.

Most of Dr. Wagner's conclusions are based upon his hypothesis that Literacy and Economic Development are inextricably linked in the literature, often with little examination, and economic, social and political objectives are combined with internal and external pressures to produce this relationship.

According to Dr. Wagner, better methods of assessment and program evaluation should be put into place if we are to achieve both understanding of literacy and literacy programming. He goes on to say that "prior experience in assessment has been characterized by use of literacy surveys and no one who has studied national surveys of adult literacy seriously believes that illiteracy in the United States will be eradicated by the year 2000."

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# Revising the Tutor-training Workshop Step-By-Step

In a recent issue of *Trainer Touchstone*, the newsletter for Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) tutor-trainers, Abigail M. Sebastian of a literacy council in Louisiana outlines some important points relevant to adult basic and literacy education programs which are looking to revise or redesign their tutor-training workshops.

One of the strengths of tutor training through an LLA affiliated program was the organized, sequential activities presented by LLA and supported with charts, graphs and other materials to produce an effective 12-hour tutor training program. For years many Pennsylvania literacy councils used LLA produced materials and, in most cases, followed the outlines for tutor training which accompanied the materials.

Recently, however, LLA has revised its recommendations and procedures for tutor training. Local councils are given more flexibility in deciding their unique community needs and how to best train community members who volunteer to serve as tutors.

Ms. Sebastian makes note of her organization's use of LLA's "Guidelines for Effective Tutor Workshops" and effectively outlines how her local program followed the updated *Guidelines. Establishing the overall training goals* and *developing timelines for training activities* are the initial steps recommended by Ms. Sebastian. These are followed by compiling a variety of training materials and activities addressing each session's goals. This stage of planning is referred to as "the heart of the revision process" and is followed by field testing the earlier planning in a "real workshop" and evaluating every segment of the workshop.

The writer emphasizes the importance of a strong commitment of the training team to the revised training format. She also stresses that, to be effective, the format is being continually revised to meet the changing needs of the program and the community.

We were interested to read how LLA and its tutor-training programs are developing expanded goals, objectives and training activities to keep their training programs dynamic. The importance of designing adult basic and literacy education programs around community characteristics and needs is borne out by the recently adopted tutor training revisions of LLA. Have a look at your program and how you meet the professional development and training needs of your teachers, tutors, counselors and administrators. Give some thought to upgrading your training activities - - perhaps using the suggestions in this article as an outline. ❖

# Pittsburgh Family Literacy Program Wins Community Award

Congratulations to Goodwill Literacy Initiative's (GLI) Family Literacy "Read Me a Story" Program which was recently awarded a Commitment to Excellence Special Recognition Award from the Allegheny County Department of Federal Programs Community Services Advisory Council.

The "Read Me a Story" program is centered around a workshop for parents and guardians of children in county HeadStart programs and is modeled on *Family Reading* by Ellen Goldsmith and Ruth D. Handel.

GLI's Family Literacy Supervisor Penny Lang says the program encourages parents to use books and have books in the home. Funding for the program permits purchase of copies of four books which are used in workshops for parents to own as a start or in addition to family home libraries. ❖

*From left, Goodwill Industry of Pittsburgh's Department of Education and Training Programs Director Judith Aaronson, Family Literacy Supervisor Penny Lang, and Workplace Literacy Supervisor Shelli Glanz. (photo courtesy of GLI)*

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# When Bonds Are Broken . . .

## A Family Literacy Program

### by Dr. Manuel Gonzalez

Northampton Community College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) Bureau designed an intergenerational family literacy program for incarcerated fathers at the Northampton County Prison in Easton, Pennsylvania. Funding was provided by the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy for its first year. The second year of the program was funded by Pennsylvania's ABLE Bureau, the third year of the program is currently being funded through ABLE.

The project proposed to enhance literacy and parenting skills of incarcerated fathers to provide educational and social service intervention for their families in the community in order to positively affect their families' literacy climate, thus breaking intergenerational patterns of literacy related problems. The first year 49 fathers, 101 children, and 52 families were served.

As reported by Lanier and Fisher in the December, 1994 issue of the *Journal of Correctional Education* - "parental training increases the knowledge of parenting issues and awareness of parental responsibilities, thus improving the quality of life for children who have fathers in prison."

Northampton Community College and the Easton Area School District provided individualized instruction for incarcerated fathers in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL). The family literacy program provided direct parenting skills instruction that addressed areas of interpersonal communication, self-esteem, addictive behaviors, values, attitudes and life skills. The program also provided opportunities for fathers and children to interact biweekly and facilitated linkages between the family, various community services, prison officials, and parole officials. A family liaison staff member goes into the community to work with the children and their caretakers.

Since the inception of the program, many positive changes have been noticed in the behavior of the students. The fathers are often hesitant to come to the program. They do not see the immediate need for getting involved in the instruction. Willie, a student in the program, was not too sure if he should get enrolled in the program. He was in last year's program. This year he came back to the class to talk to the current students. He told them how apprehensive he was about attending class. He then proceeded to tell the class that when he entered the program his son was failing in school. He stated, because of his intervention, his son is now receiving B's in his classes.

One of the primary needs of incarcerated individuals is appropriate socialization skills which traditionally have been present with involved and nurturing fathers with a lack of appropriate modeling behavior in the backgrounds of the majority of incarcerated men. With direct reinforcement and encouragement their literacy skills improved and their attitudes became more positive. Through the medium of the children's literature, indirect reflection afforded awareness of their own feelings and past models which they were projecting onto the children. Direct instruction in reflective listening offering encouragement and support, and building trust provided a new model and in most cases new behaviors and attitudes were demonstrated.

The positive feedback from the children, the comments of the caretakers and the instructors, as well as the reaction of institutional treatment staff and officers positively reinforced these new changes and helped promote prosocial behavior of the children and the adults. ❖

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# English as a Second Language (ESL) at SCI-Smithfield

## by Lawrence Beatty, Academic Counselor

It is a published fact that it takes approximately five years of ESL studies before a student can begin to prepare for the GED in English. This is based on their fluency of the English Language. Most times we do not have five years to work with incarcerated adults. The students all too often feel their own culture is taking a back seat to English. Thus begins the problem of keeping students interested and motivated. The Education Department at SCI-Smithfield is continuously advancing in Adult Literacy.

Our ESL class is provided four days a week from 8:30 AM to 9:45 AM. A one-half hour session is to provide English Grammar. The text is bilingual to support teaching those who have very limited English skills. The second half-hour session is strictly Spanish Grammar. In order to better understand English language, students must be fully literate in their own language. They are being prepared to take the GED test in Spanish. The final fifteen minutes are dedicated to Math. Everyone starts with the basic understanding of a number, then proceeds to use the number in mathematical computation.

Spanish materials have been provided by several resources. In order to educate, you must first assess for skill level and ability. TABE Espanol gives educators the information they need to plan effective teaching and training programs for Spanish speaking adults. TABE Espanol is not a translation of the English version of TABE. It was developed by Spanish-speaking experts using Spanish common to all dialects. Level "E" tests grade range 1.6 to 3.9, and Level "M" tests grade range 3.6 to 6.9. The Spanish assessment of Basic Education (SABE) test in Level "4" which evaluates grade range 6.6 to 8.9 and above.

The Test of Adult & Basic Education (TABE), Espanol, and the (2) level exams provide a beginning to Spanish Literacy. A recent purchase of 20 books in GED Espanol, will provide a GED preparatory study guide for all subject matters of the test in Spanish. Another Literacy book that was recently provided was Manual De Gramatica Espanola, which provides an in-depth study guide to Spanish Grammar. Another recent addition to Spanish Literacy is 20 copies of World History written in Spanish. The addition of tape recorders and head phones provides a self-paced lesson plan for those who are unable to grasp the subject material provided to the class, but allows them to hear and understand the basics of English Language.

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# Adult Education Legislative News From PAACE

The Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) is presently engaged in an all-out effort to have members become involved in federal and state legislative funding action which directly impacts upon adult basic and literacy education in Pennsylvania.

THE STATE: Governor Tom Ridge who, when he was a gubernatorial candidate said he pledged to "strive to increase and improve the services to those who need literacy training," submitted his budget which calls for an increase in Act 143 literacy funding from $7.75 million to $8.25 million. This includes funding of the Literacy Corps which was previously funded through other sources.

THE FEDS: The U.S. House Appropriations Committee approved cuts of approximately $41 million from Adult Education monies with promises of larger cuts to come.

PAACE Legislative chairs Jean Henry and JoAnn Weinberger have suggested PAACE members contact Senator Arlen Specter's office - (202) 224-4254, FAX (202) 224-1893 and solicit his support for restoring funding to the adult education programs in HR 1158 as well as Senator Specter's endorsement of a letter from Senator Paul Simon of Illinois who is requesting adult education funding be maintained at present levels.

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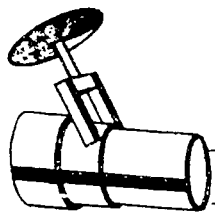
> "When the barriers posed by severe educational deficiencies are compounded by the trauma of being without a place to call home, a sense of hopelessness is almost inevitable.
>
> "Adult educators have always been in the business of creating hope where there was despair. If you're in the business of providing adult basic education and literacy services then you're already in the business of alleviating many of the problems faced by homeless people."
>
> — Clifton Edwards, former ABLE Division Homeless Education Coordinator

Homelessness in the United States continues to be a persistent and nagging social problem. Estimates on the number of homeless people range between 500,000 and 2 million.

According to Susan Imel in ERIC Digest #136, the homeless "tend to be poorly educated and impoverished: more than half did not complete high school and their monthly median income is about $100. Due to life circumstances, obtaining more education may be a low priority for homeless adults; most are simply trying to survive."

A number of reasons deter successful implementation of adult basic and literacy education programs for the homeless:

—many participants leave shelters or the area before completing the program.

—some shelters have inadequate facilities and/or shelter staffs do not cooperate.

—personal characteristics of homeless cause education to be a low priority, including the adult responsibilities of part-time work and job hunting.

—program limitations such as lack of child care, staff turnover, and inadequate curriculum negatively impact upon homeless participation.

Two basic program models are used to provide adult education services to homeless adults. Offsite programs use sites frequented by homeless persons — soup kitchens, libraries, churches, etc. Onsite programs provide instruction in quarters where homeless adults live and sleep. In Pennsylvania federally funded programs are offered in shelters and targeted toward homeless adults with children — the fastest growing homeless population in the state.

In this SPOTLIGHT section we have collected information, experiences and suggestions pertaining to adult education programs for the homeless from a number of adult educators in Pennsylvania presently involved with these programs. ❖

## Program Development

ERIC Digest #136 "Education for Homeless Adults" suggests the following recommendations for program development:

* Focus on the adult as a learner rather than as a member of a particular subgroup.

* Use learner-centered approaches in order to provide adults an opportunity to have control over at least one aspect of their lives.

* Use learner life experiences as the basis for the curriculum or learner activities.

* Develop curricula that address the diversity of experience, age, gender, race, ethnicity, and parenting status in the learner group.

* Develop a network of instructors to facilitate the sharing of curricula and instructional materials and common experiences.

* Provide ongoing staff development focusing on such areas as literacy instruction, community resources, knowledge of homelessness issues, crisis management, and stress management.

* Cultivate a teamwork mentality that encourages program staff to work with shelter staff, case workers, and other social service personnel by providing the inter-agency linkages to support these efforts.

* Provide access to a wide range of services needed by homeless persons by giving high priority to collaboration among agencies and programs serving adults. ❖

# Adult Education for the Homeless:

## A Three Year Project
### by Ella Morin, Chief
#### Special Programs and Projects Section, ABLE Bureau

In 1993, Pennsylvania was awarded a grant from the United States Department of Education to provide educational services to homeless adults. Pennsylvania proposed to provide services through 15 local adult education agencies across the Commonwealth that had shown an exceptional record in developing and providing learner-centered instruction and were themselves multi-service agencies or had established linkages with local agencies for additional services that this special population might need.

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act defines the "homeless" as an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is either a supervised public or private shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or a public or private place not designed for, or regularly used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

However, there is little agreement on how to define homelessness; and therefore, it is difficult to actually determine the number of persons who are "homeless". Generally, homelessness is traced to a gap between affordable housing and income of individuals, especially those at the poverty level. Other factors contributing to homelessness are drug and/or alcohol abuse, mental disorders, physical illness, and spousal abuse.

Although all homeless adults are eligible for services, Pennsylvania's proposal targets homeless adults with children, the fastest growing homeless population in Pennsylvania. Each of the agencies providing services to the homeless offers programs of instructions in four areas: life management skills, family literacy, employability skills and basic skills.

Because of the complexity and the range of needs of the homeless individual, the 15 agencies involved in the project have developed a networking system in their communities to meet these multiple needs. This cooperation begins at the shelter itself between shelter staff and education staff.

Homeless individuals are focused on their immediate needs - housing, employment - so the instructional program is designed to meet the students' needs and goals and is delivered in a variety of ways. Life skills are often offered as a group session and include shopping and budgeting. Teachers, in cooperation with a local agency provide sessions on how to use and prepare foods available from local food banks. Basic skills are offered on a one-to-one basis in an unstructured class setting. IEP's are encouraged and the students participate in setting their personal and educational goals. If there are children in the shelter, family literacy activities are provided. Employability skills curriculum includes development of resumes, job/career interest and aptitude inventories, and the use of want ads from the local newspaper.

Although the adult education for the homeless program faces a bleak future as a separately funded program, the lessons learned during the duration of the project are not lost. The 15 agencies in Pennsylvania's project have developed cooperative relationships with shelters and with other human service agencies in the community, and the educational component is recognized as a part of the continuum of service for the homeless individual. The teachers have learned to deliver a program that is flexible, meets immediate needs and provides the opportunity for a person to recognize his or her long term needs. Perhaps the emphasis on meeting individuals where they are, providing a program that meets their immediate needs while recognizing their long term needs and delivering a program that is based on coordination and cooperation is the best lesson for all of us in what we do in adult basic education. ❖

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# Strategies for Success:

## Family Literacy and Counseling at a Homeless Shelter

### by Lauren Giguere and Krista Carvajal
### Lehigh Carbon Community College

Providing classes at a shelter may be different from other adult education programs. Your expectations may be the following: that class should always start on time, students should treat each other and staff with respect, staff should have provided proper classroom space, and your services should be a priority in the residents lives. These may be realistic goals but they need to develop over time. The shelter environment is often chaotic and the approach that is used may be different from other programs.

The shelter residents respond best when using the following approaches: first, staff may want to dress casually. Next, be enthusiastic and friendly and be as gentle as possible both in manner and tone of voice.

We enjoy being able to interact with the children and casual dress makes it possible to intervene in a helpful way if a mom is distracted and does not notice a preventable problem. This takes some pressure off the residents although we are careful to model appropriate behavior rather than confront parenting styles verbally. It is a lot more effective to show parents what to do than to tell them what to do. Always emphasize to the parents that they are the authority over their children. Staff should not discipline but should redirect. Do not pick up the children without the parents' permission. Usually the mothers start to feel comfortable with staff after about three sessions.

In the beginning, try to be casual about time. If someone comes in late, thank them for coming and have them sign in. Usually, this may happen during the first several classes; and, if you have a welcoming attitude, they will begin to show up more promptly. If students are obviously breaking rules, just mark down the time they arrived and report this to the shelter staff rather than draw attention to negative behavior during the group time.

Staff should help the students to feel as relaxed and comfortable as possible. Students in shelters seem to need time to just recover from the shock of being homeless before they get involved in programs for their educational benefit. This relaxed attitude towards participation really tends to work in our favor because the women have to observe how the class works. Then they usually approach staff after the group for some one-on-one conversation. When students take the initiative to ask for what they need, we do everything possible to meet with them that day. This necessitates structuring some "open" time both before and after the groups meet. If students have to be seen on a different day and do not show, we make sure to look for them. Frequently, people need to test your commitment and reliability.

It is important to stress survival skills: how to develop a support network, and how to maintain healthy communications while learning to accept each other. Listening to problems is of course fine and necessary, but redirecting their attention to the present moment and what they actually can control is the most helpful approach.

Stress management is a useful topic because it is non-threatening. People need to learn to take care of themselves and find something uplifting to do every day. Listening to each other and building a supportive community during the duration of their stay is a positive way to get people to help each other and get outside themselves.

Many people come in to the shelter very depressed and self-involved. As they learn to communicate and resolve their problems together, they feel less anxious. They are encouraged to take charge of their own lives rather than expect a professional to walk them step by step through every decision. They start doing for themselves and each other instead of feeling so helpless. Once this starts to happen it is easy to give encouragement and get people interested in goal setting for the next phase of their lives. ❖

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## Homeless Resources at Home at WPALRC

### by Chris Kemp, Adult Literacy Resource Specialist

Adult education programs for the homeless provide opportunities for homeless adults to: develop the literacy and life skills needed to break the cycle of homelessness, gain confidence and positive attitudes essential to problem solving and making constructive life choices, and develop a support system where the homeless individual can find safety, resources and fellowship needed to counteract isolation. While education is an obvious answer to problems, obtaining more education may be a low priority for homeless adults who are simply trying to survive. Programs need to address the problems created by transiency itself as well as physical and emotional obstacles that impede learning. Most programs include strong job skills and employability components. Onsite programs provide instruction where homeless adults live and sleep while offsite programs tend to use soup kitchens, libraries, churches or other sites frequented by homeless adults.

Three 353 Special Demonstration Projects, *Atkinson Center Adult Literacy Program Chester County OIC* (AE 3025-974), *Family Literacy in Bridge Housing* (AE 3025-992), and *Steps to Success* (AE 3025-1038), provided onsite services to very different populations. Each project faced unique challenges and developed solutions that would be of interest to any program developing an education-for-the-homeless component. *Education for Homeless Adults: Strategies for Implementation* (LIS-0093), produced by the University of the State of New York, is an excellent resource for both administrators and teachers. The handbook provides sample lesson plans and handouts as well as background information about homelessness and strategies for program development and evaluation.

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# Adult Education for the Homeless

by Margaret Rood Risch, ALTA Coordinator, Institute for Developmental Educational Activities, Luzerne County Community College

During program year 1993-94, the Institute at Luzerne County Community College added an adult education for the homeless component to its Adult Literacy Training and Assistance Program (ALTA) and began delivering adult education services at several local shelters. This new component presented many challenges to our ALTA staff as the homeless men and women to whom we deliver adult education services have lives that seem to have been built upon numerous past failures and few successes.

Although this unfortunate and at times overwhelming number of failures produces difficulties in delivering services, the ALTA instructional staff and homeless shelter staff are determined, persistent, and unrelenting in their push to motivate, to retain, to encourage, and to see their clients succeed.

One of the sites where we deliver adult education services is the Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Center, which is a long term shelter for clients who are homeless, drug and alcohol abusers, and ex-offenders. A new client at this site whose work habits and concentration abilities were very poor when he enrolled in the program has shown significant improvement. Initially, when working on addition of whole numbers, he made comments such as, "I can't do this! After everything . . . I can't remember . . . It's gone!" However, after three weeks, he exclaimed in class, "I know it now!" This client has gained a great deal of confidence and is now working on division of whole numbers.

Another Salvation Army Client is ready for the GED examination. His greatest accomplishment was writing a two hundred word essay. This client had never written an essay before this class. His essay, about the advantages and disadvantages of living alone, was well organized and concrete. He enjoyed writing it and the class enjoyed listening to him read it.

As you see from these examples, the objectives of the adult education for the homeless are often very similar to those of adult basic education classes and GED classes such as as-

sessing and improving reading, writing, and mathematics skills, preparing students for the GED exam, motivating students to participate, and building tolerance and understanding of individuals working in groups. The differences come from the intensity and depth of the lessons such as the following achievement illustrates.

A client at REACH, a program that provides emergency shelter services, and who has not missed a class since it began, quite suddenly stopped coming to class. Sometime later we heard that he had been incarcerated. Upon his release, he called the shelter immediately to find out if there was class. The shelter director also informed the instructor that this same client continued to make phone calls for a ride every day that class was scheduled. This was a remarkable achievement for this client as he was unable to make phone calls when he first enrolled in the program; however, after several instructional sessions on using the phone, much reluctance from the client to apply the new knowledge and follow-up discussions dealing with his reluctance, the client finally applied his new skill and used it to return to class.

How do ALTA instructors teach such diverse lessons? Educational strands include individualized instruction, small group instruction, group discussion, cooperative learning, team teaching, and peer tutoring. Materials used by students range from the local newspapers to ABE/GED workbooks, computers, portfolios, and journals. One of the most helpful set of workbooks we have come across is titled *An Affective Skills Curriculum*, developed by Patti McLaughlin and published through The Adult Basic & Literacy Educators (ABLE) Network of Washington, 1993. There are four workbooks in the set entitled *Realizing Goals, Recognizing Emotions, Enhancing Self-Awareness,* and *Interacting With Others*. Although these workbooks had been recommended to meet the diverse needs of the homeless, ALTA instructors have also found them to be very practical for their ABE and GED classes. ❖

## WPALRC materials, cont. from p. 8

*An Affective Skills Curriculum*, produced by the Adult Basic Literacy Educators (ABLE) Network of Washington, is "a four part curriculum that provides activities for interpersonal skills, thinking skills, group effectiveness and communication skills for homeless, incarcerated or other at risk adult learners". The curriculum components, *Realizing Goals* (LSK-0167), *Recognizing Emotions* (LSK-0168), *Interacting with Others* (LSK-0169) and *Enhancing Self-Awareness* (LSK-0170), may be used together or as stand alone units. The texts may be borrowed from WPALRC or purchased for $35.00 per set from the ABLE Network (206-587-3880).

Two 20 minute videos, *Our Nation's Homeless: Who, Where, and Why?* and *Teenage Runaways: Society's Children*, produced by American School Publishers present background about America's homeless population. Teachers may, also, need information about problems such as violence, addiction, STD's and teen pregnancy. The teacher must walk a "fine line", however, displaying active listening and intervention skills to encourage students to make their own decisions and take responsibility for themselves. Too much help can enable students to ignore accountability for their actions. While not a program for the homeless, *Volunteer Awareness and Education Enabling: Staff Development Project for Volunteer Literacy Tutors* (AE 3025-941) examines the difference between empowering and enabling.

All of the materials mentioned may be borrowed from WPALRC by calling 1-800-446-5607 ext. 216 in PA or 412-961-0294 ext 216. Ask for a complete listing of materials.

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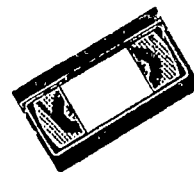
# Utilizing Desktop Publishing and Process Writing to Provide Adult Basic Education to Homeless Shelter Residents

by Ben Burenstein, Drexel University

The Computing Resources Group (CRG) of Drexel University has delivered a unique ABE program to residents of Philadelphia shelters since it was first granted a PDE-approved Section 353 grant in 1990-91. The program combines wordprocessing and desktop publishing using computers, with the process writing approach to developing literacy skills. The approach has produced good results with high adult student recruitment and retention, usually completing 15-30% more than required under the grants. Many of these are people who had not participated in any formal educational experience for many years. It is worth looking at some of the aspects of the program which led to its success.

The classes take place in three homeless shelters in Philadelphia. Much of the curriculum involves students either dictating or writing using the word-processor. The teacher uses these writings to generate topics for further skill development, as well as guides to discussion. To motivate learners even more, they bring in photographs which have personal meaning to them; photographs are available which depict familiar aspects of city life, and the teacher engages in photographic field trips with the students. These images are digitized and formatted to a graphics program. Students are then encouraged to manipulate the images within the graphics program and write stories, articles, poems, recipes, resumes, and/or letters based on using a word-processing program. Their stories are usually autobiographical, and not infrequently cathartic. The class learns reading and skills development using a combination of traditional teaching methods and commercially available tutorial computer software.

Among the activities students engage in are:

1. Composing stories and essays about their lives, their wishes, and their thoughts about the world, and typing them into a computer so they can be easily printed out. Students sometimes collaborate to write such articles.

2. Taking key words from stories and studying them as sight words using flash cards or cloze procedures. These could be generated by the computer or selected by the teacher from their stories.

3. Using speech-synthesizing software to help them read their own and/or other peoples' stories. When they get stuck on a word, they may access this capability to help them.

4. Adding pictures of the community to their books. Software makes it possible to incorporate pictures with text and allows users to manipulate the pictures, since visual aids are motivational in generating writing and can also assist poor readers by providing context for text.

5. Creating posters, flyers, newsletters, business cards, and other desktop publishing projects for local community organizations.

6. Creating quarterly class newsletters.

The methods of this project have been shown to be effective for helping adult students achieve improved levels of literacy. They emphasize the connection of written to oral language. Technical writing skills are developed by analyzing the writings (or dictation) of the students and building exercises around these meaningful words, rather than (what may be) a static workbook. The approach, which integrates elements of the language-experience approach with computer literacy skills and emphasizes expressive writing, is motivating and particularly appropriate to people who have a great deal of life experience, many stories to tell, but no very good route to disseminate them. Desktop-publishing provides that outlet. Additionally, computer drill-and-practice programs can help learners with writing, reading, and math skills when no teacher or tutor is available.

The computer can be an effective teaching tool and a vehicle for delivering information and instruction. In addition, there are numerous social and self-esteem reasons why students will attend a class that is computer-oriented rather than more traditional. It is more acceptable to say, "I'm going to study computers," than, "I'm going to reading class." Because the computer is the symbol of the dominant society, it is empowering for learners to associate with it. Computer skills, as well as language and math skills, are often directly transferable to personal and job situations. An on-site computer can provide tutoring and motivation even when a teacher is not here. Instead of watching television, residents have an activity that is not only educational, but also useful and enjoyable.

*Education for Homeless Adults: The First Year* (US Office of Education) suggests these key elements as indicators of success: a stable living environment for a minimum of 45 days (CRG classes take place at shelters which allow individuals to stay for longer than three months, rather than allowing them only a few nights); individualized instruction (both the computer-oriented nature of the program and CRG's collaborative, process-oriented approach promote this); instruction related to practical tasks and everyday experiences (learners in CRG's program are making bed-charts and schedules, as well as working on newsletters and writing résumés); activities aimed at building self-esteem (both the computer-oriented nature of the program and CRG's own style promote this); well-trained volunteers (because of the difficulty of working with this population, CRG has screened volunteers carefully). The volunteers CRG has worked with have been valuable additions to the program); and development and testing of non-traditional and alternative curricula. This program fulfills virtually every one of the prescribed conditions described in the report.

When CRG introduced the integration of desktop publishing with a process writing curriculum in shelters in 1990-91 it was unique nationally. The high level of interest in this project was demonstrated by the attendance of 30 professionals at CRG's presentation for the National Conference on Adult Education for Homeless People in March, 1992. At the 1993 AEH conference at least six programs indicated that they had attempted to adapt the technique for their shelters, and were using it successfully.

CRG is confident that the success to date of its projects over the last three years is built on solid practical and theoretical foundations, and would be appropriate for others to implement in shelter environments. ❖

# NEWSLETTER ROUNDUP . . .

*In which we note types and contents of newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze.*

* "LITERACY EDUCATION THREATENED" is the headline on the cover of the January/February, 1995 issue of *Hands-On English*, a periodical for teachers and tutors of adult English as a second language. We counted no less than four state newsletters this month which contained articles expressing concerns about the future of adult basic and literacy education because of the uncertainty of federal funding. The combined message seems to be "Organize support and make legislative contacts."

*Hands-On English* is one of the few newsletters we receive which contains teaching tips and materials which can be photocopied for classroom use. It's $16 per year from PO Box 256, Crete, NE 68333.

* The February, 1995 issue of *FOCUS on Literacy* features information about a number of Pennsylvania Section 353 projects in the area of Curriculum Development. Geography, Math, Science, and Pennsylvania Government are subjects dealt with in the projects evaluated. It's free from Dr. Sherry Royce's *FOCUS Publications, 1938 Crooked Oak Drive, Lancaster, PA 17601.*

* *Reading TODAY* is the newsletter of the International Reading Association (IRA) and always contains lots of good information relating to reading and adult education. In the February/March, 1995 issue the following are noted:
— A recent report by the Educational Testing Service shows there is a wide disparity in the literateness of college graduates and, among other concerns, the top 25 percent of adults with only a high school education scored higher in prose literacy than the bottom 25 percent of those with a four-year college degree.
— In the third of a series of articles on family literacy issues, mention is made of the positive influence of siblings in the area of reading.
— Gateway Education Products, publishers of *Hooked on Phonics*, has agreed to settle Federal Trade Commission charges that the company made misleading claims about the "Hooked" program and "Gateway did not have adequate substantiation to back up the challenged reading and comprehension claims".

For information about joining the IRA and receiving *Reading TODAY*, write 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714.

* Part-time adult education teachers as "Throwaways" is the subject addressed by an article in the January/February, 1995 *GED Items* published by the General Educational Development Testing Service. In the same issue is an editorial about "Professionalizing" Adult Education and "Teaching Tips for Test 1: Writing Skills." Other articles include a report on the External Degree Program (EDP) stating, among other things, that 40% of EDP graduates go on to postsecondary education." *GED Items* is free by writing GEDTS, Suite 250, One Dupont Circle NW, Washington, DC 20036.

* An insert of just published materials in a recent issue of the *UNESCO Adult Education Information Notes* (PO Box 13 10 23, D-20110 Hamburg, Germany) lists a manual titled "Cost Analysis of Educational Inclusion of Marginalized Populations" which contains methodologies for estimating the costs, applying cost analysis to the planning and policy, and developing an information base for monitoring and analyzing the costs of educational inclusion of marginalized populations - ISBN 92-803-1152-2.

* Volume 19, #1 of *Literacy Advance*, a newsletter from Laubach Literacy Advance (LLA), contains an interesting article with advice for adult educators making instructional or staff development videotapes. Written by Linda Church, LLA Director of Research and Development and a "guid-ing light" for the start-up of many literacy councils in Pennsylvania, the author warns "Be Ready for the Unexpected" and uses examples of surprises encountered in the making of LLA's new ESL tutor training videotapes.

Some suggestions:

- Don't make assumptions about what the learner knows or doesn't know . . . and be ready for surprises.
- Be sensitive to the physical needs of the learners . . . and be flexible.
- Use real-life objects in teaching . . . but choose them carefully.
- Let the learners do the speaking . . . and have fun doing it.

The tutor training videotapes will be released soon. For access to *Literacy Advance* contact your local literacy council or write LLA, 1320 Jamesville Avenue, Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.

* While we're talking about LLA, our congratulations on the 50th Anniversary of the original version of the Laubach Way to Reading (LWR) which is still used by most of the Literacy programs in Pennsylvania.

According to Peter Waite, Executive Director of LLA, "LWR has endured because it has proved to be effective for so many people. It stands alone as the most highly respected instructional core series serving those most in need of basic literacy skills."

LLA is putting together a scrapbook of LWR Success Stories and invites *Buzz* readers to send letters telling of successes to LLA, 1320 Jamesville Avenue, Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.

A sampling of letters will be on display at the LLA Biennial Conference in Portland, Oregon next year. ❖

# PA Authors Write Top Titles

The Winter, 1994 issue of the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) newsletter contains a bibliography of "Annual Top Titles for Adult New Readers."

Our congratulations to three Pennsylvania authors for being recognized for their "outstanding books" by the Publishers Liaison Committee of the American Public Library Association.

According to the newsletter, this is "a compilation of outstanding books, fiction and nonfiction chosen for high appeal in terms of content, format and artwork. They are easily accessible with simple plots, short sentences, and uncomplicated vocabulary" and have been published recently.

If you are looking for some good books for your lower level readers, these should fit the bill:

Author: **Ruth Yaffe Radin** of Center Valley. All are on reading level 1-3+, cost $3 and are published by New Readers Press (800-448-8878).

"From the Wooded Hill"; the poem is the text of this illustrated book and tells how hard it would be to leave a home surrounded by the countryside's ever-changing beauty.

"Morning Streets" takes the reader on a simple walk to the store one morning when all the familiar city sights seem brand new.

"Sky Bridges and Other Poems"; this collection of appealing, lighthearted poems will delight new readers of all ages and stages. The easy-to-read and easy-to-understand poetry lends itself well to the beginning reader.

Author: **Tana Reiff** of Lancaster. "Hopes and Dreams II". This is a series of 10 books providing a glimpse into the life of people coming to this country to live from throughout the world. Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, Poles, Greeks, Salvadorans, Koreans, Arabs, Indians, Jamaicans, and Japanese are represented in these attractive and easy-to-read stories. All are on the Fry Reading Level 3, are paperbacks, cost $4.80 each and are published by Fearon/Quercus publishers (800-587-4283).

Titles: "Fair Fields," "Here and There," "Making Heaven," "Many Miles," "Never So Good," "Next Life," "Sent Away," "Ties to the Past," "Two Hearts," "Who Is My Neighbor?"

Author: **Pamela Weinberg** of Harrisburg. We mentioned Pam's book "Your Home is Learning Place" in our March issue. It is published by New Readers Press, is written on the Fry Level 3-4, is paperback and costs $6.25. According to the COABE bibliography "This is a well-done 'how to' for parenting young children that teaches by suggesting activities."

We have lots of talented adult educators in Pennsylvania and we are proud of these three authors for earning this national recognition. ❖

## PCN Literacy Training Programs

As mentioned in February, the Pennsylvania Cable Network (PCN) has a number of literacy training programs available through its local outlets.

PCN notes the following off-air rights:

"On Your Own" - unlimited off-air record and hold rights. Companion materials may be purchased from Simon & Schuster (1-800-947-7700). Guides for Math, Writing, Grammar and Reading are $12.20. The Teaching Guide is $8.70.

"Helping Adults Learn" - unlimited off-air record and hold rights.

"GED on TV" - off-air and record rights until the end of the year in which it is shown.

"Touching the Future" - 7 day off-air and record and hold window.

All of these are presently showing on PCN (see our February issue). Off-air record rights give adult educators permission to tape the show from the air; hold rights give adult educators permission to hold and use the tape for the amount of time indicated.

For more information contact Brad Hammer, Director of Marketing for PCN, at (717) 730-6000. ❖

Many adult educators have little or no training in teaching the concepts or activities important to study skill development to their adult students.

As programs become more involved with cooperative planning efforts between instructor and students, skill development in these areas becomes more critical to a student's participation in curricular and instructional planning.

Fortunately some adult education publishers are beginning to make available materials designed to assist teachers, tutors and adult learners in developing study skills.

"Better Study Habits Mean Better Performance" is part of the description of Steck-Vaughn's Study Skills for Adults series. The five books deal with one topic each (Using Resources, Writing Reports, Preparing Written Assignments, Taking Tests and Working With Textbooks). The reading level is 5-6 and the "Worktexts" are put together for individual use by students. Steck-Vaughn's Pennsylvania sales representative is Ron Ray, (800) 531-5015.

Contemporary's new series of Vocabulary Exercises contains three books which will help adult learners develop learning skills and, thus, have a better grasp of what to think about when considering curriculum development. Book 4 "Getting Meaning from Context" lumps together all the study habits and context clues many of us learned the hard way (by experience) and presents explanations and activities of such topics as Seeing Relationships, Getting Meaning from a Comparison, Using Word Parts, etc. Book 6 is "Getting the Most from Dictionaries," and Book 7 is "Analyzing Word Parts."

Contemporary's Pennsylvania sales rep is Myron Hallock (800) 397-2556. ❖

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# People and Programs in PA ABLE

✻ Two staff members of the *Scranton Council for Literacy Advance* (SCOLA) were recently recognized by the *Scranton Times*. *Marlene Evans*, a faithful volunteer, was named Northeast Woman and *Molly Quinn Philbin*, program coordinator, was recognized as Personality of the Week. These awards are good examples of Adult Basic and Literacy Education practitioners being recognized as contributing members to their communities.

✻ *Brad Hammer*, Director of Marketing for the *Pennsylvania Cable Network* (PCN), writes to update the information we noted in our February, 1995 article on PCN Literacy Programming. Brad notes "On Your Own" which deals with basic reading, writing and math airs weekdays from 11 a.m. until noon; "GED on TV" is on weekdays at noon and in Spanish at 12:30; "Helping Adults Learn" is at 4 p.m.; and "Touching the Future" at 4:30. We were pleased to hear PCN is now carried by Blue Ridge Cable and other outlets. For more information contact PCN at (717) 730-6000.

✻ We received a note from *Lori Dubrawka* who was with the *Pottstown YWCA Adult Literacy Center* when she wrote the article on Training Tutors to Teach Adults with Special Learning Needs which appeared in our February, 1995 issue. Lori tells us she is now working on her M.A. in learning disabilities in Tucson.

✻ *Dr. Eunice Askov*, Director of the *Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy* at Penn State, writes to remind us the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy began in 1988, not four years ago which we reported in our February, 1995 issue. Nickie tells us the Institute received a grant from the Gannett Foundation and they were the founding organizer and coordinator of the State Coalition. Thanks, Nickie.

✻ *The Tri-Valley Literacy Regional Staff Development Center #7* has developed lots of creative, innovative activities to support adult educators in their region. In the February, 1995 issue of their newsletter mention is made of an ESL Mentoring project which sounds like a great idea.

Center Coordinator *Ann Koefer* tells us they are attempting to hook up adult educators with resources by providing an experienced, knowledgeable ESL practitionery (*Carolyn DiGiacomo*) who is available to answer specific queries from ESL teachers, tutors, etc. about curriculum, assessment, resources, etc. Most of the help is provided over the telephone and Ann says they hope to expand the mentoring concept to ABE and other areas for next year.

What we think is another great idea is the Region 7 *New Teacher Induction Program* which provides persons with two years or less experience in adult education with opportunities for group discussion, mentoring, etc. The first group of 30 adult educators is presently going through the program.

✻ *Roland Vendeland* is a former reading teacher, adult educator and presently is Special Populations Coordinator at the Community College of Allegheny County, Monroeville. He recently sent us some information about his unique method for teaching reading to adults which he and his wife, Jeanne, developed. The method centers around teaching critical reading skills through storytelling and demonstrates to adult students that the comprehension process is the same whether information is acquired through viewing, listening, or reading. For more information contact Roland at PO Box 4719, Pittsburgh, 15206 (412) 422-8874.

✻ *Mike Savani* is a new reader who has been working with the *Scranton Council for Literacy Advance* (SCOLA) for two years. In October Mike began to participate in the local New Reader Support Group and, in an article which appears in a recent issue of the SCOLA newsletter, Mike tells of his experiences and how important the support group has been to him. He closes his article by saying, "I know there are a lot of people who would benefit from being part of a support group. I just don't know how to reach them. I would like others to feel as good as I do". Other new readers can contact Mike at SCOLA, 1032 Green Ridge Street, Scranton, PA 18509.

✻ The activities of *Susan Bowser* of the *Elizabethtown Public Library* and *Kathy Gordon* of the American Legion Auxiliary #329 in Elizabethtown are written up in the February, 1995 *READ USA Update*. As we noted in an earlier issue of *The Buzz*, the American Legion and Auxiliary have distributed sets of the "I Want to Read" video series to library literacy programs and the two sets contributed to the Elizabethtown Library are being put to good use. Says the Auxiliary President, "I knew if we helped just one person learn to read or to read better through the program, that it was worth the money we spent." ❖

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## April, 1995

**5:** ADULT NUMERACY PRACTI-TIONERS NETWORK (ANPN): Pre-conference session for National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Meeting; Cambridge, Massachusetts. Contact: Mary Jane Schmitt, Massachusetts Department of Education; 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 01248.

**6:** INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERIES: Operating Systems Decisions; Teleconference; 1-3 p.m. Contact PBS Adult Learning Systems (800) 257-2578.

**7:** STAFF DEVELOPMENT BY DISTANCE LEARNING; Hazleton Career Prep Center of Lackawanna Junior College; 8:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. Total Quality Management; Stress Management; Teaching Math to Adults; Time Management. Contact: Joyce Kerrick, Region 3 Staff Development Center (800) 458-2058.

**13:** WHAT WORKS? LITERACY TRAINING IN THE WORKPLACE. Videoconference; 1-3 p.m. Contact: Public Broadcasting System (PBS) (800) 257-2578 or your Regional Staff Development Center.

**13:** Region 7 COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP. Lehigh University 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Contact: Ann Koefer (610) 758-6905.

**17:** FAMILY LITERACY - FAMILY LITERACY AND LIBRARIES TELECONFERENCE; IU #5, Edinboro; 4 - 5:30 p.m. Contact: Bootsie Barbour, Regional Staff Development Center #1 (814) 866-3775.

**17:** CULTURAL SENSITIVITY: Mansfield University; 5:45 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Presenter: Ronald Vendeland. Sponsored by Project STAR, Regional Staff Development Center. Contact: Diane Cady (717) 662-4746.

**18-22:** ADULT LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM; San Francisco; Applications of the National Adult Literacy Survey or Teaching, Testing and Research; Roundtables on Adult Literacy Issues. Contact: The National Center on Adult Literacy e-mail: ncal@literacy.upenn.edu

**21:** STAFF DEVELOPMENT BY DISTANCE LEARNING; Towanda High School Guidance Office; 8:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. Total Quality Management; Stress Management; Teaching Math to Adults; Time Management. Contact: Joyce Kerrick, Region 3 Staff Development Center (800) 458-2058.

**21:** TECHNOLOGY FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION: Clinton County Development Center for Adults Technology Center, Lock Haven; 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Contact: Gail Leightley (814) 359-3069.

**23-25:** NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY LITERACY 4th ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE: Louisville, KY. Contact: NCFL, Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 West Main Street, Louisville, KY 40202.

**24:** ESL: THE TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE FOR BEGINNERS AND OTHER TECHNIQUES FOR MORE ADVANCED ESL STUDENTS: IU #16, Montandon; 5:45 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Contact: Dawn Dorn (717) 523-1155, ext. 324.

**26:** USING THE WESTERN PA ADULT LITERACY RESOURCE CENTER: presenter, Chris Kemp; Seneca Highlands IU, Smethport; evening. Contact: Bootsie Barbour, Regional Staff Development Center #1 (814) 866-3775.

**27:** QUALITY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH TEAM BUILDING: Gibsonia; 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Contact: Rachel Zilcosky, Region 4 Staff Development Center (412) 661-7323.

**28:** QUALITY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH TEAM BUILDING; Presenter: Dehra and Ron Shafer; BelAire North, Erie; 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Contact: Bootsie Barbour.

**28:** LITERACY AND THE TONGUE-TYING OF AMERICA: Presenter: Donald Macedo, University of Massachusetts; Penn State Scanticon Conference Center Hotel; 7 p.m. Contact: Brian Frey, Region 5 Staff Development Center (717) 248-4942.

**29:** PENN TESOL 15th SPRING CONFERENCE: Community College of Philadelphia. Contact: Penn-TESOL-East, 21 Bennett Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

**April 30 - May 3:** NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR CONTINUING/COMMUNITY EDUCATION 44th ANNUAL CONFERENCE; Rochester. Contact: Sue Mendel Hausman, 1901 Sweet Home Road, Amherst, NY 11428.

**April 30 - May 5:** *International Reading Association (IRA) 40th Annual Conference;* Anaheim, CA. Contact IRA, 800 Barksdale Rd., Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714.

## May, 1995

**1:** REGION 4 STAFF DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE: "A Celebration of Family Reading," 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, Pittsburgh. Sponsored by the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council's Region 4 Staff Development Center, the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, Goodwill Literacy Initiative, Allegheny Intermediate Unit Head Start, Mon-Valley Even Start, FOR Sto-Rox, and Beginning With Books. Contact: Rachel Zilcosky (800) 438-2011.

**4-5:** *Maryland AAACE Conference;* Gaithersburg Hilton. Contact Laura Weidner, Catonsville Community College, 800 S. Rolling Road, Baltimore, MD 21228 (410) 455-4501.

**8-10:** 1995 PENNSYLVANIA RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE: State College. Call (814) 865-8301. Includes "Building Community Coalitions".

**15:** DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION FOR PENNSYLVANIA ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION RESEARCH CONFERENCE: Conference date: September 30, 1995. Contact: Dr. Gary W. Kuhne, Penn State Center for Continuing and Graduate Education, 4518 Northern Pike, Monroeville, PA 15146.

**15:** PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS FOR ABE STUDENTS: IU #16, Montandon; 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Presenter: Barbara Van Horn. Contact: Gail Leightley (814) 359-3069.

**18:** CREATING A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES: Liberating People with Disabilities through Adaptive Technologies; TELECONFERENCE; 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Contact: PBS Adult Learning Satellite Service, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314 GOPHER.PBS.ORG (port 70).

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Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter

# "What's the Buzz?"

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# What's The *BUZZ?*™

MAY, 1995                                                     VOLUME 14, NUMBER 9

Theory to Practice . . .

## Action Research for Professional Development

by Dr. B. Allan Quigley

Implementation of *The National Literacy Act of 1991* has created the highest level of literacy staff development activities since the halcyon adult basic education funding days of the 1960s.

Pennsylvania is one of three states (Virginia and Massachusetts are others) which has promoted "grass-roots research" as part of the new thrust in staff development. In guidelines for project applications *action research* is described as "research undertaken by practitioners in order that they may improve practices and enhance the inquiry teachers undertake to understand the situation and improve the practice."

Under staff development opportunities available through the nine Regional Staff Development Centers in Pennsylvania, provision is made for grants of up to $300 to support practitioner-directed action research projects and a number of adult basic and literacy education teachers and tutors have pursued research activities in topics of their professional concern.

"In order to understand anything well, you must have at least three good theories," goes William Perry's famous maxim. We need to consider longer range staff development plans if we are to foster the very increase in self-reliance in our own field that we typically seek for our own students.

How? By creating and owning more of our own knowledge out of systematic inquiry conducted by teachers, tutors, administrators, and our own students.

If knowledge is power, as Francis Bacon once said, we can engage in the creation of our own knowledge through *action research* and truly empower ourselves and our field.

Practitioners, in effect, can share the "expert" label through action research.
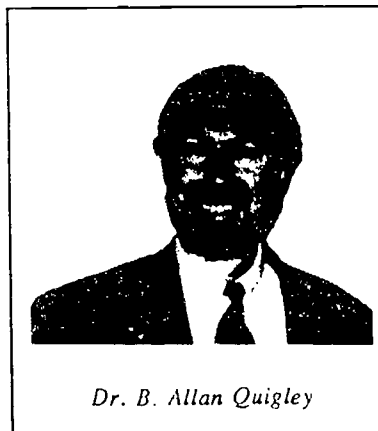
*Dr. B. Allan Quigley*

### What Is Action Research? How Does It Work?

One of the most straight-forward definitions of action research is provided by Issac (1971): "to develop new skills or new approaches and to solve problems with direct application to the classroom or working world setting." Kemmis and McTaggart (1984) provide an especially useful, longer definition:

"Trying new ideas in practice as a means of improvement and as a means of increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching, and learning. The result is improvement in what happens in the classroom and school, and the better articulation and justification of the educational rationale for what goes on. Action research provides a way of working which links theory and practice into one whole: ideas-in-action.

## From Theory to Practice . . .
### Continued from page 1

Action research is based in inductive experimentation and grounded in "trying something out to see if it works better."

Taking a closer look, action research follows a spiral - - we try one "cycle" of the research; then having learned something, we try another, and so on. Action research does not have a static or frozen "end of experiment" conclusion because it is conducted in the action-based world of daily practice.

#### Imagine a Research and Policy Plan for the Future

Consider for a minute how many teachers/tutors have basically the same questions and frustrations every day. Imagine for another moment that the problems of illiteracy are not isolated incidents, but patterns re-occurring in every classroom in every region of our state. Whether trying to experiment with teaching, recruiting, or retention across several classrooms or, at the policy level, trying to implement new ideas such as ways to achieve quality indicators, common problems could be addressed through a common action research strategy. Done collaboratively, internal validity could be enhanced by multi-classroom, state-wide "pooled judgement".

Our new professional development funding provides new opportunities to resolve issues. If we use them to re-search new solutions through action research, we can professionalize, create more effective policies and substantively reduce illiteracy.

Editor's Note: A more complete approach to this topic by Dr. Quigley appears in the *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning, Vol. 4, 1995*. Dr. Quigley is Associate Professor and Regional Director of Adult Education at The Pennsylvania State University, Monroeville. ❖

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## New York Establishes Action Research Program for Adult Literacy Educators

In an attempt to overcome some of the isolation in what has sometimes been called the "lonely profession of adult literacy education," the New York State Department of Education and Columbia University have provided funds for the establishment of an *Action Research Professional Development Program* (ARPD) which invites teachers of adults to participate in identifying, testing, and reporting on innovative instructional practices and contributing their findings to a national database of powerful solutions to real classroom problems.

Reported in *Literacy Update*, the newsletter of The Literacy Assistance Center in New York City, ARPD each quarter identifies a topic or issue of importance to participating network members. Focus groups of participating practitioners are convened to discuss exemplary classroom practices relating to that topic. The information is then systematically recorded in a national database, accessible via the ARPD electronic bulletin board, Literacy On-Line, and published in ARPD's Exemplary Practice File.

Some topics dealt with to date are:

* What To Do in the
   First Class Sessions
* Participate Instruction
* Reading Instruction
* Whole Language Instruction
* Math Instruction ❖

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### Are YOU Involved in a Section 353 Project?

#### Have YOU Completed a Research Project?

The deadline for submissions for presentations at the **Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Education Research Conference** to be held September 30, 1995 is May 15. Here's an opportunity to share the information from your Section 353 or Action Research project. Send submissions to Dr. Gary Kuhne, Penn State Center for Continuing and Graduate Education, 4518 Northern Pike, Monroeville, PA 15146.

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## Action Research

## A Guide for Literacy Practitioners

The Tri-Valley, Region 7 Staff Development Center (Supervisor - Dr. Judith Rance-Roney; Director - Jane Ditmars; Coordinator - Ann Koefer) has made available an *excellent* "how-to" *"Action Research Guide for Adult Literacy Practitioners"* and we recommend it to anyone thinking: "I would like to research a topic, but I don't know how to begin, or how to proceed."

After a two-page introduction, Part I of *The Guide* lays out guidelines for adult education action researchers to follow from Research Steps through an explanation of "The Action Research Spiral" and a bibliography and glossary.

Part II deals with the presentation of the Research Paper and concludes with a complete research paper prepared by Judith Rance-Roney.

#### What Is Action Research?

According to the Guide, Action Research is a "collaborative, interactive process whereby the practitioner becomes the researcher pursuing activities of study (research) for the enhancement of one's own practice."

#### The Research Steps

Stressing that *flexibility* is a necessary ingredient in research, the Guide suggests activities to help the researcher define the research question, establish a procedure to keep track of research activities, study information on the topic from various sources, and establish a hypothesis to test.

Author Victoria Mekosh-Rosenbaum, a doctoral candidate at Lehigh University and Coordinator of the Literacy Corps on campus, has produced a readable, logically laid out publication which adult educators will find interesting and informative.

*The Action Research Guide for Adult Literacy Practitioners is available on loan from the Tri-Valley Literacy Staff Development Center #7, 33 Coppee Dr., Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA 18015 – (610) 758-6347.* ❖

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# The Training of Volunteer Tutors

"I believe very strongly in the need for staff development in the area of tutor training . . . any literacy program using volunteers is only as good as the quality of its tutor training . . . ".

These beliefs of Mary Lindquist, formerly Program Coordinator of the Crawford County READ Program, are so strong that Ms. Lindquist did something about it—she developed a research project to survey what procedures and standards are in place for training/staff development of the 7,000+ volunteer tutors involved in literacy in Pennsylvania.

As she began to plan her survey Ms. Lindquist found there was no database of programs in the state which use volunteer tutors. There is a listing of State Literacy Act 143 funded programs which uses volunteer tutors. There is a listing of federal Adult Education Act Section 322 funded programs, some of which use volunteers. Unavailable was information about the more than 38 literacy programs with volunteer tutors which are funded by sources other than through Act 143 or Section 322.

Now, thanks to the efforts of Mary Lindquist, a database of at least 152 literacy programs which use volunteer tutors in Pennsylvania has been established. The listing is regardless of funding source and the results of the survey which helped establish the database provides the first step in identifying and understanding the wide range of training for volunteer tutors throughout the state.

### Findings and Conclusions

* A large majority (97%) of programs use volunteer tutors in one-on-one tutoring while 41% use them in small group tutoring sessions, 29% as classroom aides and 27% to conduct assessments and reassessments. 48% of the programs use volunteers for eleven other duties ranging from classroom instruction to newsletter editing.

* 15% of the programs using volunteers do not require any training and 63% of the programs requiring training have a requirement of 12 hours or less.

* Although 68% of the programs using volunteers "expect" them to attend staff development/inservice training, only 8% make participation in training mandatory.

* 70% of the programs responding to the survey indicated they would participate in staff development training dealing with tutor training issues.

* Although the types of training of volunteers varies widely, 37% of the programs base their training on the Laubach Way to Reading (LWR) program. However 76% of these noted they had made many adaptations to the original training outlined in the series (extensive revision in Laubach Literacy training during the past few years gives local programs more flexibility in training).

The report closes with the comment that "Statewide, close to 7,000 volunteers are providing literacy services for almost 22,500 adults. In order to insure the quality of those services, tutor training standards need to be high . . . tutor training is an area of great opportunity for staff development."

*Editor's note: We are indebted to Mary Lindquist for sharing her research with us. She pursued this research with no funding.*

*Mary is now employed as an Education Guidance Counselor at the State Correctional Institution at Albion. One of her first duties was to establish an inmate tutoring program.* ❖

# Monroeville Summer Courses

Gannon University of Erie will offer two graduate level education courses this summer at the *Monroeville Expo Mart*.

The 3-credit courses will be taught by *Tom Staszewski* who is an experienced adult educator with Allegheny County Community College. Tom has instructed the courses for more than five years and promises to present supplemental material geared especially for the professional needs of adult basic and literacy educators. A number of adult educators from the Pittsburgh area have received reimbursement from their Regional Staff Development Center for these courses.

One of the courses will be *Teaching the Skills of the 21st Century* which deals with the latest techniques in teaching strategies, curriculum reform and the development of lesson plans incorporating real-life, useful student learning outcomes. This course meets from 8-5, July 10-14.

*Achieving Student Outcomes Through Cooperative Learning* is designed to familiarize teachers with appropriate cooperative classroom strategies, an area which is receiving lots of attention in adult education today. This course meets from 8-5, July 31-August 4.

Detailed course outlines and more information are available by calling (412) 824-5082 or writing Attitude Adjustment, PO Box 141, Monroeville, PA 15146. ❖

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# A Reader Response on Literacy for the Homeless

"Our adult learning center offers classes for the homeless both at our main location and at the homeless shelters. Our decision to hold classes at any given site is usually based on the need for convenience and the elimination of barriers to participation such as transportation and child care. Homeless students who attend classes at the main site are not reluctant to share class space with non-homeless learners. Nor are non-homeless learners reluctant to work with the homeless in the same environment. I believe that each program must establish a philosophy of learning that encompasses the variety of learners that their program serves and allows for inclusion and diversity."

—Jeff Woodyard, Tri-County OIC, Harrisburg

# Pennsylvania GED Examiners' Conference 1995

### by Larry Goodwin, State GED Administrator

During March 16-17, 1995, Pennsylvania's annual GED Conference was held at the Harrisburg Hotel on Market Square, downtown Harrisburg. Unlike last year the weather cooperated in every way and conference attendees were able to concentrate on the agenda items without fear of snow, slect, or a treacherous trip home.

Approximately 100 examiners across the State participated in the meetings with general test centers and institutions being equally represented. The agenda on March 16 included presentations by members of the GED Testing Service who discussed computer testing, GED 2000, essay grading, testing security, and establishing a minimum score across all testing jurisdictions nation-wide. These topics were thoroughly discussed with a follow-on session scheduled the next day for the minimum score issue.

The annual dinner meeting on March 16 was very well attended and the guest speaker was the acting Secretary of Education, Ms. Jane Carroll. She addressed the State's current budget process and how the education items were affected. It was a superb presentation that was both interesting and informative.

On the 17th, the Director of the External Diploma Program (EDP) of the American Council on Education gave an excellent presentation on the content of the EDP and how to start a local program. There was a lot of interest expressed in the EDP and many of the conference participants requested that additional information be forwarded to their home office.

Next, the staff of the State GED office covered some administrative items and the proper procedures for requesting and conducting Special Accommodation testing. The final agenda item was a follow-up discussion of the "minimum score" as proposed the previous day. There was a lot of energy around this topic because it could mean raising the minimum score required to pass each test of the GED battery.

From the perspective of the State Administrator, this conference was an excellent opportunity for all to be updated on future plans of the Testing Service, trained on topics of concern and emphasis, and to hear the concerns of other examiners in the field. GED examiners should plan to attend the next annual conference to be held at generally the same time period next year. Notification of the conference will be made in October. ❖

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## Return Those Surveys!

If you're like most Pennsylvania adult basic and literacy education professionals when you read this headline you probably say to yourself, "Which survey?"—The one from my regional staff development center; the one about my uses of technology; the one asking about my training of volunteers?

The answer is "none of the above." We are reminding program directors to complete and return the survey distributed by Dr. William Murphy, Research Associate for the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.

On February 2nd Dr. Murphy sent a "Survey on Student and Staff Reporting" to programs and asked for its return "as soon as possible." Also enclosed was a revised and shortened version of PDE-3066 which is due May 15.

The Bureau is making a real attempt to simplify your student and staff reporting chores. Do your part and provide them with the information they need.

If you have questions about either of these survey forms contact Caryn Watson at the Bureau (717) 787-4333.

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## Dyslexia a Hearing Perception Problem?

Five to ten percent of the population has problems learning to read because of an abnormality in the brain resulting in dyslexia. Recently, evidence has been produced to indicate dyslexia is not the result of a visual problem, but of a problem in processing sounds.

The problem seems to lie in a part of the brain that acts as an auditory relay station and, although research is sketchy at this time, reading specialists and others are studying alternative ways to learn to read to compensate for this encoding difficulty.

We also note the results of some medical research that conclude dyslexia is the result of a gene on chromosome six. Further researching is being conducted with the possibility of gene alterations.

## Update on COABE

It's a *Biggie* and even a year before the 1996 Conference date of May 15-18, Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) members who are on the planning committee for the 1996 Commission of Adult Basic Education Conference are spending lots of hours "putting it all together."

COABE is the adult basic education program division group of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) with which our state PAACE is affiliated and the COABE National Conference brings together adult educators from throughout the country to share professional experiences.

ABLE programs would do well to consider setting aside some of their admittedly already stretched 1995-96 budgets to send as many staff members as possible to the COABE CONFERENCE IN PITTSBURGH, May 15-18, 1996.

## Third Annual Regions 1 and 4 Conference

by Bootsie Barbour, Region 1 Staff Development Center Coordinator

Over 100 adult education practitioners from Region #1 and #4 (covering the Western part of the state), attended the third annual Spring Staff Development Workshop in New Castle recently and those attending had an opportunity to listen to new and original ideas from an exciting group of seminar presenters.

Vendors from Contemporary, South Western and Steck Vaughn were also available to show their latest materials and give teachers sample books to try in their classrooms. Edie Richards represented the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center and displayed items from their extensive collection.

Presenters included: Don Block, Executive Director of the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC), *Getting the Best Out of Your Professional and Volunteer Staff*, Jodi Greenwald Golomb, also of GPLC, *Managing Self to Lead Others*, Dr. Richard Gacka, Adult Education Director for IU #5, *Intention Deficit Disorder*, Mary Peterson, Franklin Area School District, *Techniques for the GED Essay*, Roberta Wycoff, Director of the Grove City Literacy Council, *Family Literacy: A Brief Overview*, and Ellen McDevitt, of Carlow College, *But I'm Not a Math Person*.

There have been many requests for more information on all of the topics presented and the Staff Development Projects of Regions 4 and 1 will schedule follow-up sessions wherever possible. ❖

## Legislative Funding Update

At the April meeting of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE), extensive discussion was held concerning legislative programs on federal and state levels which will impact upon funding for Adult Basic and Literacy Education programs for 1995-96 and future years.

Legislative co-chair Jean Henry emphasized the importance of adult educators contacting their U.S. and state senators and representatives and making their thoughts about budget legislation known.

According to Ms. Henry PAACE members and other adult educators in Pennsylvania should:

1. Visit, write, telephone, FAX or E-mail U.S. Representatives and Senators and ask their help in keeping adult education funding for 1996 at the present level and making sure block grants for adult basic education are kept separate and are earmarked for the Pennsylvania Department of Education for distribution.

2. Contact Pennsylvania state senators and representatives and request a funding increase to $10 million for support of Act 143. Also request Senators to sign on to Senator Rhoades' bill to enact the Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Act which has been endorsed by PAACE.

Ms. Henry made the point that now, as never in the past 20 years, funding for *all* adult education programs is in jeopardy. Legislators listen to their constituents and adult educators should take an active role in keeping their legislators informed.

## ABA Offers Grants to Adult Education

The American Bar Association (ABA) has, for many years, stressed the importance of Literacy in the field of legal understanding and the ABA newsletter, *Passport*, contains many articles useful in adult education (especially ESL) classrooms.

Each year the ABA offers grants of up to $5,000 for programs in adult education. In 1994 financial support went to a library literacy program, a program to produce a videotape and lesson plans in low-level English, a workplace project for immigrant workers, etc.

1995 Awards are now available (deadline is May 15—sorry for the short notice). Guidelines for the 1995 APPEAL Mini-grant program are available from Gary Alexander, Public Education Division, 541 North Fairbanks Court, Chicago, IL 60611-3314, (312) 988-5742. Requests for information may be FAXed to (312) 988-5032.

The ABA also offers grants for public education programs for the elderly. Guidelines for the next round of grants will be in September, 1995. To be placed on the mailing list, write to Julie Pasatiempo, ABA Commission on the Elderly, 1800 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

To get on the mailing list for the ABA newsletter *Passport*, write PUAL, ABA, 541 North Fairbanks Court, Chicago, IL 60611-3314.

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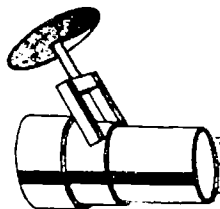
> " 'Do computers improve learning in adult literacy programs?' has no simple answer. It is really the wrong question. It is more meaningful to ask how best to use computers in a particular program, not whether computers are a good thing in general."
>
> —*Rob Foshay, Vice President, Quality Assurance, Standards and Training, TRO Learning, Inc. Quoted in NCAL Connections.*

The application of technology to the field of adult literacy has been recent. During the 1950's volunteer tutors and adult literacy teachers scrambled to find materials that would work with adults. The *newspaper* was a key curricular material because it did not embarrass the adult learners, was inexpensive and contained interesting material.

Later films, tape recorders, reading machines, etc. were used to relieve the tedium of drill and practice. *Computers* began to be used on an experimental basis in the 1960's and 1970's. The use of computers in adult literacy instruction has become more and more acceptable as adult educators begin to realize the advantages of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) with adults, and many adult basic and literacy education programs now use computer technology for program management, instructional support such as in assessment, and in communications with other adult education professionals.

## *Some general advantages of CAI which are identified in the research:*

1. Word processing can be useful in developing writing skills. This is especially true with special needs adults.

2. Technological approaches to instruction are cost effective.

3. CAI provides flexibility in scheduling in open entry/open exit.

4. CAI help students think critically, solve problems, and draw inferences.

5. Students reading text displayed by a computer which provides access to additional information read with greater comprehension than students reading conventionally printed texts.

6. Technological use increases the self-esteem of low-literate students and reduces the fear and stigma adult learners associate with literacy instruction.

7. Adult learners react most positively to self-paced programs with ongoing and immediate feedback. The computer provides a face-saving, non-threatening approach to instruction.

8. When modern workplaces set up workplace literacy programs, they often want to incorporate computers in instruction so that workers learn not only basic skills but also computer literacy. CAI is especially appropriate for workplace programs.

## Letters From *Buzz* Readers

"Here are some of my ideas about Technology and Literacy:

1. I think it is imperative that traditional teachers continue to relearn computer and other new technologies to use them in the classroom. These valuable conferences like the Mid-Winter Conference are so important for keeping up on these new ideas. We expect our students to keep up with their knowledge after the GED test, why can't we?

2. Our center has six new computers to use with our other Apples that we have been using. I think our students must have access to these new devices in our adult education classes."

—Rich Landers, Reading Specialist, Adult Learning Center, Eric

It is my opinion that *all teachers* and *administrators* be able to use technology in the classroom. No business is without a computer. We are definitely moving to a high tech society. What I find appalling is we do not have the equipment! There are four old computers (over 30 students to use them) and no printer. I got discs for the machines from friends, but most of the students do not go onto the machines except before or after class. No lessons can be group taught. In this society that is ridiculous when one wealthy school district replaces equipment, other areas ought to have access to the secondhand yet workable equipment. We must stop being a throwaway society.

Thanks for allowing us input!"

137            —Shirley F. Jackson, IU #13, Lebanon

# Surveys Show Use of Technology in ABLE Has Advantages, Disadvantages, and Varying Extent of Application

Two surveys of the use of Technology in Pennsylvania adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) programs and one survey of six states including Pennsylvania show a wide variety of applications and advantages/disadvantages among adult education programs throughout the state.

### Most Used? The Chalkboard

A study of Pennsylvania adult education programs completed last year by Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy showed the most used type of technology (definitely "low-tech") was the chalkboard which is being used by 74% of the programs surveyed. Next was the newspaper (67%), next the videocassette recorder/player (59%), and fourth was computers (56%).

### Lack of Funds a Problem

Adult Education Linkage Services in Troy is just completing a survey of ABLE program administrators, teachers and tutors in the eight-county area served by Regional Staff Development Center #3 at Lackawanna Junior College in Scranton (Director is Joyce Kerrick).

Preliminary survey results show only 34% of survey respondents use computers in their instructional programs. Lack of funding, high cost and lack of training were given as the biggest problems inhibiting computer use.

### Six State Survey Shows Wider Use

A 1994 Survey of Computer Technology use in adult literacy programs of six states (including Pennsylvania) completed by the National Center on Adult Literacy showed greater usage of computer technology. According to survey results 66% of the programs responding use the computer for instructional activities. Other applications include: administrative activities (letter/report writing, data collection, recordkeeping)-82%; student assessment-31%; networking (e-mail, etc.)-23%.

### Advantages

Both of the latter survey results agree that *Student Motivation* is the greatest advantage in computer use with adult learners. In the Region 3 survey

79% of the respondents said that immediate feedback to students was the greatest advantage. Other advantages, according to teachers, tutors and administrators responding to the survey were: Students learn at their own pace-63%; Non-threatening to students-47%; Greater learning incentive-42%; Student control over learning-42%.

These same computer technology instructional advantages were identified in the NCAL Survey with the exception that in that survey *improved quality of instruction* was also identified as an advantage. In the Region 3 survey less than 1/2 of the respondents identified instructional quality improvement as an advantage; in fact more non-users of computers in the classroom felt there was instructional improvement with computer use than did those who use computers.

### Recommendations

Lori Forlizzi, Research Associate, and Dr. Eunice Askov, Director of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, make the recommendation that "Providers could increase reliance on technology to accomplish more."

In the conclusion of the report on its study NCAL concludes "To expand the use of computer technology, we must allocate additional financial resources, provide the expertise needed to develop new and more sophisticated software, and encourage extensive training and professional development opportunities."

Respondents in the Region 3 study identified additional funding to purchase hardware and software as an important need. Other expressed needs were for more time to learn more about technology use and what is available; a need for more information about how technology is used in adult education; the need for training in technology uses. One respondent said: "During training, computers were not even mentioned as an instrument we could use."

Many comments received in the Region 3 survey from teachers and tutors who do not use instructional computer technology said their adult students were "not ready for comput-

ers." Others stated their students were "not interested in using computers."

A report released in 1993 by the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment states that technology holds great promise for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of current adult literacy programs. The report also states that increased use of technology need not be expensive. "However," the report concludes, "it would require support for access and staff training."

### How Do I Find Software That Works?

Even full-time adult educators cannot find the time to try out all the thousands of programs that are flooding the marketplace.

The National Center on Adult Literacy (University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 19104) is initiating a *practitioner software review process* from which NCAL plans to publish reviews of software.

The review process is being developed in response to practitioners' request for not only critical reviews on adult literacy software, but reviews which zero in on the instructional context in which the software was being used as well as the educational outcomes that the literacy programs sought to achieve by utilizing specific software. AND YOU CAN HELP . . .

The Center has developed an easy-to-use review instrument and sample reviews to help practitioners record their own experiences (good and bad) with instructional software. The reviews will be published as part of NCAL's existing database of adult literacy software which is being distributed on diskette, through the Internet, and in paper form.

TO HELP . . . Contact Joe Campbell: Phone (215) 898-2100; FAX (215) 898-9804; Internet e-mail: software.review@literacy.upenn.edu

*Reference Sources: Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy: 204 Calder Way, Suite 209, University Park, PA 16801. Adult Education Linkage Services: Box 214, Troy, PA 16947. National Center on Adult Literacy: University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111.* ❖

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# Software for ABLE

### by Ben Burenstein, Drexel University

## What Is Software?

Computer systems have five components: input, output, the central processing unit (CPU), memory, and programs which run on the computer. The first three parts are called *hardware*. Programs are called *software*.

There are numerous kinds of software, but the most frequently used are *system software* and *applications software*. This article will explain a subset of applications software called *tutorial software*.

*Applications* are the programs we think of most often when we want to accomplish work. Word-processing programs, databases, spreadsheets, and graphics programs are all common productivity applications. Some teachers think that using this type of application software with adult learners is the best use of computers in education.

## Tutorial Applications

Most tutors and literacy instructors are not experienced computer users and want to rely at least partly on prefabricated packages which they can use in their classes.

*Tutorial* applications are software programs specifically designed to help people learn, practice, and master a skill. These vary widely in content, quality, and ways of implementing training. They can introduce new material or reinforce previously presented concepts.

## Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI)

The use of tutorials in education is frequently called Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) or Computer Aided Training (CAT). There are thousands of tutorial packages available in virtually any area adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) instructors and students could want. Many are designed for K-12 instruction; some can be adapted, but much cannot. Tutorials range in price from $15 to $10,000. Good tutorials can offer excellent supplements which adult learners can use when instructors are not available.

They can distill the techniques of master teachers, are private, individualized and self-pacing. They may break down knowledge into skills and sub-skills so learners can work on them to achieve mastery. They can track learner progress and address further instruction or remediation to the specific student. Some are designed to be used individually, other software is designed to be used by groups.

## Some Are Lousy

Unfortunately, many tutorials are just plain lousy. I would specifically not recommend at least 80% of the programs I have seen.

Here are some questions you should ask when you examine a tutorial application for possible adoption in your program. In many ways, it is similar to a list of questions you might ask of a book or video you would consider using. It is not exhaustive, but it will help give you some overview of whether it will fit.

* Is there an advantage to using this tutorial instead of other methods (books, discussion, class) to teach the subject this way?

* Does this tutorial reflect the philosophy of your agency?

* Is it appropriate for the intended level?

* Is the information conveyed correct? You would be amazed at how many software packages contain misspellings or misinformation.

* Is the approach and attitude consistent with the latest educational approaches and ABLE theories of learning?

* Are there extensions for faster students to use or do they need to plod through excessive and unnecessary verbiage?

* Are there extensions for slower students who may need to go over information more than others?

* Are the screens legible and uncluttered? For people who may already be having trouble reading, a poor font or poor contrast may be bad.

* Is there a good use of visuals? Do they enhance the understanding of users, or are there dancing frogs and bunnies which just distract from the learning

experience? Good programs usually offer you an "option" to turn these off and on, so for students who might enjoy the extra reinforcement they are available.

* Especially for beginning and ESL readers and writers, is there an auditory component to the program where they can hear words or instructions as well as read them? How is the quality of the sound?

* Is it relevant to different subjects?

* Compared to other programs or other ways of teaching this subject, is this tutorial a good value for the money?

* Does it encourage thinking and doing, rather than just memorization?

* Can it be used by a person with minimal computer skills? This includes the learners and the teachers or tutors who will be using it.

* Does it individualize well, or does it only go as far as saying, "Nice work, Susan"? Does it truly tailor instruction to the needs of the student?

* Does it allow for alternative answers when appropriate?

* Does it have sexist, racist, classist, ageist, or any other bias which might make it inappropriate for your class?

* Overall, did *you*, the potential purchaser, like it? Did it engage your attention? Did you enjoy it? Would you use it?

Clearly there are a number of potential problems with using the tutorial applications. There may be little allowance for alternative answers which might be correct. Learners may practice puzzle-solving (finding a pre-determined answer) rather than problem solving (as in life, choosing from among an enormous number of potential answers, all with multiple unexpected ramifications and risks). The computer may become the medium of truth, rendering teachers less important, which might be threatening.

In next month's *Buzz* I will furnish a list of a few tutorials I consider excellent along with a rating sheet which may be useful as you select programs for your ABLE instruction. ❖

# AdvancE Materials in Technology

## by Cheryl Harmon, Adult Literacy Resource Specialist

Section 353 projects in Pennsylvania have opportunities for local programs to demonstrate technology tools with students and staff. State College School District CAC expanded its software collection. Tri-County OIC reviewed shareware products and Susquehanna County Literacy Council trained its tutors. Yes, our colleagues are doing it!

The State Adult Literacy Resource Center (SLRCs) have a printout of full abstracts of technology projects funded during fiscal years 1992-1994. These, as with all SLRC materials are available for loan by contacting either AdvancE in Harrisburg (800) 992-2283 or the Western Pennsylvania Center (800) 446-5607, ext. 216.

Here are some examples of what individual programs have done to take advantage of increasingly accessible technological tools:

### Computer Software

PA 99-2016 AE 3025-808; *Adult Literacy Software Resource and Review Center*; Drexel University Office of Computing Services

This project established an adult literacy software review center which purchased software for a one-stop examination center. The center produced a newsletter, advised visiting staff on usage and gave eight workshops.

PA 98-4006 AE 3025-1004; Library Computer-Assisted Tutoring; Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit 16

The purpose of the project was to introduce computer assisted instruction to the volunteer tutoring situation Public access computers in public libraries were installed with Laubach International software for reading skills. Tutors enjoyed the new approach to instruction and students found the approach empowering.

PA 98-1020 AE 4200-62; *Word Processing/Language Experience Tutorial Handbook*; Adult Enrichment Center, Lancaster-Lebanon IU 13

The handbook was designed on the Apple IIe for use by adult learners who can read at 4th grade or higher. Writing activities are classified as language experience to accommodate a spectrum of student skill levels. To eliminate the stumbling block of computer terminology, especially to ESL students, icons were added and greatly improved student success.

### Distance Education

PA 98-3001 AE 3025-845; *Assessing . . . Adult Literacy Staff Development Through Distance Education in Rural Pennsylvania*; Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy

A survey was conducted of literacy and ABE providers in rural Pennsylvania to determine the acceptance of using distance education for staff development and accessibility to various equipment. Results indicated that staff are interested if a system can be produced.

PA 98-3028 AE 3025-874; *Laser Disc Technology "A Visual Approach to Reading"*; Tuscarora IU 11 Adult Education and Job Training Center

This project developed a planned course of study using laser disc software to enhance the study of Social Studies, Science, and Literature and the Arts in ABE/GED reading classes. The students that were served by this project had the opportunity to be involved with an exceptional method of reading instruction. Laser disc instruction added a unique, visual dimension of learning to the ABE reading curriculum.

### Videotape

PA 99-4011 AE 3025-993; *Family Literacy Videotape Evaluation*; Beginning with Books

The intent of this staff development project was to develop an ABE Family Literacy Videotape Guide which would serve as a resource. The resulting annotated guide to reviewed videotapes also helps present the collaborative process of having a diverse panel evaluate the usefulness of the videotapes.

PA 98-4048 AE 3025-1031; *Sharing Literacy Models: Deaf . . . Families*; Western Pennsylvania Center for the Deaf

The videoprogram produced vignettes matched with particular literacy strategies needed by parents of deaf children. A 22-minute videotape and corresponding booklets were produced.

PA 98-4025 AE-3025-1052; *Video Instructional Course for GED Teachers*; Erie City School District

This project was developed to prepare and offer teaching strategies to teachers of Adult Education who may not be well acquainted with the subject area of mathematics. This innovative instructional method was recorded in 30 segments with accompanying exercises. The videos were favorably reviewed by local adult educators and the Staff Development Project Coordinator.

### Additional technology resources available through AdvancE

*Adult Literacy and New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime.* U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment. Dr. Linda Roberts, 1993, 250+ pp. Thorough review of status of technology in adult literacy programs, including policy and access issues, sampling of programs, and statistics. Companion to "Tools for Technology" teleconference. Free while books last.

*Using Computers in Family Literacy Programs.* Rebecca King. National Center for Family Literacy, 1992, 77p. Report encourages incorporation of computer programs into family literacy by providing strategies for using software with either child or parent. Also describes family literacy components (early childhood, intergenerational, etc.) and application of software to each. Available for loan AE 4200-72.

*Literacy and Machines: An Overview of the Use of Technology in Adult Literacy Programs;* Terilyn C. Turner. National Center on Adult Literacy; 1993, 72 pp.

Paper describes philosophical positions, history of technology use in adult literacy and summarizes current applications. Available for loan AE 4200-73. ❖

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# 353 Final Reports — An Excellent Resource!

The following Section 353 projects have developed curricula, techniques, activities and materials utilizing technology in adult education. Final reports, including curricula, materials, etc. are available on loan from either of the two State Adult Literacy Resource Centers.

� *GED Computer-Assisted Instruction Project* (PA 99-4026). Project Director-Thomas Wojcicki, Somerset County AVTS, RD 5, Vo-Tech Road, Somerset, PA 15501.

The vo-tech school adult program introduced computer assisted instruction (CAI) into a program where there had been only traditional instruction. See Mr. Wojcicki's report on this page.

� *Overcoming the "Fear"* (PA 99-4018). Project Director-Harold J. Staats, Susquehanna County Volunteer Literacy Council, 72 Church Street, Montrose, PA 18801.

Despite the fears of tutors and students toward use of computers, the project overcame most of the fears with training in the workings of a computer and its use with instruction. See report by Louise Lyons Novy, Literacy Council Director, and Harold Staats on this page.

� *Library Computer-Assisted Tutoring* (PA 98-4006). Project Director-Michael Wilson, Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit #16, PO Box 213, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

Sixty tutors were trained in using public access computers in public libraries. Laubach Literacy software addressing reading skills was installed and included in the training. Although only 14 tutors used the system the project concluded that "it clearly opened some opportunities for both tutor and student." Comment: "Public libraries did not always offer hospitable situations for the program."

✷ *Operation Link-Up/Instruction Delivery and Classroom Management through Technology* (PA 98-4002). Project Director-Jeffrey Woodyard, Tri-County Opportunities Industrialization Center, 2107 Sixth Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

The Project identified computer needs at satellite locations, reviewed and evaluated instructional materials, designed and installed a host computer bulletin board access network, published a user's manual, and trained staff and students. Comment: "Others who try to replicate this project will have to consider that the key to its success was having a project implementor who is fully aware of the capabilities and limitations of technology as it relates to distance education."

✷ *Overcoming The Fear* by Louise Lyons Novy and Harold J. Staats.

This project was to instruct Volunteer Tutors and their students in basic computer literacy. The goal was to have tutors and students work together to overcome their fear of working with computer technology.

Tutors were first given basic instruction on how computers work and a thorough explanation of how to perform tasks. Programs such as WordPerfect and Lotus 1-2-3 were used to familiarize the tutors with DOS.

Next the tutors worked on programs that were directed more to literacy and to workplace needs. Additional software was tested and purchased creating a "library" of programs.

Training the tutors to use computers was successful. Their confidence and ability increased dramatically.

Many of the students did not want to go public with their tutors, or found the class incompatible with their schedules. The tutors continued their training and found alternate sites for instruction.

There was far too little money in the budget to pay instructors an adequate salary. This issue must be addressed to achieve future success.

✷ *Introducing Technology Into Your Classroom* by Thomas P. Wojcicki, Somerset County AVTS.

It has been well documented that technology in the classroom, specifically computer-assisted instruction, is a valuable curriculum tool. Computer-assisted instruction has been found to promote student learning by increasing student satisfaction, motivation, performance and program retention (Brown, 1990, Evaluation to The R.O.A.D. to Success Project). This method of instruction provides an opportunity for self-paced independent learning and facilitates the process in a less stressful manner.

The Somerset County Area Vocational-Technical School was awarded two Section 353 Mini Staff Development grants, ABE Computer-Assisted Instruction and GED Computer-Assisted Instruction to introduce computer-assisted technology into the ABE and GED programs offered through the AVTS. This was accomplished by first providing the staff with training in basic computer concepts and specific application of curriculum software. The staff was then able to implement the computer-assisted instruction, via the use of laptop computers, as a supplement to their curriculum offerings.

The Somerset County AVTS operates its adult literacy classes throughout rural Somerset County utilizing a network of outreach sites. The use of laptop computers provided ease of portability and was an efficient and economical means by which to access this new technology tool to as many students as possible.

The advantages received by students' exposure to computers are immeasurable. The exposure opens an avenue which explores new mediums of learning, promotes vocational interests, and encourages a foundation for further learning.

The introduction of computer-assisted instruction provides a foundation for future technology development in the classroom and provides students with the means by which they may better achieve their personal goals. ❖

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# NEWSLETTER ROUNDUP . . .

*in which we note types and contents of newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze.*

■ The Winter, 1995 edition of *Literacy Harvest*, The Journal of the Literacy Assistance Center in New York City, contains an article by Diana D. Woolis which contains some interesting insights into the current state of affairs in the areas of literacy and politics.

Ms. Woolis notes that presently "the highest priority is to move people to work. Implicit in this assumption are the beliefs that those who can work should . . . and that low, entry-level work can lead to higher-wage, more stable employment.

"With this . . . shift came a de-emphasis on the singular role of education/literacy as the best means to self-sufficiency, employment or employment persistence, *particularly if the educational program is long-term and general, as opposed to vocational or occupationally specific.*"

The Literacy Assistance Center is located at 84 William Street, 14th floor, NYC 10038.

■ The *Newsletter of the Region 4 Staff Development Center* tells of a new newsletter called *Tutor Talk*. Put together by a group of tutors from Allegheny, Beaver and Westmoreland Counties, the newsletter contains practical suggestions and hints for volunteer tutors. This is a great opportunity for tutors to "talk" to each other. For more information contact Rachel Zilcosky, Region 4 Coordinator (412) 661-7323.

■ The *Region 5 Staff Development Center Newsletter* of March, 1995 (Brian Frey, coordinator) contains a special insert from *Hands-On English*, a newsletter for teachers and tutors of adult English as a Second Language. The insert explains about the proposed funding cuts in federal adult education programs and gives some examples of what adult educators can do: Letter-writing; Phone calls; Networking with other professionals, etc. Contact Hands-on-English, PO Box 256, Crete, NE 68333.

■ We have frequently noted words of wisdom concerning the Politics of Literacy which appeared in *The Ladder*, the newsletter of the literacy-advocacy group *Push Literacy Action Now* (PLAN) based in Washington, DC.

For years *The Ladder* has been keeping us up to date on the latest shenanigans of the feds as well as providing readers with lots of professional development information.

In the November/December, 1994 issue of *The Ladder* is a letter from *Don Block*, Executive Director of the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council. Don laments the regression of *The Ladder* to "a publication which is indistinguishable from many others in the literacy field," and states, "The worst criticism that could have been leveled at *The Ladder* is that it could be mistaken for a publication of the U.S. Department of Education."

*Tony Kroll*, editor of *The Ladder*, responds to Don by saying, "Thank you for your truth and honesty," and agreeing with the mediocre level of recent issues.

According to Mr. Kroll, "Literacy just isn't an issue anymore. There are no big publicity campaigns and no visible spokespersons for the 'fight against illiteracy'."

*The Ladder* has been published (this may have been their last issue) at 1332 G Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003.

■ The April, 1995 issue of *NEA Today*, the newsletter of the National Educational Association, contains a cover story titled "Literacy: A Family Affair" which says, among other things: "Across the country, there are 90 million adults who can't read at a fifth grade level. Forty million of them can barely read or write at all." The article concludes with a listing of resources in the Resource Pavilion in America Online's Education Marketplace.

■ *Missouri's Literacy Network News* has a "Tutor Tip" in the March, 1995 issue called Newspaper Bingo. Designed to help adult students pick out key words and assisting in critical thinking and summarizing, the game has students and tutor reading newspaper articles then filling in "bingo" cards with: Who? What? When? Where? What? and How?

■ The first issue of 1995 of *Trainer Touchstone*, the newsletter for tutor trainers from Laubach Literacy Action (LLA), has among other articles information about some experiments with *Training By Design* (TBD), based upon local program needs. Some of the experimentation has resulted in combinations of TBD, *Laubach Way to Reading* (LWR) and *Challenger* materials to produce workshops adapted to tutor needs as they meet varying student needs.

LLA may be contacted at Box 131, Syracuse, NY 13210.

■ In the same issue of *Trainer Touchstone* is a letter from *Helen Patterson*, *Ted Transue*, and *Marge Dickey* of *ProJeCt LEARN* in Easton telling of their efforts over the past eight years to help other programs in their area establish new reader training teams.

The ProJeCt LEARN staff members take issue with a story in an earlier issue of *Trainer Touchstone* which suggested that utilizing new readers as trainees is difficult and that participation of new readers in training sessions would be limited. Their letter outlines the success the Easton program has had and notes: "Over the years we have seen how this process improves the quality of our training, builds confidence and commitment in our tutors, and raises the confidence and self esteem of our new readers."

*New Reader Tutors from ProJeCt LEARN will present information on their tutor training, New Reader Newsletter, support groups and dropout prevention program at the Northeast Regional Adult Literacy Conference at Penn State in June.* ❖

# From The Marketplace . . . What Works

One of the problems adult educators encounter as they attempt to get feedback from students who have left their programs is the inability of the former adult students to identify those learnings from adult basic and literacy education programs which they are presently utilizing and which helped prepare them for success.

The comments, "I learned to read," or "I learned to do math," are relevant, but do not identify other skills which have been learned in the adult education program.

We recently received two "kit-type" programs from Philip Roy Publishers for review and adult educators who reviewed them feel they contain materials which extend the usual skill development areas into what is referred to as *functional skills*, and permit adult students to develop areas of useful knowledge which they can directly relate to their transition to employment and successful lives in their communities and families.

The *Social and Functional Skills* Curriculum Program places emphasis on developing competencies in a number of everyday living areas.

Materials are written on the 3.5-5.6 adult levels and, although the publisher indicates the materials are designed for independent use by students, most teachers will find some type of instructional/resource assistance is appropriate.

Reading, math, language arts, job preparation and attitudes, critical thinking skills as they relate to everyday living, locating and interpreting information from newspapers, arithmetic skills required to the completion of loan applications, bank deposit slips, etc. are some of the topics dealt with in the *Social and Functional Skills Kit*.

Materials are attractively bound in a series of loose-leaf binders and there is a separate booklet for each unit of work. Each unit contains an extensive listing of goals, objectives, materials, activities, etc. and there is also a Teacher's Guide.

The cost for the kit is $895, and books may be purchased for individual skill areas.

## Family Literacy

Another kit of duplicatable materials and cassettes from Philip Roy, this time in the Family Literacy area, is *Preparing Your Child for School* which takes family literacy right to the motivational place of most parents who want to improve their literacy skills so they can be an educational resource for their children.

The kit is available in Spanish or English and includes a Trainer's Guide with some good suggestions for use by parents and teachers in using the kit's materials.

In the kit's eight binders there are 43 books and cassettes, completion certificates, posters, coloring books and nursery rhymes all relating to the literacy and life skills areas of Reading and Language Arts, Math, Self-esteem, The World Around Us, Good Health Habits, and Physical Activities.

For example, one of the areas dealt with is titled "Helping Your Child—Reading Children's Books" which gives a number of tips for parents reading to their children and notes the advantages of the child learning new words, hearing the sounds of languages, learning about other places and times, etc.

Booklets are available for purchase individually and the entire kit costs $495.

One of the real advantages of both of these kits is the duplicatable materials (print and audio cassettes) which permit teachers to furnish copies to every class member or parent with minimal additional cost.

A review set of the *The Social and Functional Skills Curriculum Program* is housed in the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (800-446-5607, ext. 216) and the *Preparing Your Child for School* kit is at AdvancE (800) 992-2283. Catalogs and additional information may be ordered from Philip Roy (800) 255-9085, PO Box 130, Indian Rocks Beach, FL 34635 (ask for Dr. Ruth Bragman). ✣

## 1995 PA ABLE Staff Handbook Now Available

It's a great resource for experienced and, especially, novice adult basic and literacy education professionals and the 1995 edition of the *Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Handbook* is now available.

Prepared and published by Tana Reiff of Lancaster, the 1995 *Handbook* contains 64 pages of articles and reference directories on more than 50 key topics for teachers, tutors, counselors and other staff of ABLE programs in Pennsylvania.

It's free from one of the State Adult Literacy Resource Centers: AdvancE, 1-800-992-2283 and Western Pennsylvania 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216.

## PCN Revised Literacy Program Schedule

We have received word from Brad Plummer, Director of Marketing for the Pennsylvania Cable Network (PCN) there have been minor revisions in the literacy programming schedule for Spring, 1995.

*Helping Adults Learn* will air Monday through Thursday from 4-4:30 p.m.

*Touching the Future* airs Monday through Thursday from 4:30-5 p.m.

*On Your Own* continues to run from 11:30 a.m. to 12 noon each weekday. It is followed by *GED on TV* in English, with a Spanish version airing at 12:30 p.m.

From 11-11:30 p.m. every weekday *Journal: The News Magazine* in Spanish airs. ESL teachers might want to use this content to supplement their current affairs teaching.

We also note a show titled *New Literacy* on Fridays from 4-4:30 p.m.

For more information including PCN outlets in your area and videotaping rights, contact PCN (717) 730-6000.

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# People and Program in PA ABLE

❊ Welcome to *Jack Kinney* who has been appointed sales representative in Southeastern Pennsylvania for Globe Fearon, a subsidiary of Simon and Schuster. Jack's address is 546 Angelo Drive, Bethlehem, PA 18017 – (610) 691-1245.

Globe Fearon is the publishing group representing Quercus, Janus and Cambridge and their number is (800) 877-4283. Note: This number is a revision of the Fearon/Quercus number we noted for publishers of Tana Reiff's *Hopes and Dreams II* series published by Fearon, in our April, 1995 issue.

❊ For many years we have referred adult educators with questions about information relating to adult learners with disabilities to *William Langner*, program specialist for the U.S. Department of Education. Bill has fought the good fight for many, many years and, among his other accomplishments, was one of the founders of the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN).

We rec *ntly talked to Bill and found that, by the time you read this article, he will have left the Department and has "retired" to a long list of projects he is considering including establishment of an Institute for Lifelong Learning for Adults With Disabilities, a Center for Leadership Development which will provide long-term training to adult educators, etc.

Bill has been a good friend to adult learners, especially those with disabilities, and has many friends in Pennsylvania. We wish him well.

❊ Congratulations to the winners of the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC)'s *Leaders in Literacy Awards:*
LITERACY VOLUNTEER
*Yvonne Grandy*, Westmoreland County Literacy Council.
LITERACY PROFESSIONAL
*Linda Flower*, National Center for the Study of Writing, Learning, Carnegie Mellon University.
CORPORATION/FOUNDATION
*Integra Financial Corporation.*
ADULT LEARNER
*Bryant Gilmore*, GPLC.

❊ Welcome to *Sister Jacqueline Hall* who has been recently named Executive Director of *Lutheran Social Mission Society/Lutheran Settlement House.* The Northeast Philadelphia agency provides a number of services including adult education, literacy training and employment assistance. Sister Jacquie comes to Philadelphia from Lutheran Social Services in Southern California – hope you enjoy the winters, Sister!

❊ We have been trying to keep our readers up-to-date on the free Literacy Programming being made available by the Pennsylvania Cable Network and our thanks to PCN Marketing Director Bradford Hammer for keeping us informed. PCN is now being carried by cable outlets in nearly every section of the state (excluding some of the boonies) and the latest outlets are members of CATV Service, Inc. with outlets in Danville, Lewisburg, Milton and Watsontown.

If you're not sure where or when to receive PCN Literacy cable broadcasts, call PCN at (717) 730-6000.

❊ Karen Warner of the Adult Education program for Intermediate Unit #12 in York, was awarded the PAACE Service Award at the Midwinter Conference for her work in computerizing the conference registration process.

In making the award Dr. Gordon Godbey, former Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education President and a member of the PAACE Board of Directors, said "PAACE is volunteers and many of our PAACE members do not know Karen nor her work on behalf of the organization because she is working very quietly, not being on the front lines, but doing things constructively."

Karen graciously thanked her co-worker at IU #12, Larry Bresnahan, who, when presented with the challenge of registration for PAACE, said, "We can do it." Karen notes: "It turns out *I was we!*"

❊ Congratulations to the ten program sites which have been chosen as EQuAL Pilot Sites. They are:

Altoona School District
Central Intermediate Unit 10
Community Women's
Education Project (Philadelphia)
Norristown School District
Rockview State
Correctional Institution
Tri-County OIC (Harrisburg)
Lancaster - Lebanon IU #13
Adult Literacy Action/Penn
State University, Beaver
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council
Scranton Council for
Literacy Advance (SCOLA)

❊ *Buzz* readers who did not receive their calendar recently in the mail should be aware of the *Learning Disabilities Association of Pennsylvania, Inc.*, a non-profit organization which provides information about adults with learning disabilities and their needs within literacy programs.

Included in the 1995 calendar is a section titled "Tips for Literacy Providers – Instructional Accommodations" which lists 23 General Techniques and seven ways to capitalize on visual strengths of LD adults.

You may contact the Association at Box 208, Uwchland, PA 19480 (610) 458-8193. ❖

Welcome aboard to Dr. **Eugene W. Hickok, Jr.**, newly appointed Secretary of Education for Pennsylvania. As a member of the Carlisle School Board, Dr. Hickok had a first-hand opportunity to become familiar with the Carlisle School District and Carlisle OIC adult basic and literacy education programs.

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**MAY, 1995**

**1:** NATIONAL FAMILY READING WEEK.

**1:** A Celebration of Family Reading: Allegheny IU, Station Square, 2nd floor, Pittsburgh. 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Contact: Rachel Zilcosky (412) 661-7323.

**4 & 5:** Maryland AAACE Conference; Gaithersburg Hilton. Contact: Laura Weidner, Catonsville Community College, 800 S. Rolling Road, Baltimore, MD 21228 (410) 455-4501.

**15:** Deadline for submissions for Pennsylvania Adult and Continuing Education Research Conference to be held September 30, 1995. Send submissions to: Dr. Gary W. Kuhne, Penn State Center for Continuing and Graduate Education, 4518 Northern Pike, Monroeville, PA 15146.

**15:** Family Literacy and Community Collaborations: *Teleconference;* 4-5:30 p.m. Edinboro. Contact: Bootsie Barbour (814) 866-3775.

**18:** CREATING A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES: Liberating People with Disabilities through Adaptive Technologies; *TELECONFERENCE.* 2:30-4:30 p.m. Contact: PBS Adult Learning Satellite Service, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314 or GOPHER.PBS.ORG (port 70).

**21-27:** *National Adult and Continuing Education Week.*

**24-25:** 11th Annual SDA Employment, Education and Training Conference. Hershey. Contact: Brian Frey (717) 248-4942. Will include ABLE workshops in basic skills, collaboration and family literacy.

**JUNE, 1995**

**5-7:** 5th Annual Adult Education for the Homeless Conference; Excelsior Hotel, Little Rock, Arkansas. Contact: COABE, 1504 Caldwell, Conway, AR 72032.

**June 7-9:** COMMISSION ON ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (COABE) NATIONAL CONFERENCE: Little Rock, Arkansas. Theme: "Helping Others Pursue Excellence". Contact: COABE '95, 1504 Caldwell, Conway, AR 73032.

**7-9:** Newspaper Association of America Conference on Newspapers in Education and Literacy: Seattle. Contact: Betty Sullivan, The Newspaper Center, 11600 Sunrise Valley Dr., Reston, VA 22091.

**9-10:** Teaching Limited-English-Speaking Adult Learners, audioconference sessions. A new summer course at Penn State including the 1995 First Annual Eastern Regional Professional Development Adult Basic Education Workshop. Contact: Judy Hall, 225 Penn State Scanticon, University Park, PA 16802-7002 (814) 863-5130. Resident instruction on July 17-21.

**15:** 3rd Annual Inter-Regional Corrections Conference. Altoona. Staff Development Regions 2, 4 and 5. Contact: Brian Frey (717) 248-4942.

**17-19:** National Educational Computing Conferences: Baltimore; Theme: "Emerging Technologies – Lifelong Learning". Contact: NECC '95, 1787 Agate St., Eugene, OR 97403.

**23-25:** 1995 NorthEast Regional Adult Literacy Conference; Penn State. Keynote Speaker: *Dr. Ron Pugsley,* Director of Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. Expenses for adult learners are available (Linda Herr, 717-326-0556). For more information or to volunteer to assist, contact Monica Kindig (814) 238-1809.

**25-27:** 11th Annual State Conference on Volunteerism; Philadelphia. Theme: "Volunteers Making History". Contact: Sherry Collins, Eagleville Hospital, 100 Eagleville Rd., Eagleville, PA 19408 (610) 539-6000, ext. 115.

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## Have You Used WPALRC Materials?

Chris Kemp, Adult Literacy Resource Center Specialist at the Western Pennsylvania Resource Center in Gibsonia, is requesting *Buzz* readers who: 1. adapted/adopted a Section 353 project from information received from WPALRC; or 2. purchased published materials after reviewing loan materials from WPALRC, to contact Chris (800) 446-5607, ext. 216, and let her know about your usage of materials.

## Need Computers, Office Supplies? . . .

The nonprofit *National Association for the Exchange of Industrial Resources* (NAEIR) has been doing business since 1977, but not too many adult basic and literacy education programs are aware of how they can tap into excess inventory items from U.S. corporations which NAEIR has in its 300-page catalog issued every 10 weeks.

Since 1977 NAEIR has distributed more than $500 million in office supplies, computer software and hardware, teaching materials, books, etc. to more than 7,000 schools and charities across the country.

There is a fee for participation in the service, but new subscribers get a money-back guarantee for the first year.

For more information contact NAEIR at 800-562-0955.

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Pennsylvania's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Professional Development Newsletter

# "What's the Buzz?"

# What's The *BUZZ?*™

## Ethical Considerations . . .
### In Adult Education
### Program Planning

Program planning in adult education is a complicated, multi-step process requiring numerous decisions at many points. Value systems of adult students, society, other practitioners, sponsors and planners themselves must be taken into consideration.

Examples of the dilemmas produced by these considerations might include whether the program should address the needs of those most in need or those learners who will show the most progress the fastest. The ethical considerations in this dimension are enhanced by the recent emphasis upon accountability, assessment, and "quality indicators" in adult education.

R. G. Brockett in his book "Ethical Issues in Adult Education" suggests the following ideas for promoting ethical practice in adult education:

* **Self-examination.** The starting point for understanding the ethics of practice is found in personal value systems, but these must be articulated.
* **Reflect on ethics in practice.** Finding time for personal and group reflection on ethical issues is important because it helps uncover ethical dilemmas and resolve conflicts before they arise.
* **Examine the practices of other professions.** Learning how other professions deal with ethical dilemmas can lead to more insights about the ethics of adult education practice.

*Buzz readers interested in pursuing further research in this area should contact the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education, 1900 Kenny Road. Columbus. Ohio and request Digest #116 from which this article is excerpted There is no charge and the Digest contains an extensive bibliography relating to Ethical Practice in Adult Education* ❖

# Literacy Testing and Social Policy

Literacy Tests are one of the central ways that policymakers (funders) obtain information about the needs and characteristics of their clients for adult literacy services, the quality of services actually delivered, and the impact of those services upon the individuals who receive them.

Policymakers now access data from four types of tests: (1) national and state population assessments, such as the *National Adult Literacy Survey* (NALS), (2) individual skills assessments, such as the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE), (3) placement procedures, and (4) progress evaluations. All of these tests provide data with widely varying degrees of reliability, validity, and comparability. Their usefulness as sources of information for policymakers is, therefore, a subject of some controversy.

> *"There are many problems with Adult Basic Education programs using tests like the TABE, both for placement and to meet reporting requirements . . . "*

### National assessments and individual skills tests

National and state surveys of literacy generally measure functional skills abilities. The tests are constructed around short-answer responses to everyday literacy tasks, such as reading want ads. In contrast, most *individual* skills assessments used for pre- and post-testing of adults' abilities in literacy skills programs are basic skills tests, often developed from similar tests for children. A typical adult reading test assesses various types of comprehension (for example, literal, inferential, critical) and other skills, such as vocabulary.

Functional literacy tests and basic skills tests are not simply alternative means for tapping the same skills; the two cannot be equated.

For example, if want ads in newspapers are selected as a text type for assessment, different tasks might be defined for such a text. A want ad requesting a house cleaner for an initial salary of $10 an hour and listing a phone number might be coupled with questions such as: What phone number should you call to respond to the ad? If you took the job and worked one day each week for four hours, how much would you earn in eight weeks? Since no analysis has been done of the skills required to do such tasks, the instructional implications of such assessments are not clear. Considerable research remains to be done on the interaction between text difficulty and the skills involved in functional literacy tasks.

### Placement tests and progress evaluations

Many Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs currently use tests like the TABE both for placement and to meet reporting requirements for student progress and program outcomes. There are many problems with this, and the results, as currently reported, have relatively limited use for policymakers.

One problem is that the test is generally administered during an adult's

## Literacy Testing,
## continued from page 1

first week in a program; for many, this is the first encounter with formal testing since dropping out of school. Many of the adults have poor test-taking skills and low self-confidence, and thus, their test results may be artificially low. Tests given after several weeks of instruction might yield more reliable scores, but of course would not be useful for placement.

Another complication is that what a functional literacy test or a basic skills test assesses may not be what particular courses teach or what particular students want to learn. Almost all test score reporting is for reading comprehension, yet most ABE courses stress a variety of skills, including basic mathematics and writing, as well as specific survival skills, such as applying for a job and interacting with a child's school. In fact, ABE programs are attempting to serve two distinct goals. One is to prepare adults to progress in a formal educational system. This path might lead them to GED courses or community college. The other is to give adults practical skills they need for self-esteem, work, home, and civic needs. In this path, less attention is given to academic skills.

Policy-related results must be interpretable in relation to societal goals. What policymakers need to know, for adults who enroll in literacy courses, is how many stay long enough to reach desired levels of functioning. *Without an accurate measure of individual progress that links to national trend data and without linking both of these to functional levels, little can be decided about long-term impacts of programs.*

*Matching Literacy Testing With Social Policy: What are the Alternatives?* By Richard L. Venezky, Co-Director for Research and Development, The National Center on Adult Literacy, University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111. Abridged from a paper presented at the Literacy Policy Forum, Washington, DC, 1992. ❖

# National Evaluation of Adult Education Nears Completion

Last year, in our March, 1994 issue, we brought you information about the National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs (NEAEP), a study carried out by Development Associates, Inc. in Arlington, Virginia under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education. The March article dealt with the topic "Client Attendance" and contained some conclusions the study drew relating to characteristics of adult education programs having high retention rates.

*Fourth Report: Learner Outcomes and Program Results* is the topic of the fourth, and final, stage of the NEAEP. The recently released Executive Summary deals with Client Enrollment, Attendance, Outcomes and Reasons Why adults leave programs.

ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE: The National Survey identified 46% of adult learners in English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, 30% in Adult Secondary Education (ASE) and 24% in Adult Basic Education (ABE).

- ESL clients received a median of 113 hours (18 weeks) of instruction; ASE, 28 hours (6 weeks); ABE, 35 hours (8 weeks). Overall, ESL adult students account for 75% of the total hours of instruction provided to adult learners.

- The "roller-coaster" enrollment pattern typical of adult education programs reaches its low point in July and peaks in September/October and March.

- Distribution of adult students by geographic area: West - 40%; South - 30%; North Central - 19%; Northeast - 11%.

- For every 1,000 persons eligible for adult education in the United States, an estimated 36% enroll as new clients each year. For ESL eligibles, 73% enroll.

OUTCOMES: After 84 hours of instruction the average ABE client gains 15 scale-score points on the TABE reading comprehension test; ASE - 7

points after 63 hours of instruction. The average ESL client gains 5 scale-score points on the CASAS reading test after 120 hours of instruction.

More dollars, better scores? The survey showed that, in ASE and ESL programs, higher cost per student hour of instruction *is positively* related to client learning gains. Total hours of instruction are related to measured literacy outcomes in ESL programs only.

Employment Gains? About 6% more clients are employed six months after leaving the program than held jobs just prior to enrollment. 43% of adult learners report the program helped them in finding a job; 61% of those already employed when entering feel the program helped them in their jobs and 59% say the program helped them get better jobs.

Goals: Six months after leaving the program 18% of the adults report they are enrolled in another, ongoing, educational program; another 28% say they are planning to enroll. In addition to employability and academic work, clients express their reasons for attending adult education programs as feeling better about themselves, contributing to family and community, making others feel better about them, becoming less dependent on others for help, and helping children with homework. After six months of leaving the program, an average of 70% say they have been helped "a lot" in one or more of these areas.

Were you satisfied? 41% of the clients report they left the program because they had finished it, achieved their goals or received satisfaction from their educational experience. Reasons for leaving: Illness and transportation problems - 41%; Instructional factors (lack of progress, dissatisfaction with the program, etc.) - 7%.

For ordering information concerning portions of or the entire study, write Development Associates, Inc., 1730 North Lynn Street, Arlington, VA 22209. ❖

## Self-Directed Learning

### by Malcolm Knowles

Although this book was originally published in 1975, don't let the date make you think the material on Self-Directed Learning is out of date.

The introduction says the book is designed for both learners and teachers and we imagine a self-directed learner could benefit from Dr. Knowles' guidelines. However, its most appropriate use would be with tutors and teachers who are sold on the concept of Self-Directed Learning, but don't quite know where to start.

The author describes *Self-Directed Learning* as a situation where adult learners "take the initiative, with or without help, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes." Quite an undertaking for a professional adult educator let alone an adult student.

The *reasons for Self-Directed Learning* outlined by the author are valid: 1. proactive learners learn more and better; 2. self-direction is in keeping with the concept of increasing responsibility; 3. new methods and technology place more responsibility on learners; 4. the main purpose of education should be to develop the skills of inquiry.

Learning resources, learning contracts and evaluation round out Dr. Knowles' "Guide" and he outlines information about these activities as they relate to Self-Directed Learning.

One of the strongest-based concepts deals with the development from a "Content Transmitter" to a "Facilitator".

The book is short (135 pages) and concise and a good introduction to the topic. It is available from the Western Pennsylvania Resource Center on free loan (1-800-446-5607, ext. 216). ❖

## Collaborative Learning:
## A Key to Empowerment and Participation in the 90's

Philadelphia is the most concentrated metropolitan and most populous area in the Commonwealth. Presently in the city there are more than 400 adult education learning sites where adults can access quality educational services. However, according to a Section 353 project carried out in the 1993-94 year, "these efforts do not meet the needs of even 25% of all of the adults (in the City) who lack basic skills."

Project Directors Donna Cooper, former Executive Director of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy, and Diane C. Inverso, Resource Coordinator for the Mayor's Commission, feel that, in order to meet the challenge of reaching a larger proportion of adults in need of adult basic and literacy services, adult literacy organizations need to look beyond the traditional methods of service delivery (one-to-one and classroom instruction), to insure that the largest number of adult learners possible is served and that learners in programs are full participants in the educational process.

**COLLABORATION** involves teachers and/or tutors and adult learners actively participating in the educational process. Democratic planning, decision-making and responsibility among all participants bridge the chasm between teachers and students, create a sense of community in the classroom and establish the creation of knowledge as an interactive process which, at best, develops students' abilities to learn for themselves.

**BENEFITS** of *Collaborative Learning* include higher achievement, increased retention, higher self-esteem and better attitudes toward education. According to the final report of the project, one of the greatest benefits is the potential for the model to reach larger numbers of adult learners than in one-on-one tutoring.

The Mayor's Commission on Literacy has been working with a Collaborative Learning Program since 1992 and, through funds provided by the Pew Charitable Trust, designed staff development activities and a manual designed to introduce the concept of Collaborative Learning to staff members in adult education programs of Philadelphia.

Workshops were held to assist participating literacy teachers in understanding the concepts and activities involved, develop logistical plans for facilitating a program of Collaborative Learning, and developing instructional and assessment models.

With Section 353 funding, the project expanded its activities and developed a series of tutor training workshops for volunteers in Philadelphia adult literacy programs. According to the project's final report, these "trainings marked an important breakthrough in adult education delivery both in Philadelphia and across the state" by providing this new approach to volunteer tutor training.

In addition to the training workshops the Commission oversaw six mentor/tutor pairs who examined the workings of the training method.

**RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION** are enhanced through Collaborative Learning because, according to the final report, the number of adults being served is substantially increased over a one-on-one learning situation; in addition, learners involved with the Collaborative Approach "believe their activities and perspectives constitute significant knowledge that ought to be shared and that their own lives and experiences are sources of knowledge," thus giving participants a vested interest in maintaining attendance at sessions.

The manual and other materials, along with the final report developed by the project, are available on free loan from either of the two State Adult Literacy Resource Centers: AdvancE at 1-800-992-2283 or the Western Pennsylvania Resource Center at 1-800-446-5607, ext. 216. ❖

## Individualizing Instruction . . .
### Making Learning Personal, Empowering and Successful

The authors of "Individualizing Instruction," Roger Heimstra, professor of adult education at Syracuse University, and Burton Cisco, assistant professor of adult education at the University of Wyoming, developed this comprehensive look at individualization from a text-book point of view. It would be useful in a graduate school course on the subject, but we can see only the most dedicated adult basic and literacy education practitioner wading through the 267 pages of theory, research and practice and the nearly 500 "references" at the end of the book (even if one of the references is to an article written by Dr. Dale Jordan for *What's the Buzz?* which we printed in 1988).

"Individualizing Instruction" would be useful to a dedicated tutor/teacher who is looking for a single source of a wide variety of information about Individualizing Instruction in an adult education theory/practice format.

The authors point out that *Individualizing* instruction is not *INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION*.

The practical suggestions ("It is not easy for an instructor to help learners take personal ownership for learning while at the same time satisfying those individual or institutional expectations that are rooted in traditional learning practices") are balanced with the recognition that training of adult educators is lacking ("the need for instructor training based on knowledge of adulthood will increase").

This book gives adult basic and literacy educators lots of useful information built on a wide variety of research and literature sources.

The book, "Individualizing Instruction", is available on free loan from the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (1-800-446-5607, ext. 216). ❖

It has long been understood that effective literacy programs are "partnerships" between students, instructors, funders, and other involved members of the Adult Literacy network. Too often, however, developing programs have inadvertently failed to insure that the center of this mission – the student – is fully involved in the decision making process.

In response to the need for a comprehensive guide to student involvement, Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. has published *Growing Together: Improving Your Literacy Program Through Student Participation*. This guidebook presents a participatory, collaborative model for student involvement, along with nearly 40 pages of activities such as student newsletters, student advisory groups, and peer tutoring, which enable students and staff to work together as "partners".

*Growing Together: Improving Your Literacy Program Through Student Participation* (Order #91123) is available from Literacy Volunteers of America, 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214. The price is $9.50 plus shipping and handling. Orders may be placed by phoning toll free 1-800-582-8812, Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. EST, or by mail at the above address.

### Penn State Offers Adult Education Graduate Assistantship

*Buzz* readers planning to pursue advanced degree preparation in Adult Education might be interested in a half-time graduate assistantship available from Penn State in Continuing and Distance Education.

Contact Peter Cookson, Professor in charge, Adult Education Program, Penn State University, 403 South Allen, #206, State College, PA 16801-5202 (814) 865-5878.

## Using the Native Language as a Bridge to English

Some practitioners have found that introducing literacy in the native language can serve as a bridge to ESL literacy. Native language literacy approaches have been used successfully in regions where non-literate learners share a common language, including Massachusetts (where the Haitian Multi-Service Center teaches literacy in Haitian Creole), Minnesota (the Lao Family Community uses Hmong) California (City College of San Francisco uses Spanish), and New York (El Barrio popular uses Spanish).

In many cases, native language literacy is the best approach for non-literate learners who have had few years of education, are unsure about their own ability to learn in a school setting, and speak little English.

The Lao Family Community of Minnesota uses English and Hmong to link the home culture of the learners with the mainstream community. In the family literacy component, both languages are used in the beginning classes to strengthen the role of the Hmong parents and increase their understanding of the local school system. Stories from Hmong culture and materials from the schools the children attend are used to build literacy in the two languages. To build background knowledge of U.S. laws and conventions in a way that is culturally congruent with Hmong values and traditions, speakers from community agencies work together with program staff to develop presentations on sensitive subjects such as child immunization, state marriage laws, and hunting laws.

*Excerpted from ERIC Digest "Developing Native Language Literacy in Language Minority Students" by K. M. Rivera (1990).* ❖

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# Tutorial Software . . . some suggestions for selection

## by Ben Burenstein, Drexel University

Knowledge may be seen as "fixed" by the computer, not developed internally. There may be little emphasis on social, effective, intuitive, political, moral, or experiential processes of learning (not a trivial set of failings). And there may be a hidden curriculum-- is the learner perceived as creative and active, or dependant and passive? Nevertheless, there are enough positive aspects to tutorial software use to make it worth looking for and finding the best that is out there.

Below is a list of a few tutorials I consider excellent. Most of these programs work on both IBM-compatible *and* Macintosh computers (and in some cases Apple-II and Commodore as well). All have been used extensively in the field. Not all are specifically targeted at adults. This is a problem we will discuss in a future issue. But all can be used effectively and enjoyably by adult learners.

Prices quoted are retail. Most programs are available for 10-40% less by buying from a mail order house, such as Educational Resources (800-624-2926) or GBW (302-658-1315). Neither Drexel University, I, nor *"What's the Buzz?"* receive any commercial endorsement from mentioning the products below. I just think they're good.

**Math Blaster Mystery** (Davidson, $49.95, IBM, MAC, Apple II): four games to practice addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, whole number, fraction, decimal and percent word problems. A 4-step problem-solving approach is modeled (what is the question? what is needed to figure it out? how are the figures used? what is the answer?) to help learners internalize this metacognitive strategy. A little Skinnerian, but can hold the attention of students at many levels. Teachers can add problems relevant to the learners they work with, or learners can work together to generate problems for inclusion.

**Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego** (Broderbund, $39.95, IBM, MAC, Apple II, Commodore): part of a series of addictive geography games with great graphics. Students track a gang of criminals using clues which help them learn world facts and help them practice reference skills from which they must extract information.

**Hot Dog Stand** (Sunburst, $65, IBM, MAC): a decision-making and problem-solving life-skills math game where students run a simulated hot dog stand and contend with numerous variables while trying to make money. They learn entrepreneurial skills while calculating and estimating with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions, and deal with different units of measurement such as dozens and cases.

**Type!** (Broderbund, $29.95, IBM, MAC, Apple II, Commodore): an excellent program to learn typing. It analyzes your mistakes, and prescribes lessons which directly address those problems. Has an enjoyable game, and many charts to help analyze individual typing patterns.

**Decisions, Decisions: Immigration** (Tom Snyder Productions, $119.95, IBM, MAC, Apple II): a social studies, decision-making, problem-solving, group-process, role-playing and reference-skill game designed for classrooms which may only have one computer. Students take roles in a political process and are "evaluated" by how their decisions affect their election to office. Part of a series.

Name of software.
What does it teach?
Is there an advantage to using computers instead of other methods to teach the subject this way?
Rate the software on each of the following:

| | Exc. | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Appropriate for intended level? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. Information conveyed is correct? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. Approach and attitude is consistent with latest educational approaches? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. Extensions for faster students? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5. Extensions for slower students? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. Screens are legible and uncluttered? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7. Good use of visuals? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8. Relevant to different subjects? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9. Good value for the money? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10. Encourages thinking and doing, rather than just memorization? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 11. Requires minimal computer skill? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 12. Individualizes well? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 13. Allows for alternative answers? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 14. Has sexist, racist, classist bias? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 15. Quality compares to similar software? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **16. Overall Quality** | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

I recommend ☐ do not recommend ☐ this software (for purchase ☐).

Signature ....................
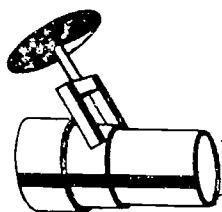
> *"Community-based planning for adult literacy is a process whereby communities identify, develop and implement comprehensive services for adult learners. It is based on the assumption that adult education is a community service and therefore a community responsibility."*
>
> – Cheryl Keenan, ABLE Bureau Director

## Erie Area GED Graduation

### This Is What We're All About . . . by Joseph Mando



For the past six years the GED service providers in the City and County of Erie have joined to produce an *Erie Area GED Graduation Ceremony* in June for everyone who has passed the exam during the year.

Preparation is the key to a successful graduation ceremony. Three months before the date representatives from each participating agency meet to coordinate activities. Included are: The Erie Adult Learning Center; Northwest Tri-County IU #5; Greater Erie Community Action Committee; Millcreek School District; the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Program at St. Ben's Adult Center; and the Hispanic Council.

Activities of the group include printing and mailing invitations to each graduate (approximately 400 per year earn their GED in our area), printing graduation certificates and programs, preparing refreshments and decorations, arranging for music, etc.

Commencement speakers are selected and we have been fortunate to have such dignitaries as former ABLE Bureau Director Dr. John Christopher, Erie Mayor Joyce Savocchio, County Executive Judy Lynch, and State Senator Buzz Andrezeski, as keynote speakers. This year's speaker will be Pennsylvania First Lady *Michele Ridge* who is a former Director of the Erie County Library.

Nearly 1,000 spectators attend the Ceremony and press coverage has been very encouraging. It is a remarkable night and the feelings of pride and accomplishment are as great for teachers and staff as for graduates and their families.

*"What's the Buzz?" readers interested in more information please contact me, Joseph Mando, or Daniel Tempestini at the Erie Adult Learning Center, 2931 Harvard Road, Erie, PA 16508.* ❖

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# PSCAL Community Literacy Planning Revisited

by Cheryl Keenan, Director
Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education

Several months ago, *The Buzz* reported that the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy (PSCAL) had undertaken a new initiative that would improve services to adult learners by supporting local community efforts at coordinated planning. For the past five months, I have served as Chair to the Community Literacy Planning Committee of PSCAL. The work of the Committee is scheduled to end this month, culminating in a strategic planning process called, "Building Communities for Learning".

Committee membership included a diverse group of literacy and human service providers, representatives of various state departments and initiatives, members of business and industry, and staff of the General Assembly who came together to form a common vision for community planning. The work was facilitated by Dr. Stephen A. Nunes, Richmond, VA, who has been involved in community-based planning in several other states. The result is a community literacy planning process that is unique to Pennsylvania and its literacy service delivery system across five state agencies.

Community-based planning for adult literacy is a process whereby communities identify, develop, and implement comprehensive services for adult learners. It is based on the assumption that adult education is a community service and therefore a community responsibility. The degree of responsibility for service planning varies according to the mission, goals, and mandates of each group, individual, or organization within the community. Effective planning involves a broad base of partnerships that assists the learner in accessing services which are needed to support his or her educational goals. It also assists communities in building comprehensive learning systems that integrate educational and human services and ultimately better support the economic and social well being of the community. When effective community planning is operational, it maximizes the use of all community resources,

more so than when resources are applied in a fragmented and uncoordinated fashion. While, by its very nature, community-based planning is initiated and realized at the local level, the role of state level groups is to provide support to locals through resources and technical assistance. The planning process can be built upon existing cooperative and collaborative efforts that already exist within many communities.

In order for planning to be effective, the Committee agreed that certain characteristics are important to the planning process. Planning groups must establish a defined vision with clear objectives and establish security, continuity, and equality among participating members. Planning must allow time to develop a common base of knowledge among all stakeholders and to develop a mission and community presence.

Work should be realistic, action oriented, and provide for positive motivation. The result of the planning process should be concrete and measurable with clear lines of accountability and responsibility. These characteristics are built into the planning model developed by the Committee.

As the work of the Committee is completed, the PSCAL will develop several sites to pilot the community-based planning process. The work and plans developed by the pilot sites will serve as models for further refinement and large scale implementation of community literacy planning. PSCAL will continue to work with various state level agencies and organizations to develop a strategy to implement community-based literacy planning statewide. ❖

## Community Collaborations

by Dr. Linda V. McCrossan,
Executive Director, Adult Literacy
Center of the Lehigh Valley

As adult educators we hear an increasing mandate to collaborate within our communities. We need to understand what collaborations are and how to work within collaborative frameworks. Throughout our communities, collaborations presently exist. They are formed through mutual interest in addressing a theme or a common goal. The premise of all collaborations is that "No one organization can do it all."

Like our students who are first and foremost adult members of our communities, adult education programs are educational programs with a strong community focus.

What are the characteristics of collaborations?

**Collaborations are multi-layered.** The layers of a collaboration, of course, depend on the nature of the collaboration. At the center is the target group - i.e., families, a neighborhood, individuals with medical problems or adult learners. Another layer contains the staff. A third layer has the agencies involved in the collaborations. The fourth layer contains the national or state organizations working together at their respective levels. A fifth layer is funders . . . private, state, city, and county. Each layer is independent and interdependent on the other layers.

**Collaborations are dynamic and developmental.** As collaborations develop, individuals participating in the collaborations and the collaborative partnerships change. Sharing of information, joint planning, sharing of resources and restructuring and/or strengthening of current services are possible stages. All collaborations change as they relate to the sociopolitical structure of communities around them. Consequently, collaborations in small cities will be different than collaborations in large metropolitan areas.

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## Community Collaboration, cont. from p. 7

**Collaborations are holistic.** The recognition that issues need to be addressed by various sectors in a community means that these issues can be defined holistically and therefore, creatively. Rather than a fragmented approach, collaborative relationships should provide, at a minimum, a seamless web of services.

In the Lehigh Valley, collaborations built around the needs of children (the Children's Coalition), Allentown's plan for community development, smoke free environment (PROJECT ALERT), strengthening neighborhoods (Neighborhood Empowerment Task Force), strategic planning for community-based agencies (The Funding Partnership), coordinated medical services for families (MACRO CHIP), and AIDS (AIDSNET) to name a few are already functioning. All are at various stages of development. They are interlocking, concentric circles providing access to all governmental and private sectors of our community, Adult education is already part of a number of these collaborative circles.

**Collaborations take time.** As they begin collaborations need the time to develop trusting relationships among the individuals who are working together. Later, time is needed to develop new approaches to issues.

**What about adult educators?**

We are a vital part of community collaborations. As adult educators, we add our expertise to these collaborations and learn from them. As we do, we need to ask the following: What can we learn from existing collaborations? What strengths and pitfalls did they experience as they developed? If we are not now involved with existing collaborative relationships, should we be? Should we develop new collaborations or should we build on what currently exists? If we believe in empowerment, how do we facilitate the role of the new reader and the adult learner in collaborations? If we teach minority students, how do we involve minority members in the collaborations? How can we use technology to strengthen collaborations?

Collaborations take time to build. They can be frightening or motivating. Because of the potential to bring together a broad spectrum of a community, they are exciting!

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## Your Passport to the Future –

### The 1995 NE Region Adult Literacy Conference, June 23-25

If you haven't made your arrangements to attend the upcoming Northeastern Regional Adult Literacy Conference to be held at Penn State on June 23-25, it's not too late.

Keynote speakers will be Dr. Ron Pugsley, Acting Director of the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy, and Cheryl Keenan, Director of Pennsylvania's Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.

Registration forms and information are available from the Mid-State Literacy Council which is hosting the Conference. Call (814) 238-1809.

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## WPALRC

## Collaboration: In This Together

by Chris Kemp, Adult Literacy Resource Specialist

As teamwork replaces rugged individualism in an ever-shrinking world, organizations, like individuals must become "team players". Coordination, cooperation and collaboration are keys to success. Since vast resources are needed to serve clients with complex problems, programs addressing common problems or delivering similar services can stretch resources and reduce individual expenses by coordinating activities. Funding sources increasingly require collaboration to avoid duplication of effort and cost.

In *Collaboration: What Makes It Work* Michael Winer defines collaboration as " . . . a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals. The relationship includes a commitment to: mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and rewards." Collaboration joins previously separated organizations into a new structure committed to a common mission. Collaborations produce broader, more comprehensive analyses of issues while sharing resources expands service capabilities. Unfortunately, some projects are not successful. *Collaboration: What Makes It Work* published by the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, reviewed research and identified 19 keys to success. This easy-to-read handbook provides excellent background and a handy checklist. While each collaboration is unique, *Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining, and Enjoying the Journey*, also published by the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, provides a model for developing collaborative relationships.

Collaboration requires many, sometimes frightening, changes in thinking, planning and communication. Individuals may need additional strategic planning, team building, or conflict resolution skills to participate fully in a collaborative setting. Text, video and 353 Special Project Reports addressing these issues are available for loan from AdvancE (800-992-2283) or WPALRC (800-446-5607, ext. 216).

Coordination, cooperation and collaboration are not new concepts to Pennsylvania educators. Countless Special Project Reports document interagency and community linkages. While products include public awareness campaigns, handbooks, and service delivery systems, the final reports provide participant lists and descriptions of interagency interactions. Consortia, networks, and advertising campaigns come and go, but the final reports remain as models for others to follow: building on successes and avoiding hazards. Contact AdvancE or WPALRC to identify project reports documenting successful community linkages appropriate to your unique situation. ❖

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Community Groups Dealing with National Issues . . .

# National Issues Forum Adult Education Program

By Amy Wilson, Literacy Education Specialist

Who:   All people.

What:  Forums or study circles on current national
       problems.

When:  2-3 hours, all day, or four session study circle.

Where: Public places - schools, libraries, literacy
       councils, colleges.

Why:   Create a voice for the people and a better world.

How:   Use the National Issues Forums' materials:
       videos, audiocassette tapes, guides, issue books
       in English and Spanish.
       Contact trained moderators.

Cost:  Many materials are provided by the Kettering
       Foundation without charge, phone (800) 433-
       4819. The Kettering Foundation supports
       democracy.

Additional Assistance:
       Contact Amy Wilson, phone (814) 234-8182.

Can you imagine a world in which women didn't vote in political elections? Do you remember a time when doctors didn't wash their hands between patients' examinations? Changes in medical practices gave us safer operations. These changes occurred through controversy, dialogue, fact finding and commitment. Now, what changes do you want to see in your lifetime for yourself and your family? What do our learners need? Change requires discussion, empowerment and commitment. The National Issues Forum Adult Education Program stimulates thinking, applies education to real issues and problems, and it allows people to become more active in the process of productive change.

The National Issues Forum is the protocol of the Kettering Foundation of Dayton, Ohio. Local discussion groups are part of a national network of people interested in public issues. The purpose of the groups is choicemaking, discerning our values, examining facts and our personal experiences, and finally, hearing others' viewpoints and searching for common ground. Based on the tradition of the town meeting people come together to solve problems.

For many years my involvement in the forums delighted me. Let me explain why. I learned. Listening to others' ideas gave a richer perspective on the issue. Issues included the daycare dilemma, the environment at risk, the drug crisis, crime, welfare and many more. Each year the Kettering Foundation examines several issues. A team of experts researches an issue and then an issue book is developed. The books, written in two editions (different reading levels), define the problem using pictures, charts, graphs, facts, quotes

and statistics. Then several options/solutions to the problem are examined. Each option also contains the pros and cons of potential solutions. For example, concerning welfare, who should receive benefits, what will happen if benefits are lessened, what will happen if benefits aren't cut? What will happen if benefits are increased? The forums allow us the opportunity to examine the consequences and potential outcomes of public policy decisions. The critical thinking developed within a forum accomplishes one of the goals of our education programs.

I moderated forums in the local community, in my ABE/GED classrooms, in the prison literacy programs and for groups of educators. The moderator's responsibilities when introducing/beginning the forum include explaining the purpose, describing the problem, explaining the choices, setting ground rules for the discussion, and connecting people's personal experiences with the issue. When the group deliberates on the choices, the moderator asks questions to explore the pros, cons, benefits, and costs. The moderator also reminds the group of important facts and statistics. When closing the forum the moderator summarizes the discussion and asks the group to determine their conclusions answering the question, "What do you want to say to your policymakers?".

Why do we host forums in our communities? Let's examine what the participants must do. First of all, the participants must understand all the options and consider the consequences of the options they value. Then they hear what others think about the pros and cons of each option. People often recognize contradictions in their positions and examine the facts again. A recorder takes notes during the forum to assist the participants. Feedback from the forum participants often includes comments about how they want to know more and get more involved in their community. Outcomes of forums include people registering to vote, writing letters to politicians, visits to politicians, and continued discussion.

Dr. Cornelia Flora of Kansas State University researches successful communities. The research results demonstrate that prosperous communities emphasize academics in the schools (versus sports) and controversy over issues is thought to be normal. The successful community disburses many leaders to work and develop the community's goals. The National Issues Forums build leaders and participants.

Through the efforts of the Kettering Foundation and support of the Pennsylvania Department of Education several people in Pennsylvania are trained to moderate forums and train moderators. For additional information contact Amy Wilson at (814) 234-8182. ❖

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# Community and Adult Education:
# A Conceptual Framework for Theory and Practice

by Dr. Gary J. Dean

The development of community education has been primarily as a field of practice, with little attention being given to the substantial development of a theoretical base. This lack of theoretical base has led to difficulties in developing a research agenda in community education and confusion in delineating the relationships between adult and community education as fields of both practice and inquiry.
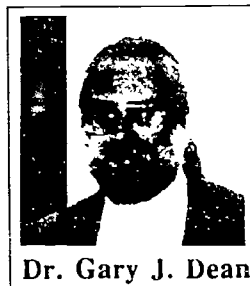
## Community Education

A primary source of confusion in defining community education is the variety of terms used to describe community-related educational activities. The term "community education" has been used to narrowly describe a process in which the public school is at the center of educational activities which have community-wide implications. Other terms, such as community development, community-based adult education, and community adult education have been used to describe community related learning which the public school does not necessarily figure so prominently. The premise of this paper is that there are four elements which can be used to identify and describe all community related learning and that the term community education should be used to identify this broader context:

1. Community serves as the context of the activity.

2. The goals are to improve the quality of peoples' lives as well as the context for the activity.

3. Education is seen as a process as well as an outcome, and

4. Education is a central means of achieving the goals of improving the quality of life and enhancing the community.

## Adult Education

It is interesting to note that many of the definitions of adult education emphasize individual learning and accomplishment. For example, andragogy relies on humanistic assumptions and emphasizes that adult education primarily serves individual needs as opposed to society's needs. Recent attempts at definition have generated much discussion but little unification for the field of adult education. If adult educators retain a belief in the salience of the concept of community as an important part of adult education, then enhancing communities through education must be an important part of the adult educator's role.

## Comparing Adult and Community Education

Adult and community education can be compared in several areas: practice, research, perspective, and philosophy. A brief discussion of each follows.

**Practice.** The practices of community education and adult education have run parallel courses in some ways and divergent courses in others. Adult education as well as community education occurs in both nonformal and formal settings. Identifying adult education providers by sources of financial support has promise for describing both adult and community education because it identifies directly who has control of the learning activity and it also includes nonorganized learning activities that occur outside of formal organizations.

**Research.** Research in community education has been almost exclusively practical, for example to evaluate pro-

grams or conduct needs assessments. While adult education research has a history of being practical, that is, stemming from practice and meeting practical needs, recent developments to expand the research base and applications have made adult education research more dynamic.

**Perspective.** From an adult educators' perspective, much of the nonformal forms of community education can be identified as community-based adult education whereas a community educator might view adult education as a separate field that offers much in the way of ideas and practices which can be applied to the distinct field of practice called community education.

**Philosophy.** Community education has been most closely identified with a progressive philosophical approach to education. Adult education, on the other hand, has had a more diverse philosophical basis including liberal, progressive, behaviorist, humanistic, radical and analytical approaches.

**Definition.** The definition of community education includes its goals as directed toward the improvement of the quality of life for individuals as well as to enhance the community. Adult education has not had a central unifying purpose like community education. However, the lack of consensus in adult education is associated with a more inclusionary spirit which has resulted in healthy debate as to means and ends of the field which fosters growth in both theory and practice.

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# NEWSLETTER
# ROUNDUP . . .

*In which we note types and contents of newsletters to assist Buzz readers in finding their way through the adult education newsletter maze.*

■ *Reading Today,* the newsletter of the International Reading Association (IRA) in its April/May, 1995 issue contains mention of the Special Interest Group of IRA devoted to Adult Literacy to encourage the involvement of IRA members in adult literacy activities and to serve as a resource on literacy to adult educators.

The group's meeting, held in conjunction with the IRA annual conference last month, featured discussions on computer software applications in adult literacy, portfolio assessment, and using media for adult literacy instruction.

*Reading Today* will change its name in September to the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* to be more descriptive of the Journal's content.

IRA's address is 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139.

■ The *Region 6 Adult Education Staff Development News* for April from the Regional Staff Development Center in Harrisburg (Director - Dr. Beverly Smith, Coordinator - Paula Smith, Assistant Coordinator - Carol Carl) has some interesting Census Bureau information concerning the more than 31 million "other language" speakers at home in the United States: Spanish - 17.3 million speakers; French - 1.7 million; German - 1.5 million; Italian - 1.3 million; Chinese - 1.2 million; 20 other languages - 6 million.

■ *Northwest Report* of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) tells of an annotated bibliography of more than 100 publications related to alternative assessment in reading. Titled "Reading Assessment Alternatives" it includes a variety of sources including ERIC, the International Reading Association and commercial publishers.

Strategies for assessing reading are changing. Educators are beginning to abandon multiple-choice reading tests or to supplement them with performance assessments such as portfolios of student work, oral reading-and-question sessions, or written assignments built around reading selections

Reading specialists are advocating that teachers focus on students' attitudes toward reading, and that they ask students to relate current reading to their past experiences and interpret what they read rather than determine what the writer intended, according to Judy Arter of NWREL's Assessment program.

This shift in assessment certainly has relevance to adult basic and literacy education in which we are seeing a strong movement toward experience/skill-oriented instruction and assessment. NWREL is located at 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500, Portland, Oregon 97204 (503) 275-9500.

■ *Literacy Update* is an excellent newsletter from The Literacy Assistance Center, Inc. (LAC). In the April, 1995 issue an article by Fiona Armstrong, an ESL Literacy teacher, asks "Who's the Teacher in Here, Anyway?" Ms. Armstrong says, "Little by little, my adult class is becoming a community of teachers. Together we are working on identifying and recognizing their many skills and strengths, and transforming them into experts and partners in running the class." Address for the LAC is 84 William Street, 14th floor, New York, NY 10038.

■ The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) *Newsletter* is being replaced by The Family Literacy Network which will be a centralized resource for information on issues affecting the field of family literacy. A bimonthly newsletter, *Update,* and a new magazine, *Window on the World of Family Literacy,* will be published three times a year. One-year subscriptions to the Family Literacy Network are $37, payable to NCFL, Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200, 325 Main St., Louisville, KY 40202-4251.

■ The External Diploma Program (EDP) administered by the American Council on Education (ACE) is the topic of an article appearing in *GED Items* for March/April, 1995. The article tells of One-Stop Career Centers being proposed by the U.S. Department of Labor which provide assessment and information resources to underemployed and unemployed adults. The EDP has a diagnostic test portion which includes a math, reading, and writing basic skill diagnostic test. The client is provided with a printed specific skill learning recommendation that defines the areas in which he or she must improve skills. *GED Items* is free by contacting the GED Testing Services, One DuPont Circle, N.W., Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036-1163.

■ The May issue of the Region 8 Staff Development Center's Newsletter has an excellent report by Center Coordinator Elizabeth Mitchell who attended the 29th annual Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Convention held recently in Long Beach, California.

Attended by more than 8,600 educators from throughout the world, one of the conference plenary speakers was Dr. Eugene Garcia, Director of Bilingual Education for the U.S. Department of Education.

Ms. Mitchell notes that Dr. Garcia summarized some key principals guiding national policy regarding educational reform in a diverse culture including:
- students' native language and culture must serve as a resource toward their learning English.
- there is no "silver bullet" method to construct positive teaching environments.
- policymakers must allow for local-level solutions, provide resources and offer flexibility.
- educators must maintain high standards and expectations of learners.
- we must support professional development.

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# Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education Act Introduced

Senate Bill 975 has been introduced into the Pennsylvania Senate by Senator James J. Rhoades, Republican from the 29th District (Schuylkill, Carbon and Monroe Counties) and the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) is supporting the bill in the hopes it will produce coordination of the delivery of adult basic education programs in the Commonwealth.

In introducing the legislation Senator Rhoades said, "These services are absolutely vital and we must make sure everyone has adequate access to them. After all, literacy skills affect every aspect of life."

According to Rhoades, the Commonwealth's uncoordinated and disjointed system of adult education and literacy services prevents potential adult learners from accessing available programs.

"It's a splintered state system," he said. "There's no state-level coordination to ensure that one agency is not offering the same kind of services as another, or to make certain that services are available everywhere they are needed."

The Act was conceived at the May, 1994 "Call to Action: Mobilizing for Adult Literacy and Learning" Conference co-sponsored by Pennsylvania 2000, the Pennsylvania State Coalition for Adult Literacy and Mellon Bank.

According to JoAnn Weinberger, Director of the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia and co-chair of the PAACE Legislative Committee, the bill establishes an Interagency Coordinating Council consisting of 30-35 members representing state agencies, the General Assembly, adult education service providers, and private organizations including business, industry and labor. The Council would recommend ways to coordinate the patchwork of literacy funding, data collection, training, technical assistance and research dissemination currently existing in five state government departments and sixteen funding streams, plus the private sector.

# A Practical Lesson in Government

Two programs use adult education funding as an object lesson . . .

Persons holding political office are always alert to the needs of their constituents. A large constituency in Pennsylvania is the 60,000+ adult students, 2,000 professional adult educators, and 9,000 volunteers involved in state adult literacy programs.

With 48% of the state's population in need of adult basic and literacy education services but not enrolled in adult education programs, it is obvious our message is not getting through to the office holders with the purse strings.

At least two programs (we hope there are more) are using the "Service Delivery Gap" and funding limitations on literacy services as an applied object lesson in state and national government.

### Delaware County Literacy Council (DCLC)

A former member of the Board of DCLC, John Ferguson, became interested in assisting adult literacy students with advocacy. John is retired from the position as Community Relations Representative for State Senator Clarence Bell of Delaware County and offered to arrange a caucus of the county's state legislators and DCLC adult students.

On April 26, 1995, three staff members and six adult students representing DCLC and a representative of Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth and the Adams County Literacy Council met under the dome in the state Capitol and, during the day, spoke with four Representatives, including the House Speaker, four aides to Representatives, two Senators and one Senatorial aide. Each student spoke and talked of the impact tutors and the literacy programs have had on their lives and on how they view themselves.

According to DCLC Director Pat Gaul, "The legislators listened. These students were the real advocates, perhaps the only true advocates which adult literacy has."

Upon returning from Harrisburg, Ms. Gaul wrote a thank you note to each legislator who met with the students and included fact sheets with information about the program. The letter also encouraged the legislators to increase the financial support for Act 143 and to support Department of Education administration of federal funds which may be put into block grants.

### Lebanon-Lancaster IU 13

Sandy Strunk is the Director of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education's (PAACE) ESL Program Division. As such she is aware of the funding problems encountered by adult education programs in Pennsylvania and the serious cuts and re-alignments being proposed in the U.S. House of Representatives.

After a recent PAACE Board meeting at which these matters were discussed, Sandy talked with fellow staff members in the IU #13 adult education program and they, in turn, talked with their students. The adult students said they wanted to do something.

"This became a wonderful informational lesson about how government works," said Sandy. "We were careful not to impress our attitudes upon our students, but we felt it was part of the learning process to inform them as to how they could involve themselves in the governmental process."

The students elected to write Senator Arlen Specter and tell him how they felt about possible cut-backs in federal funding for adult education. Over 250 letters were sent stressing information about the adult education program and how their lives would be impacted if the program were not available. Postage was donated by two staff members.

"We were very careful," said Sandy, "that student activities took place outside class time and no program funds were expended. This was a student-planned and managed activity and, as such, was that much more valuable to our students as they became involved."

*Buzz* readers wishing more information about these activities may contact Pat Gaul at (610) 876-4811 or Sandy Strunk at (717) 684-6288. ❖

# People and Programs in PA ABLE

☆ Among presenters at the International Reading Association Annual Conference in Anaheim, California last month were *Anna Blevins, Shirley Biggs* and *Alice Scales*, all from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Scales is chair of the IRA's Special Interest Group in Aging and Intergenerational Reading which provides a forum to promote research in reading as it spans the generations, research on the impact of early reading habits and interests upon lifelong learning, research on the characteristics of avid older adult readers, and research on the oral histories of older adults. Her address is 4H01 Forbes Quadrangle, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260.

☆ The *Philadelphia Writing Project* at the University of Pennsylvania has received a grant from the United Parcel Service aimed at improving and expanding adult literacy services. The grant will support a partnership between Literacy South, based in Durham, North Carolina and the Project. The program will support innovative staff development and program improvement activities among networks of literacy practitioners in the southeast and in Philadelphia.

☆ Drs. Gary Dean and Trenton Ferro of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania are co-editors of "Resources," a section of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) magazine *Adult Learning*. In the May/June, 1995 issue Gary Dean reviews a book titled "Professional Writing: Processes, Strategies, and Tips for Publishing in Education Journals" (Roger Hiemstra and Ellen Brier). Dr. Dean recommends the book for new writers and veteran writers. In the same issue Dr. Dean's 1994 book "Designing Instruction for Adult Learners" is reviewed by Peter Murk of Ball State University: "Gary Dean presents a new and successful approach to instructional design using careful planning techniques . . . *Designing Instruction* is recommended either as a classroom text or supplementary reference." Drs. Ferro and Dean are also co-editors of *The PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning*

published by the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education. The *Journal* is rapidly achieving nationwide recognition as a leading journal in adult education.

☆ *Dr. Richard J. Cooper*, president of the Center for Alternative Learning in Bryn Mawr and frequent presenter at Regional Staff Development workshops was a presenter of two two-hour workshops as part of the 8th Annual Literacy Fair of Virginia last month. One workshop was addressed to tutors and instructors in adult basic and literacy education and the other to adult students.

☆ We were sorry to hear that *Jane Ditmars*, coordinator of the Region 7 Tri-Valley Staff Development Center, is leaving that position at the end of this month to pursue work in the area of Curriculum Development. We know the energies, enthusiasm and creativity which Jane showed in her "part-time" job as Center Coordinator will carry over into her new professional activities and we wish her well.

☆ The work of the *Montgomery County Abington Free Library Literacy Program* was recently recognized in an article in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. The Program has 160 tutors serving 148 adults and uses a performing group for volunteer and student recruitment and community awareness activities. The group, called "The Literacy Live Players," is made up of volunteer actors who work with program Director Marlyn Cohen to present comedy and dramatic skits.

☆ Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Ben Burenstein for their recent acquisition of a new lap-top (the latest model). Ben is with the Office of Computing Services at Drexel University, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) and Technology Writer for "What's the Buzz?". Name of the latest design: Ruben, who is presently administering a custom staff development program designed to train the new parents. 15ᵟ

☆ Since we've begun our *Spotlight* section of the *Buzz* featuring articles relating to a particular area of concern to Pennsylvania adult educators, we have received a number of requests from other states asking permission to reprint information. The latest came from North Dakota asking about the article on English as a Second Language written by *Sandy Strunk* of Lancaster-Lebanon IU #13. Sandy tells us she's had a number of inquiries since her article appeared in the February, 1995 *Buzz*. The South Dakota Resource Center also plans to reprint our article about *Dr. Barbara Mooney's* Family Numeracy 353 project for the Washington-Greene Community Action Corporation in Waynesburg which we synopsized in the same issue.

Due to budget cutbacks, the Spotlight section will not appear in our bimonthly 1995-96 issues.



*Penny Lang (left) and Rachel Zilcosky.*

☆ Thanks to Ellen Fischer, an AmeriCorps/VISTA employee at the Goodwill Literacy Initiative of Pittsburgh for sending us word of "A Celebration of Family Reading" held last month to honor National Family Reading Week.

Originated by Region 4 Staff Development Coordinator Rachel Zilcosky and Penny Lang, Goodwill Literacy's Family Literacy Supervisor, the one-day conference included presentations by a panel of parents, two sessions of six concurrent topics, a reading fair and a storyteller.

Representatives of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, Beginning With Books, Even Start, Goodwill Literacy, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, HeadStart and the Region 4 Center shared ideas and resources to plan the celebration. ❖

# It's A Date!

## JUNE, 1995: Have a nice summer!

**2:** PAACE ABE/GED PROGRAM DIVISION MEETING: TIU Adult Education & Job Training Center, Lewistown; 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Technology Demonstration by Dr. Barbara Woodruff. Contact Brian Frey (717) 248-4942.

**5-7:** 5th Annual ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS Conference; Excelsior Hotel, Little Rock, Arkansas. Contact: COABE, 1504 Caldwell, Conway, AR 72032.

**6:** USING VOLUNTEERS EFFECTIVELY; Holiday Inn, Mechanicsburg; 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs. Contact: (717) 787-5177.

**7-9:** COMMISSION ON ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (COABE) NATIONAL CONFERENCE: Little Rock, Arkansas. Theme: "Helping Others Pursue Excellence". Contact: COABE '95, 1504 Caldwell, Conway, AR 72032.

**7-9:** NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA CONFERENCE ON NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION AND LITERACY: Seattle. Contact: Betty Sullivan, The Newspaper Center, 11600 Sunrise Valley Dr., Reston, VA 22091.

**8:** USING VOLUNTEERS EFFECTIVELY; Holiday Inn, Rt. 100, Lionville. Contact: PA Department of Community Affairs (717) 787-5177.

**9:** VISUAL MATH: HELP YOUR STUDENTS SEE MATH THEIR WAY; Regions 1 & 4 staff development workshop; Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (WPALRC); 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., followed by a tour of the Center; presenter: Ellen McDevitt. Contact: Rachel Zilcosky (800) 438-2011.

**9-10:** TEACHING LIMITED-ENGLISH SPEAKING ADULT LEARNERS, audioconference sessions. A new summer course at Penn State including the 1995 FIRST ANNUAL EASTERN REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ADULT BASIC EDUCATION WORKSHOP. Contact: Judy Hall, 225 Penn State Scanticon, University Park, PA 16802-7002 (814) 863-5130. Resident Instruction on July 17-21.

**14:** USING VOLUNTEERS EFFECTIVELY; Best Western, Greentree (Pittsburgh). Contact: PA Department of Community Affairs (717) 787-5177.

**15:** 3rd Annual Inter-Regional Corrections Conference. Altoona. Staff Development Regions 2, 4 and 5. Contact: Brian Frey (717) 248-4942.

**17-19:** NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL COMPUTING CONFERENCE; Baltimore; Theme: "Emerging Technologies -- Lifelong Learning". Contact: NECC '95, 1787 Agate St., Eugene, OR 97403.

**22-29:** 114th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION; Chicago. Contact: ALA Public Information Office, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611 (800) 545-2433.

**23-25:** 1995 NorthEast Regional Adult Literacy Conference; Penn State. Keynote Speaker: Dr. Ron Pugsley, Director of Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. Expenses for adult learners are available (Linda Herr, 717-326-0536). For more information or to volunteer to assist, contact Monica Kindig (814) 238-1809.

**28:** TELECONFERENCE - LEARNING TO READ: COMMUNITY STRATEGIES FOR CREATING MORE LITERATE STUDENTS & ADULTS; IU #11 Offices, McVeytown, 8:30-11:30 a.m. Contact: Brian Frey, (717) 248-4942.

## JULY, 1995

**2-14: and 16-28:** 1995 TESOL INSTITUTE, Colchester, Vermont. Contact: Marian Blaber, Center for International Programs, Colchester, VT 05439-0235.

**10-14:** NATIONAL CENTER ON ADULT LITERACY LEADERSHIP SUMMER SEMINAR; Philadelphia. Contact: Pete Mahoney (215) 898-2100.

**23-27:** EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON READING; Budapest. Contact: The International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714.

**27-30:** 6th Annual WHOLE LANGUAGE Conference; Windsor, Ontario. Contact: Gerry Oglan (519) 255-3372.

## AUGUST, 1995

**4 and 5:** NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY AND TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE, Philadelphia. Theme: "Alternatives for Literacy: Technology for Today and Tomorrow". Contact: Tom Andrzejewski or Chris Hopey, National Center on Adult Literacy, University of Pennsylvania, 3910 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-3111 (215) 898-2100.

**23-26:** PROBLEM SOLVING AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT THROUGH ACTION RESEARCH: Eric; 1 credit course by Dr. Allan Quigley. Contact: Bootsie Barbour (814) 866-3775.

## SEPTEMBER, 1995

**30:** PENNSYLVANIA ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION RESEARCH CONFERENCE.

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## At the End of the Year . . .

That's a strange expression to use in summer, but *we* know what it means even if it confuses persons not in the education business.

This is the end of the 14th year of "What's the Buzz?" and, as far as we know, we'll be back in somewhat "downsized" form (from 10 issues, 14 pages to 5 issues, 8 pages) next year.

As is the case in working with adult learners we get much of our gratification from a figurative pat-on-the-back in the form of a "thank you" or "well done" from our colleagues. Knowing you are doing something worthwhile which benefits others is worth a lot.

Our sincere thanks to all the Pennsylvania adult educators who have contributed articles and information to *The Buzz* over the past year. Today I called two very busy adult education professionals with requests for articles on topics which will show up in this issue and they both agreed with no hemming or hawing or "Sorry, I'm too busy." As I thought of their responses I came to the realization that I have *never* had a *Buzz* reader refuse to write an article or send us information when we requested it.

To all those talented people who have helped us out by writing for or reading *The Buzz*, I say "Thank You."

Sincerely,
Dave Fluke, editor

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# "What's the Buzz?"

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