

## The K–12 School Experiences of High School Dropouts

### RESULTS FROM THE LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF ADULT LEARNING

by Stephen Reder & Clare Strawn  
Portland State University

#### About the Authors

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Participatory Education in the Classroom

Based on the widely held belief that people in the target population for adult education tend to have had negative experiences in K–12 schools, many adult educators have attempted to make their programs less school-like in order to recruit and retain students. However, initial findings from our Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning (LSAL), sponsored by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL), do not support this view. While some of the adults in our study resemble the typical “school resister,” many others feel positive about their school experiences. We also found that the adults in our study who

participate in adult education programs have similar K–12 experiences to those who do not participate.

A longitudinal study, LSAL follows a fixed sample of individuals over time. We conducted in-home, in-depth interviews and cognitive assessments of 979 adults, ages 18–44, living in the Portland, Oregon, metropolitan area. These adults do not have a high school diploma or equivalent but are proficient speakers of English. About half participate in adult education programs, while half do not. We will continue to interview and assess the study participants periodically over seven years, regardless of whether they enter, stay in, or leave adult education programs.

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by Elyse Barbell Rudolph  
Executive Director

# 2002 at the LAC

As a native New Yorker, I have always found the time between Labor Day and Christmas in New York City to be particularly magical. The U.S. Open, school starting, the World Series, Thanksgiving and the end-of-year holiday season with all the trimmings—it's an extraordinary time here. This year, the fall has been spectacular. Unfortunately, the dust created on September 11 has tended to obscure our view of the magnificence of the changing season.

The season is changing at the Literacy Assistance Center as well, and I am excited at the prospects the new year brings. After almost 18 years of working in adult education programs in NYC, I am thrilled to have the chance to take the driver's seat at the LAC. As we delve into an intensive strategic planning process, I believe this organization is as strong as it has ever been, with the potential to reach incredibly high standards. We have never been more expertly staffed. We are moving ahead at a strong pace in our effort to bring our knowledge of literacy, technology, and data to bear on all of our initiatives. This year, we hope to "connect the dots" in the fragmented literacy field by developing frameworks for quality literacy instruction that will guide all our professional development initiatives.

In February, the LAC will enter into a partnership with Verizon to bring New York City Reads to the local literacy community. Verizon Reads is the umbrella organization for Verizon's national literacy platform. Established in 1999, Verizon Reads is dedicated to the fight for a more literate America through programs that create awareness, raise funds, and encourage collaboration among literacy providers.

In addition, this spring we continue our intensive professional development series in GED 2002, instructional technology, and culture-based education. Our after-school program, CLASP (Creative Literacy in After-School Programs), provides intensive site-based professional development to a variety of community-based organizations. The Dan Rabideau Clearinghouse finishes its facelift with a substantial expansion of our professional development collection as we seek to raise funds for a full-time Clearinghouse coordinator. The Hotline continues to refer thousands of students to literacy programs, expands its outreach to potential volunteers, and gears up for GED 2002 testing referrals. ALIES expands its New York City presence with the inclusion of the NYC Board of Education in the ALIES family, and is about to become the official data collection system for New York State.

The LAC is moving forward with a targeted focus on supporting literacy programs at the highest standard we can achieve. With our eyes always trained on the needs of the learner, we strive to assist programs to meet their needs at all levels. Happy New Year! We look forward to seeing you all very soon. 🎉

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## Please Help Us with Our Mailing List!

We're working on correcting our mailing list, particularly for *Literacy Update*. Each subscription to *Literacy Update* costs approximately \$14.00 per year—but we provide it to you, our readers, free of charge. We know there are errors in our address database and that some information is out of date. We are eager to correct this situation, and we need your help.

Do you receive more than one copy of the Update? Please note that we can no longer mail both to your home and work address. Unless you tell us otherwise, we'll send our newsletter to your work address. Does your organization receive multiple copies (some, perhaps, addressed to people who have moved on) when one or two would do? Is any part of your mailing address incorrect, so that you receive your newsletter sporadically?

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# nyc P D C

## NYCPDC-Funded Projects at HRA-BEGIN

Teacher's name	Project title	Product available in LAC Clearinghouse
Steve Meyerson	Financial Literacy in Adult Education	Financial literacy curriculum (print)
Lisa Herman	Research and Development of Effective Retention Strategies	Documentary video
Dan Ruderman, Teresa Bell, Star Hope	Using Themes: Planning ESOL Instruction in a World of Work Context	ESOL thematic curriculum
Margaret Pemberton	Employment Plus Conference: Strategies and Steps to Success	Post-employment strategies guide
Susan Lieberman	Success—From Public Assistance to Client Independence: Work Retention Evaluation of BEGIN Clients after 90-Day Verification	Survey, analysis, case studies, alumni speakers' bureau
Nancy Cole, Mark Harrison, Betty Jacob, Elaine Gorsline, Lorelei McGhee, Sandy Milligan Johnson	Constructing a Framework for Effective Employment Terms: Matching Clients to Work Sites	Manual/guide on matching clients to work sites

### MEMBER PROJECT, 2001

In order to tailor the content and style of our staff development to the needs of our constituents, the NYCPDC offers each consortium member (see above) the opportunity to partner with the NYCPDC to develop activities and projects in response to local needs. These process-oriented projects cover diverse levels of staff development and offer many choices for participants.

Often these agency-based partnerships with the NYCPDC result in products, such as curricula or manuals, that are made available to interested practitioners in the LAC Clearinghouse. Last year, Solange Farina, staff developer at HRA-BEGIN (NYC's welfare-to-work program) and an NYCPDC board member, coordinated a series of such projects at HRA-BEGIN managed programs. Drawing on its vision that staff development should be sustained and supported, and building on the expertise of its staff developers, HRA-BEGIN offered several opportunities for long-term professional development, each culminating in a product. The teachers and their projects are listed on this page.

### MEMBER PROJECT, 2002

An NYCPDC member project for the 2001–2002 program year is a Workplace Essential Skills/Literacy Link pilot program, a cooperative effort between the NYCPDC and the Department of Employment. The project is being administered by Anita Rich, NYCPDC board member and DOE curriculum developer. The pilot program will examine how Workplace Essential Skills (WES), a multimedia instructional package that introduces an integrated approach to ABE and job readiness skills, can help meet the goals of the DOE's youth-to-work initiative. Teachers

and job developers from selected DOE programs are exploring how the various WES applications—videos, workbooks, class activities, website—can work together to teach not just basic reading, writing, communication, and math skills, but also the strategies and attitudes necessary to find, keep, and thrive in a job.

For additional information on these programs and products or other NYCPDC events, please contact the NYCPDC office at [nycpdc@lacnyc.org](mailto:nycpdc@lacnyc.org) or 212.803.3355.

### GIFT FROM A FELLOW CONSORTIUM

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the Southern Tier Professional Development Consortium (STPDC) presented a handmade quilt to the NYCPDC and the Literacy Assistance Center. STPDC Advisory Board members and

Linda Headley-Walker of the NY State Education Department used a variety of materials and designs to illustrate each letter of this alphabet quilt. The quilt's diverse fabrics, techniques, colors, and designs—all unified for a common purpose—are symbolic of our nation's diversity and unity.

The following message was included on a plaque presented with the quilt:

This alphabet quilt, created by the Southern Tier Professional Development Consortium Advisory Board, is presented in friendship to the New York City Professional Development Consortium and the Literacy Assistance Center to commemorate the unity and support we share as we serve adult education service providers during these difficult and tumultuous times.

The quilt is on display outside the NYCPDC office at 32 Broadway, 10th floor. ■

The NYC Professional Development Consortium is one of ten regional staff development consortia established by the New York State Education Department to coordinate and support professional development in adult education and training.



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## Books on Participatory Education

Dr. Winston Lawrence, Coordinator of Adult Literacy Services at the LAC, says, "These three books should be required reading for teachers who would like to take a more participatory approach to adult literacy education." All three are available in the LAC Clearinghouse. See also Dr. Lawrence's article on participatory education in the Teachers' Corner on page 10.

**Elsa Auerbach, *Making Meaning, Making Change*. Center for Applied Linguistics / Delta Systems, 1992.**

This book provides a comprehensive overview of how to develop curriculum for adult ESOL classes through participatory approaches. Writing from a Freirian perspective, Auerbach shares a wealth of ideas on how to conceptualize and implement a participatory curriculum. Not only will teachers gain much from this text, but program managers and others engaged in curriculum building will also benefit tremendously.

**Elsa Auerbach and Nina Wallerstein, *ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work*. Addison-Wesley, 1987.**

In this classic workbook, the authors provide concrete lessons on how to use Paulo Freire's problem-posing approach in the ESOL classroom. Themes and issues for the lessons are culled from job-related problems. For teachers who are interested in ready-to-use lessons in the context of workforce and workplace education, this book is invaluable.

**Heide S. Wrigley and Gloria J.A. Guth, *Bringing Literacy to Life: Issues and Options in Adult ESL Literacy*. Dominic Press, 1992.**

This book provides teachers with an expanded view of adult literacy instruction. In its eight chapters, the authors discuss ways in which exemplary programs have effectively used various instructional approaches, methods, and technologies. Several curricular models show readers how those features have been implemented in the classroom.

## Books for Teachers of Children

The following books, available in the LAC Clearinghouse, have been recommended by Gabrielle Aponte, Youth Literacy Specialist at the LAC, for use in after-school programs.

**Harvey Daniels and M. Bizar, *Methods That Matter: Six Structures for Best Practice Classrooms*. Stenhouse, 1998.**

This effective book covers six teaching strategies or "structures" for the classroom. More than a simple way of setting up classroom, these "structures" come closer to being classroom philosophies. Structures discussed in this book include integrative units, small-group activities, and classroom workshops. Providing practical examples, the authors enable educators to employ these structures to ensure exemplary instructional practice.

**Lesley Morrow, *The Literacy Center: Contexts for Reading and Writing*. Stenhouse, 1997.**

This guide is a no-nonsense "how to" for literacy centers: classroom spaces devoted to reading and writing activities. Morrow provides everything from ideas for literacy activities to strategies for authentic assessment during center time.

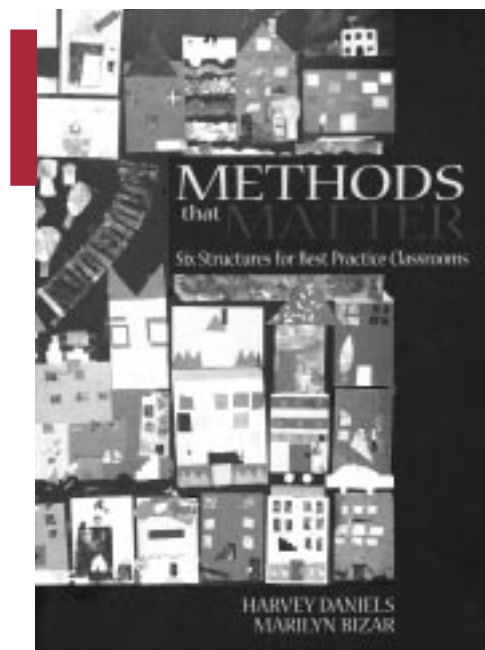
## Technology Resources

The instructional technology resources below have been recommended by Marguerite Lukes, Director of Instructional Technology at the LAC.

**From Now On [www.fno.org](http://www.fno.org)**

If you want to read something that goes beyond cheerleading for computers and the Internet, check out From Now On, published by Jamie McKenzie. FNO includes many thought-provoking articles on educational technology that, though they are aimed at a K-12 audience, provide a great deal adult educators can draw on.

Central themes include how to actually improve instruction instead of simply adding bells and whistles, and when to choose not to use technology and instead apply more traditional approaches. Use of this site is guaranteed to promote critical thinking.



**Technology & Learning [www.techlearning.com](http://www.techlearning.com)**

Calling itself "the resource for education technology leaders," Technology & Learning provides a monthly newsletter, as well as many practical resources and classroom strategies. This resource, again, is geared toward K-12 educators, but the majority of the resources and lessons can also be applied to adult literacy.

**Blue Web'n [www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn](http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn)**

Many educators already know Blue Web'n, one of a host of sites sponsored by Pacific Bell, but if you have never seen it, you owe it to yourself to check it out. This searchable archive includes web-based tutorials, activities, projects, units, lesson plans, hot lists, and other resources and references, all categorized by content area. Blue Web'n catalogs only the most useful educational websites, focusing on online activities for learners. The criteria for selection include user friendly formats; credible, rich context across subject areas; and an engaging learning process intended to promote higher order thinking skills and tap into multiple intelligences.

**Filamentality [www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil](http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil)**

To use some of the Blue Web'n sites in your classroom lessons, you can also take advantage of Filamentality, a tool that helps instructors turn existing web resources into activities. Filamentality prompts teachers to "fill in the blanks" with links, instructions, and questions, and then builds a web activity for students. You need only follow instructions; knowledge of HTML is not necessary. You can go back any time to edit your web activity.

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## Clearinghouse Open Hours

The LAC Clearinghouse will be open for browsing on Mondays from 1 to 5 pm beginning January 28. Our collection includes:

- \* Professional development materials to help you strengthen your practice
- \* Curricular materials for adult basic education, English for Speakers of Other Languages, GED preparation, youth literacy, and family literacy
- \* Drama, poetry, novels, and other reading materials at many levels, for adults and for children

If you have questions about using the LAC Clearinghouse, please contact Ira Yankwitt at [iray@lacnyc.org](mailto:iray@lacnyc.org) or 212.803.3356.

## Call For Presenters: ABE 2002

The planning committee for the 23rd Annual New York City Adult Basic Education Conference is issuing a call to adult educators and learners who are interested in presenting at the 2002 conference. The conference, *Rising to New Challenges*, will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2002. Suggested topics include bridging the gap in the BE/ESOL classroom; preparation for TOEFL, GED, and citizenship exams; practical ways to improve oral communication; strategies for the multi-level ESOL class; Internet activities for the adult learner; integrating class lessons into the workplace; basic education in the native language; survival skills for literacy students; content learning in the pre-GED classroom; job search techniques and resources; conflict resolution; writing mini-grants; and others. For the presenter application form, go to [www.lacnyc.org](http://www.lacnyc.org) or write Carolyn Fernando, NYC Consortium for Adult Basic Education, Old Chelsea Station, P.O. Box 472, NY, NY 10011. Forms must be submitted by January 31, 2002.

## Public Opinion of Adult Education

MassINC (Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth, an independent nonprofit organization) has recently published the results of a poll of 400 voters, conducted in cooperation with researchers from the University of Massachusetts, on the topic of adult education and training. While the findings confirm broad public support for efforts to expand education and training opportunities, the exact nature and extent of that support suggests the need for leaders—public, private, and nonprofit—to reassess how they think about workforce skills issues. This poll is part of MassINC's Workforce at Risk Project, whose goal is to use public opinion

research to measure the attitudes of key stakeholders in the area of adult education and training—including workers in need of assistance, voters, taxpayers, and employers—and then use the data to help advance a plan of action that builds on public sentiment. A summary of the poll results is available at [www.massinc.org/publications/reports/New\\_Skills/nsne\\_campaign/opinion\\_research2.html](http://www.massinc.org/publications/reports/New_Skills/nsne_campaign/opinion_research2.html). For the full report, contact The UMASS Poll, University of Massachusetts, One Beacon Street, 26th Floor, Boston, MA 02108.

## Tech Grants for Schools and Youth Organizations

The Oracle Corporation's "Help Us Help" Foundation will provide \$6 million for grants in its first year of operation to increase access to the Internet for disadvantaged youth in the U.S. and abroad. Grants of computer equipment and software are available to schools and youth organizations that provide educational programs in low-income communities. The foundation program will donate new Internet appliances and laser printers as well as all the ancillary equipment necessary to connect the devices. The foundation expects to make at least 200 grants in its first year of operation and deploy more than 10,000 computers. For complete guidelines and online application forms, see the Help Us Help Foundation website at [www.helpushelp.org](http://www.helpushelp.org), or contact Oracle Help Us Help Foundation, c/o Oracle Corporation, 500 Oracle Parkway OPL-B5, Redwood Shores, CA 94065, phone 866.600.HELP (4357), fax 650.633.1191. Deadlines for application are February 28 and May 21, 2002.

## Register Now for Family Literacy Conference

The 11th Annual National Conference on Family Literacy, sponsored by the National Center for Family Literacy, will be held March 3–5, 2002, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with the preconference on March 1 and 2. The theme of this conference is Shared Vision: Connecting the World of Family Literacy. Keynote speakers include Susan B. Neuman, Ed.D., of the U.S. Department of Education; Bill Hill of Microsoft Research; and Perri Klass, M.D., of Reach Out and Read. Early registration (with a reduced fee) ends February 4, 2002. Register online at [www.familit.org](http://www.familit.org) or call 502.584.1133.

## Other National Conferences

**9th Annual Distance Education Conference**, Center for Distance Learning Research at Texas A&M University and Verizon, January 22–24, Austin, TX, [www.cdli.tamu.edu](http://www.cdli.tamu.edu) or call Beth Ellison at 979.862.7217

**Technology, Reading and Learning Difficulties 20th Annual International Conference** sponsored by Educational Computer Conferences, Inc., January 24–26, San Francisco, [www.trld.com](http://www.trld.com) or 888.594.1249

**A Nation of Immigrants for the 21st Century: Creating Policies for America's Future**, National Immigration Forum, January 31 & February 1 (postponed from December), Washington, DC, [www.immigrationforum.org/savedate.htm](http://www.immigrationforum.org/savedate.htm) or 202.544.0004 x42

**Learning Disabilities Association of America 39th Annual International Conference**, February 13–16, Denver, [www.ldanatl.org/conf](http://www.ldanatl.org/conf) or 412.341.1515

**Through the Looking Glass: Reflecting on Professional Development**, Pro-Net 2000 National Professional Development Conference, February 21 & 22, Washington, DC, [www.pronet2000.org/conf2002](http://www.pronet2000.org/conf2002) or call Mike Dlott at 202.944.5347. Registration ends January 15. ■

# January

## Calendar of Events

free professional development events  
for literacy practitioners  
in and around New York City

[ 8 ]

### GED 2002 Series

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The new GED test to be introduced in January 2002 will be significantly different from the current version. This year-long series of workshops helps participants develop promising practices in GED instruction to meet the more rigorous standards of the new test.

#### The Writing Rubric

Tuesday, January 8, 1–5 pm

#### Facilitator: Ira Yankwitt

This workshop will familiarize participants with the new writing rubric that will be used to score the essay component of GED 2002. Participants will explore the writing process and its relationship to the GED essay, practice evaluating sample GED essays using the new writing rubric, examine the difference between analytical and holistic scoring, and discuss the implications of the new rubric for classroom instruction.

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or [jaynellw@lacnyc.org](mailto:jaynellw@lacnyc.org).

Sponsor: LAC

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### Technology & Innovation Study Group

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Interested in rolling up your sleeves and learning with and from your peers about innovative uses of technology in the classroom?

In this monthly study group, teachers and program managers work together to experience, explore, design, and implement innovative ways to integrate technology to enhance instruction. Participants read, examine resources, talk to their peers, and develop their own lessons and activities for classroom use. Teams explore their own classroom practice and uncover what works and why. The focus is on high-quality instruction with technology to support and enhance it. Participants also learn to use a variety of tools for communication, including video conferencing, live chats, and discussion boards. They explore ways that these resources can extend and expand their professional development.

Although this is a series, each session is self-contained, so participants may attend as many sessions as they wish. To view handouts and readings from the series and take part in group discussions, go to [www.lacnyc.org/resources/workshops.htm](http://www.lacnyc.org/resources/workshops.htm) and click on Technology & Innovation in the Classroom to be taken to the Blackboard online course.

#### Teamwork and Collaboration

Thursday, January 10, 9:30 am–3:00 pm

#### Facilitator: Marguerite Lukes

Participants will explore how to design and integrate collaborative group activities into instruction using basic word-processing and office software such as Microsoft Office. Participants will explore the principles supporting collaborative learning and learn how to design engaging collaborative activities for adult learners.

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or [jaynellw@lacnyc.org](mailto:jaynellw@lacnyc.org).

Sponsor: LAC

[ 11/18 ]

### ALIES Interim Report Workshop

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Friday, January 11, 9:30 am–12:30 pm  
OR Friday, January 18, 9:30 am–12:30 pm  
Attend only one of the two dates.

#### Presenter: Megan Swiderski

This training provides a page-by-page tour of the FY2002 NYCALI Interim Report. Highlights include the National Reporting System requirements and how ALIES responds to those requirements, changes in the Interim Report in FY2002, definitions of the Interim Report fields, Interim Report calculations, and the ALIES Data Check and Ad Hoc reports that can be used to verify the information on the Interim Report.

RSVP: Zurn Porter at 212.803.3348 or [zurnp@lacnyc.org](mailto:zurnp@lacnyc.org).

Sponsor: LAC

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### Technology Show 'n' Tell Series

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This series brings together teachers with a wide range of experiences in integrating technology into instruction to share what works, learn about new techniques, and try things out with the support of LAC Instructional Technology staff. Each session explores a different focused topic, providing examples of how different technologies can be used.

#### Enhancing the Writing Process with Technology

Friday, January 18, 9:30 am–12:30 pm

#### Facilitator: Mariann Fedele

Participants in this workshop will explore uses of technology to enhance the different stages of the writing process and learn more about how to use technology to inspire and stimulate student writing. Participants will walk through the steps of the writing process and have the opportunity to create a model lesson.

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or [jaynellw@lacnyc.org](mailto:jaynellw@lacnyc.org).

Sponsor: LAC

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## Program Managers' Series

This series is designed to meet the unique needs of NYC adult literacy program managers and site supervisors. This year's sessions focus on meeting the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act and the National Reporting System (NRS).

### Session 3: NY State NRS Implementation

Thursday, January 31, 11 am–2 pm

Tom Orsini, Team Leader of the Workforce Development Technical Support Team at the New York State Education Department, will meet with program managers to hear their recommendations for the state's implementation of the National Reporting System. The recommendations will be based on the ideas discussed at the December 13 Program Managers' session. **RSVP is essential.**

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or [jaynellw@lacnyc.org](mailto:jaynellw@lacnyc.org).

Sponsors: LAC & NYCPDC

## Open Hours at the LAC Computer Learning Center

The LAC's Computer Learning Center (CLC) is open at specific times to teachers, tutors, and administrators interested in becoming more familiar with technology to enhance their instructional practice. An LAC staff member will be available to assist users during these self-directed sessions and to help in locating resources, planning lessons, and using software. As space is limited and demand is high, please contact Mariann Fedele, Instructional Technology Specialist, at [mariannf@lacnyc.org](mailto:mariannf@lacnyc.org) or 212.803.3325 to reserve a computer workstation.

### Computer Learning Center Open Hours for January & February

Date	Time	Focus
Friday, January 4	1–5 pm	employment websites
Wednesday, January 9	1–5 pm	webquests
Wednesday, January 16	1–5 pm	online media sites
Friday, January 25	1–5 pm	LINCS Technology Special Collection
Tuesday, February 5	1–5 pm	open
Wednesday, February 13	1–5 pm	open
Friday, February 22	1–5 pm	open

## Coming in February

*Highlights of upcoming professional development events at the LAC*

## Technology & Innovation Study Group

### Project-Based Learning

Thursday, February 7, 9:30 am–3:00 pm

Participants will explore several options for designing web pages and will examine examples of how web-design projects can enhance classroom instruction. The focus will be on project-based learning.

## GED 2002 Series

### Science Curriculum Design

Tuesday, February 12, 1–5 pm

See the February *Literacy Update* for details.

## Technology Show 'n' Tell Series

### Putting Your Lesson Plans Online

Friday, February 15, 9:30 am–12:30 pm

Follow-up Friday March 29, 9:30 am–12:30 pm

In this two-part workshop, participants will discuss principles of lesson planning, create a lesson plan, and explore ways of posting those lesson plans online, including online sites for creating a web page. In the follow-up session on March 29, participants will return with lesson plans created for their classrooms to be posted and linked to the LAC site. This workshop is appropriate for participants with basic computer skills, such as using a mouse and word processing.

**All LAC and NYPDC events take place at 32 Broadway, 10th floor.**

### ALIES User Groups

ALIES users meet on the second and third Tuesdays of each month at 1 pm in the Computer Learning Center. Attend either one of the two monthly sessions, but not both. No RSVP is necessary.

Register online for LAC professional development events! Go to [www.lacnyc.org](http://www.lacnyc.org) and click on the Events tab at the top. Find the workshop you want using the convenient monthly listings, and click Register Now. Follow the instructions for quick and easy online registration. (Sorry, online registration is not available for ALIES events.)



Literacy Assistance Center



NYC Professional Development Consortium

# jobs in literacy]

To place a free employment ad, email [publications@lacnyc.org](mailto:publications@lacnyc.org) or fax 212.785.3685. The deadline for job ads for the March *Literacy Update* is January 31.

Ads are posted on the LAC website at [www.lacnyc.org](http://www.lacnyc.org) on a rolling basis. Please specify in your email or fax whether you want your ad in print or on the web only.

## Youth Literacy Specialist (FT)

Provide technical assistance to youth practitioners in after-school programs, focusing on strengthening the quality of educational services offered to children & their parents during non-school hours. Assist program directors & staff in strengthening instructional practices & identifying appropriate resources. Coordinate workshops, facilitate training, and provide consultation & professional development. Min. 5 yrs youth work experience with at least 2 yrs in a supervisory position. Skills in youth programming & professional development essential. BA req., MA pref. Letter & résumé to Elizabeth Rivera, Literacy Assistance Center, 32 Broadway, 10th floor, New York, NY 10004, fax 212.785.3685, email [lizr@lacnyc.org](mailto:lizr@lacnyc.org). ■

## After-School Program Literacy Teacher

Oversee all class activities for 20 jr hi students in after-school program; conduct literacy lessons in reading & writing skills.

## After-School Youth Group Leader

Assist teacher in class supervision, supervise activities such as homework assistance, gym time; provide peer counseling & mentoring to elementary or jr hi students.

**Both positions:** M-F, 3-6 pm. Must be at least 18 with HS diploma, pref. college student in related major; fluent in English, able to handle jr hi students independently. Résumé to Robert Bernard, Pershing IS 220 Beacon, 4812 9th Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11220, fax 718.436.5270. ■

## Case Manager

Provide case management for youth 14-18, develop program for youth to ensure they receive a full range of services for academic & occupational success; provide counseling; develop individual programs; provide workshops. HS diploma, bachelor's a plus; 3 yrs exp. working with & counseling youth from diverse backgrounds; strong data entry skills.

## Job Developer

Develop & implement workshops on job readiness for youth ages 14-18; develop career activities; develop links with other agencies for job opportunities. HS diploma, bachelor's a plus; 3 yrs exp. working with & counseling youth from diverse backgrounds; strong data entry skills.

## Basic Skills Instructor

Develop & implement basic skills instruction to ensure youth improve grade level; develop tutoring strategies; conduct assessments. BA & 5 yrs exp. in classroom instruction.

## Administrative Assistant

Filing, typing, data entry, phones; assist program director with youth program. HS diploma, 3 yrs office work exp., strong data entry skills. Letter & résumé to Mr. Vicki Cusare, Italian American League, 1460 Pennsylvania Ave., Apt. 1B, Brooklyn, NY 11239, fax 718.642.2857. ■

## Education Program Assistant (PT)

Support education initiatives with public school system, especially wrap-around services & parental involvement & education. Work with internal & external groups on initiatives such as parent workshops; provide logistical support. BA in education or human services or 90 credits and 1 yr related exp.; familiarity with NYC Board of Ed; MS Word req.; exp. with MS Publisher or PrintShop & MS Access. Résumé & letter to Elsie L. Jimenez, East Side House Settlement, 337 Alexander Ave., Bronx, NY 10454, fax 718.585.1433, [elsie@eastsidehouse.org](mailto:elsie@eastsidehouse.org). ■

## VESOL Teachers

Teach vocational ESOL; work with vocational teachers in variety of work areas. Master's or several years teaching experience; familiarity with world of work. FT & PT available, start January. Résumé & letter to Janet Burroughs, VESL Program Coordinator, Center for Immigrant Education & Training, LaGuardia Community College, fax 718.609.2004, email [jburroughs@lgacc.cuny.com](mailto:jburroughs@lgacc.cuny.com). ■

## ESOL Teachers (PT)

Classes held at worksites throughout Northern and Central NJ. Training organization seeks dedicated, compassionate professionals. Minimum BA & exp. teaching adults; must have own car. Fax résumé to E. Ray, JVS, 973.674.7858. ■

## Tutors

Tutor adults in 2-year college in ESOL & English. Some teaching or tutoring experience pref. Fax résumé to Janet Goldstein, Bramson ORT College, 718.575.5118, or call 718.261.5800. ■

## Coordinator/Employment Specialist (FT)

Coordinate adult ESOL & computer/ESOL classes: conduct participant intake & testing, assist & support teachers, help participants develop individual employment plans & obtain employment at program end. BA, exp. in adult ed or employment training/ placement program, strong computer skills, bilingual Spanish.

## ESOL Instructors (PT & FT)

Teach ESOL to adult students. Thematic or project-based approach to teaching ESOL pref. MA or BA & certificate in TESOL, linguistics, foreign language teaching or related; exp. teaching ESOL to adults. Comfortable with computers for personal use & willing to use technology with students.

## ESOL/Computer Instructors (PT & FT)

Design & implement creative computer curriculum to help adult students acquire both computer & English skills. Work with students on projects using PC computers, video cameras, digital video & still cameras & other technology. BA or MA in TESOL or related with strong computer skills & exp. using computers in instruction; or BA or MA in computer instruction with exp. teaching computers to adults, preferably nonnative English speakers.

## ESOL/Civics Instructors (PT)

Teach ESOL/civics integrated classes to adult ESOL students. Help students acquire English skills in the context of citizenship, civics & related themes. MA or BA & certificate in TESOL, linguistics, foreign language teaching or related; exp. teaching ESOL to adults. Comfortable with computers for personal use and willing to use technology with students.

## ESOL/Literacy Instructor (PT)

Teach low-level ESOL/literacy class. Help students who have no or very little education in their native language acquire basic English reading, speaking & writing skills. MA or BA & certificate in TESOL, linguistics or related; exp. teaching ESOL/literacy to adults. All positions start late Dec. or Jan. 2002 at Washington Heights community-based organization. Letter & résumé to Jana Sladkova, Director, ESOL Institute, Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation, fax 212.928.4180, email [janasladkova@nmic.org](mailto:janasladkova@nmic.org). For information, call 212.822.8320. ■

## Instructional & Support Staff

Work in inner-city alternative HS in HRA school-to-work program where students have 8-hour days Sept. thru Aug. with 20-hour internships on alternating weeks. Seeking people with varied skills and experience who have a commitment to students who need positive interactions with adults & a realistic view of the world and their place in it.

## Special Education Instructor

Certified, multi-talented, experienced special education instructor, specifically dealing with learning disabilities; able to cover NY State Ed standards in sciences (chem, environmental, bio), foreign languages (Spanish, ASL), economics or math a plus. Coaching or other extracurricular activities also a plus. See [www.wildcatatwork.org](http://www.wildcatatwork.org) for organizational philosophies. Send résumé to [jackovelli@aol.com](mailto:jackovelli@aol.com) or fax 718.328.6215. ■

## Early Learning Center Director (FT)

Oversee all functions of early learning center; supervise & coordinate teachers. Creative & energetic, good interpersonal and communication skills, able to work with diverse & bilingual children. Req. BA, NYS N-6 certification, good administrative skills, knowledge of Universal Pre-K programs. Computer literate a plus. Contact or mail résumé to Roeme Kim, Director, YWCA, 42-07 Parsons Boulevard, Flushing, NY 11355, fax 718.353.4044, email [rkim@ywcanyc.org](mailto:rkim@ywcanyc.org). ■

## Family/Youth Literacy Specialist (PT)

Design, lead & evaluate monthly staff development activities for two Even Start programs. Be part of team conducting study of youth after-school programs. MA, 5 yrs. exp. in literacy education. Fluency in Spanish a plus. 21 hours per week. Résumé to Institute for Literacy Studies, Lehman College, 250 Bedford Park Blvd. West, Bronx, NY 10468, fax 718.960.8054. ■

## Adult Education Teacher

Teach ESOL and/or GED classes to parents at PS 192 during school day, up to 12 hrs/wk. Call John Swauger, Washington Heights-Inwood Coalition, 212.781.6722. ■

## The K–12 School Experiences of High School Dropouts *cont'd*

### Prior School Experiences

When we asked participants why they left high school, they gave many reasons. Though many educators assumed that pregnancy was one of the leading reasons women dropped out of high school a generation ago, only 9% of our study group reported pregnancy or health-related concerns as the main reason for leaving school. Emotional reasons, such as boredom or a feeling of not belonging, and performance problems in school were the most often cited reasons, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Reasons for Leaving School**

Reason	Percentage*
Bored, didn't like, didn't belong	29
Problems with school performance	26
Job-related	17
Relationship problems	15
Family issues	10
Pregnancy or health problems	9

\*Percentages do not add up to 100% because some respondents selected more than one reason. N=940

We also asked study participants to evaluate their K–12 school experiences on a five-point scale ranging from “very negative” to “very positive”; the results are shown in Table 2. Although 11% of individuals in our study population had “very negative” school experiences, a nearly equal number, 10%, had “very positive” experiences. More participants (40%) report either “somewhat positive” or “very positive” experiences than reported negative experiences (28%). Not surprisingly, individuals who repeated grades or left school because of academic problems tend to feel more negative about their school experiences.

**Table 2. Evaluation of K–12 Experience**

Overall evaluation	Percentage*
Very negative	11
Somewhat negative	17
Neutral	33
Somewhat positive	30
Very positive	10

\*Percentages do not add up to 100% because of rounding. N=940

### Similarities and Differences between Program Participants and Nonparticipants

We were particularly interested in contrasting the life experiences of individuals in the study who do and do not participate in adult education programs. Surprisingly, we found that adult education participants and nonparticipants in the study group are remarkably similar in their demographics, previous K–12 school experiences, literacy proficiencies, work experience, and other variables.

The differences between the two groups, although statistically significant, are usually small. For example, the two groups differ slightly in average age: Program participants are somewhat younger, with an average age of 27 years, than are those who have never participated, who average 29 years of age. The participant group shows a slightly higher percentage of immigrants, at 12%, than does the nonparticipant group, 8% of whom are immigrants. One surprising fact is that 41% of the participant group repeated a grade during K–12 education, as compared to only 33% of those who have never participated in adult education.

### Implications of the Findings

Although a small percentage of individuals in the study group had very negative K–12 experiences, far more had positive school experiences, even though they dropped out before graduating. Our data so far do not support the idea that previous K–12 experiences are a major force in determining who among the target population participates in adult education programs. This finding might not hold true in other regions, where characteristics of both K–12 schools and adult education programs differ from those in the Portland region, but any correlation between K–12 experience and participation in adult education should be established by research rather than being generally assumed and illustrated by example or anecdote.

NCSALL's Persistence Study (see *Focus on Basics* Volume 4, Issue A, March 2000), which examined a variety of adult learners and programs in the northeastern United States, also found that

negative prior school experiences are relatively unimportant in adult students' reasons for enrolling and persisting in programs. These findings suggest that efforts to increase program outreach and retention should not assume that negative school experiences are a common barrier.

Many of the questions we hope LSAL will answer must wait for analysis of subsequent years of data that will show change over time in the study population. We plan to look more closely at relationships among individuals' previous school experiences, the characteristics of their families of origin, and the ways in which they form life goals. When we understand these relationships, we will have a better idea of the role adult education plays in students' lives. Then we will better understand why individuals enroll in adult education programs, what factors affect their persistence and learning in the programs, and how to design programs to better serve a broader base of potential students. ■▲◆

# teachers' corner ]

## Problem Posing in Participatory Education

CLASSROOM IDEAS FROM  
THE PAULO FREIRE  
INSTITUTE SUMMER WORKSHOP

by David Greene  
Young Adult Learning Academy

Winston Lawrence, Ed.D.  
Literacy Assistance Center

One aspect of what is variously called *participatory* or *Freirian* education (pioneered by Paulo Freire in *Democracy in Education* and other works) is *problem posing* as a means of helping learners apply their learning to real issues they confront daily, rather than merely tackling academic tasks that may have no connection with their lives. Unlike *problem solving*, where the teacher poses a problem for students to solve, *problem posing* allows learners to **identify** problems in their community, **analyze** the problems, and plan appropriate **action**. In the process, they build their creative and critical thinking skills.

An activity used in the Summer Institute given by the Working Group for the Paulo Freire Institute for Popular Education at the LAC last July illustrates how problem posing can work in the classroom. Facilitated by David Greene, Dr. Winston Lawrence, Olga Mehia, and Elish Sari—all teachers with the NYC Board of Education—and by Gregory Tewksbury of the New School University, the institute brought together more than 50 participants, including teachers, organizers, librarians, labor educators, community leaders, and community educators. For two days, participants explored Freirian concepts and popular education methodologies, discussing such topics as the role of participants' knowledge and experience in the learning process; the dynamic interdependence between teacher and students; the silencing of student voices; power, class, gender, and race; and the connection between social action and learning. They also practiced problem-posing techniques, using a "problem tree" to perform social analysis.

### Using the Problem Tree

Working in groups, participants brainstormed to identify obstacles to the kind of education that promotes social change. Five major categories of challenges were identified:

- Lack of resources
- Inappropriate pedagogical approaches
- Teacher isolation and burnout
- Student resistance and oppression
- Testing and standardization

Each group chose one problem within a category and used the problem tree to analyze it.

The problem-tree model uses the structure of a tree to explain social problems. The roots of the problem tree represent causes. The trunk represents the immediate cause of the problem (itself an effect of the root causes). The branches and leaves represent perceptible effects. For example, one root cause of children's poor performance in school is economic abandonment of their neighborhood. One effect of this abandonment is that competent teachers don't want to work in the neighborhood. This trunk, in turn, leads to branches—students do not pass mandated tests and therefore can't enter good colleges or get good jobs. Note that this model is not entirely linear: An effect or problem often becomes the cause of a new problem.

### Re-Presenting the Problem

Having chosen a problem, institute participants prepared class presentations using material or dramatic forms: drawings, skits, advertisements, stories, poems, or news reports. These presentations allowed groups to communicate their collective understanding of the problem.

One group, in a fine example of cooperative learning, used one member's artistic skills to express the visual features of a neglected community in a mural that showed rundown buildings, drug dealers on the corner, a pile of garbage, junked cars on the street, and graffiti-laced buildings. The mural sparked discussion about the effects of the neighborhood's deterioration on schools, including the absence of positive role models, the challenge of recruiting good teachers, and the difficulty of learning in an unhealthy social environment. In this group's problem tree, economic devastation is the root cause, the trunk reflects the resulting neglect of the community, and the branches or effects are poor schooling and abandoned buildings.

The Freirian problem-posing methodology moves from **identifying** the problem to **analyzing** it and then to **acting** on it. For the action phase, this group suggested going to elected officials or writing letters to the mayor

and other community leaders to get these leaders to address the economic devastation.

Another group performed a skit on ineffective teaching to illustrate teacher burnout and lack of preparation. The teacher in the skit asked geography questions but could not distinguish between correct and incorrect answers. Some students therefore gave palpably false answers, knowing the teacher would not be able to correct them. Others made it clear that they did not care about the class: two were talking; one leafed through a book, another threw paper. This participatory education activity allowed participants to visibly and emotionally represent the problem of teacher burnout. Rather than just discussing the issue, participants were involved at the experiential level. For the action phase, this group suggested staff development and retraining, as well as reviewing teacher compensation, to address the problem.

### Benefits of the Problem-Posing Approach

The projects from the Freirian Summer Institute show how problems can be identified and analyzed in the classroom, no matter what the level of the students. The problem-posing approach allows learners to examine an issue in a concrete way and then identify possible solutions. All members of the group participate. The representations draw on learners' artistic and dramatic talents, a classroom application of Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. As a result of these activities, Summer Institute participants saw possibilities for helping learners acquire a solid education by engaging in critical analysis. ■▲◆

For further information on the Paulo Freire Institute, contact David Greene at 718.972.5128, Greg Tewksbury at 212.229.5857, or Ron Casonova at 718.756-7375.

# ALIES Experiences Literacy Volunteers of America Conference

by Megan Swiderski  
Associate Director of ALIES & Data Analysis

Even in the wake of the September 11 tragedy, hundreds of tutors, program managers, students, and others with an interest in literacy boarded planes to travel to the annual conference of Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, October 17–20. Though the main purpose of the conference, entitled “2001: A Literacy Odyssey,” was to provide a venue for knowledge sharing among people involved in adult literacy, the conference also highlighted developments in the upcoming merger between LVA and Laubach Literacy International, two of the largest volunteer literacy organizations in the world.

The goal of the ALIES (Adult Literacy Information and Evaluation System) team in attending the conference was both to absorb LVA’s unique way of providing adult literacy services and to share the ALIES software and data collection strategy with members of LVA. Several LVA sites in New York State will pilot use of ALIES

software during FY2001. The ALIES team attended the conference in order to learn firsthand about LVA’s methods and practices so we can meet LVA’s data needs not only in this pilot program but also in the proposed future rollout of ALIES to other LVA sites.

The conference provided a variety of outlets for literacy learning and sharing. Several keynote speakers shared motivational messages with adult literacy practitioners and students. Michael Scott Karpovich spoke on “The Art of Taking Care of Yourself,” and Wally “Famous” Amos provided what the conference program called an “inspirational talk aimed at making students believe in themselves and their potential.” Smaller, hands-on workshops featured a range of topics including technology, ESOL, data, fundraising, learning disabilities, and teaching to diversity. The workshops offered the ALIES team a chance to talk with, listen to, and gather information from LVA stakeholders. We walked

away with a personal understanding of how LVA differs from and is similar to adult literacy programs in New York City, an understanding that will help us customize the ALIES software for LVA needs.

We also demonstrated the ALIES software to individuals interested in data and data management. The purpose of the demonstrations was twofold: 1) to provide LVA members with an overview of the software and how it is used to manage, maintain, and report on data and 2) to solicit the LVA representatives’ feedback on ways to improve the software from both a general and an LVA-specific perspective. Overall, the conference provided ALIES and LVA with a great opportunity to learn about each other and strategize for the future. 🗨️

## resources *cont’d*

### Portfolio Assessment for ESOL Programs

The state of Ohio has implemented statewide use of a portfolio system in response to National Reporting System requirements. An overview is available on the Northeast ABLE Resource Center website at <http://literacy.kent.edu/NEABLE>. Click on “ESOL web page” and then on “ESOL/OPAS Uniform Portfolio System” to find an overview, the content standards on which the system is based, and the documentation logs used for the system. ESOL teachers might also like to check out the ESOL Support Materials for activities and lesson plans.

### ESOL Lesson Plans and More

English To Go, at [www.english-to-go.com](http://www.english-to-go.com), offers a wide variety of lesson plans and other materials for ESOL teachers. A few sample lesson plans are available for free; other free materials, including a weekly lesson plan and read-only access to discussion boards, can be accessed by logging in as a guest member. Additional materials and privileges are available for a monthly fee, with volume discounts for institutional use.

### New Youth Connections

The November 2001 issue of *New Youth Connections (NYC)*, a general-interest magazine written by and for NYC teens, focuses on young people’s reactions to the attacks of September 11 and their aftermath, under the title *A Wounded City*. The publisher, Youth Communication, has developed a six-page study guide to this issue of the magazine, with discussion ideas, role plays, and other activities. Visit Youth Communication’s website at [www.youthcomm.org](http://www.youthcomm.org); write Youth Communication, 224 West 29th Street, 2nd floor, New York, NY 10001; or call 212.279.0708. ■



Mike Dean (top left), Educational Program Specialist for the Office of Vocational and Adult Education at the U.S. Department of Education, and Larry Condelli (top right), Managing Associate at the Pelavin Research Center—two of the architects of the National Reporting System (NRS)—discussed the history and future of the NRS with over 40 program managers (including Sheila Krentz of the NYC Board of Education, bottom) on October 25 at the LAC.

## New York City Reads

Coming in February: New York City Reads, a collaboration between the Literacy Assistance Center and Verizon! The mission of the Verizon Reads initiative is to lead America's campaign to raise literacy levels by orchestrating a national platform that will help to increase funding and community awareness and to support a diverse range of literacy programs.

The partnership between the LAC and Verizon Reads promises to bring enormous attention to the cause of literacy in NYC and to provide substantial resources to build the LAC's capacity to serve the field. For more information, see the February *Literacy Update*, [www.lacnyc.org](http://www.lacnyc.org), or [www.verizonreads.net](http://www.verizonreads.net).



Literacy Assistance Center

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[www.lacnyc.org](http://www.lacnyc.org)

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