

Technology @ Work

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REAL TRAINING FOR REAL JOBS

by Emily Hacker, F.E.G.S.
Marguerite Lukes, LAC

What do adult literacy and ESOL students have to know to qualify for computer training programs?

Do technology companies really hire people with entry-level skills?

What skills are most important for long-term job retention?

Are there any models that demonstrate an information technology training and career ladder for adult learners?

These are some of the questions addressed at the Technology @ Work Conference on November 30, 2001, sponsored by F.E.G.S., IBM, and the LAC. The conference, co-chaired by Emily Hacker of F.E.G.S. and Marguerite Lukes of the LAC, was attended by 125 representatives from more than 60 organizations and agencies that provide services in basic literacy, ESOL, workforce preparation, vocational training, union education, professional development, and resource development. These professionals convened at F.E.G.S.'s administrative headquarters in lower Manhattan to explore the challenges and opportunities the digital economy brings to adult education, training, and workforce development.

One of the highlights of the day was the keynote panel on "Technology Workforce Development in Low-Income Communities," moderated by Deborah D'Amico, consultant with the Adult Literacy Media Alliance, and featuring Reg Foster of IBM, Julian Allsid of the Workforce Strategy Center, Stephanie Creaturo of NPower NY, Amanda Birnbaum of CitySoft NY, and Linda Lopez of Per Scholas. D'Amico opened the panel by reminding conference participants that we are living in "a time of renewed urgency, in a time of impending political and economic crisis. . . ." In the face of the loss of 90,000 jobs and the closing of many businesses, the social safety net that previously sustained people has lagged behind. Participants in literacy programs are the most vulnerable to these circumstances, "the last hired and the first fired." Speaking specifically to these difficult conditions, the panelists offered a range of strategies and models to address the pressing need for an integrated and contextualized approach to technology training in adult basic education.

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by Claire Harnan
Director of Development

LAC Partners with Verizon to Launch New York City Reads

On December 11, Elyse Barbell Rudolph, LAC Executive Director, and Richard Fish, Director of the Mayor's Office of Adult Literacy, attended a special event at Verizon's Manhattan headquarters to award \$1.145 million in grants to 20 literacy and workplace education nonprofits and to announce the launch of New York City Reads. Verizon has made a unique commitment to be "America's literacy champion" through Verizon Reads, concentrating its corporate philanthropy on the cause of improving literacy in the United States.

At the December 11 event, titled "Celebration of Giving," Verizon Co-CEOs Chuck Lee and Ivan Seidenberg, as well as Vice Chairman and President Larry Babbio, underscored Verizon's commitment to lead a national campaign to raise literacy levels. The goals of Verizon Reads include:

- increasing community and corporate awareness of the nation's literacy problem
- raising funds to support nonprofit organizations focusing on child, family, adult, and technology literacy
- enlisting volunteers to help children and adults learn to read

Verizon Reads, with the LAC as its local partner, now brings its substantial resources to the support of the NYC literacy community. The LAC joins a growing group of local and state literacy organizations—in Massachusetts, Texas, Iowa, Florida, Kentucky, Hawaii, Washington, and the District of Columbia—participating in Verizon Reads. To increase public awareness of the need for improved literacy, Verizon has marshaled the support of other corporate partners; celebrities who have volunteered to be local Literacy Champions; national literacy organizations including the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), Laubach Literacy International, and the National Center for Family Literacy; and Verizon's more than 250,000 employees.

Underscoring its commitment to volunteerism, Verizon invited local programs—the Brooklyn, New York, and Queens Borough public libraries; Union Settlement Association; Literacy Partners; the Center for Employment Opportunities; Discipleship Educational Center; and the LAC—to staff tables at the December 11 event to introduce Verizon employees to volunteer opportunities throughout the city.

This year, Verizon and the LAC will undertake a campaign to raise awareness of the need for expanded literacy services in NYC. Special events with New York's Literacy Champion, Giants running back Tiki Barber, will showcase the work of NYC literacy programs and encourage volunteers to support and participate in them. Early this year, Verizon will launch its "Check into Literacy" program, whereby NYC customers can check a box on their phone bills to donate a dollar a month to support literacy efforts. The LAC will help channel these funds to local organizations providing direct services to children, families, and adults.

In accepting a Verizon grant, Elyse Barbell Rudolph expressed gratitude for Verizon's support of the NYC literacy community. Anticipating the coming of Check into Literacy, she added, "For the first time, I'm looking forward to paying my phone bill!"

To learn more about Verizon Reads, go to www.verizonreads.net. ■▲●

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NEW NYCPDC DIRECTOR

Peter Kondrat has been named Director of the NYCPDC. A public school educator since 1984, Peter has been involved in adolescent and adult literacy for more than a decade.

In 1996, Peter began his affiliation with the Brooklyn High School Superintendency's Project Freire adolescent literacy project, first as an instructor in a pilot project for at-risk youth and then as a master teacher and supervisor in the summer and Saturday literacy programs. He also worked as a literacy specialist for the Brooklyn High Schools, training teachers and running a model classroom that allowed teachers to see professional development theories put into practice.

Peter has worked with English language learners throughout his career. With Ann Redpath, he co-authored a curriculum companion to *Taste of Salt: A Novel of Haiti* by Frances Temple. For the past year, he has been an adult literacy consultant and teacher trainer with various nonprofits around the city.

Peter earned a BA in English from Bucknell University and an MA from City College; he has taught at the Université de Caen in France.

Peter Kondrat, Director, NYCPDC

KEY INGREDIENTS OF EFFECTIVE WORK-RELATED EDUCATION

Work-related adult basic education has great potential for equipping learners for productive, rewarding careers. Though being well-educated does not guarantee that an individual will get or succeed in a job, most good jobs require strong basic skills. Adult educators who want to help learners develop strong skills can follow the

guidelines below, suggested by experience and research in adult education, workplace training, and workforce development.

Take a comprehensive view of the skills and knowledge workers need. Rather than focusing solely on specific skills needed for narrow, immediate tasks, curricula should promote broad transferable skills and teach what learners need to know for both immediate and future jobs.

Promote active, contextualized learning. Learners should actively seek and construct knowledge in order to take on workplace challenges dealing not only with their job tasks but also with health and safety, worker rights and benefits, and career planning. Learners should also be encouraged to practice active learning in their roles as family and community members.

Connect learning to good jobs, so learners see a reward and are able to use what they learn.

Integrate basic skills with technology skills. More and more jobs require computer skills, and computers can be great learning devices.

Involve learners, as well as employers, unions, and other stakeholders, in planning, implementing, and continuously improving programs.

Provide multiple learning opportunities— in the classroom, at the workplace, at home—to help learners get the practice they need.

Provide well-equipped learning facilities and convenient schedules and locations.

Please see Resources on page 4 for websites that provide information on work-related learning.

Paul Jurmo, Consortium for Worker Education

WORKPLACE ESSENTIAL SKILLS

One potential resource for work-related learning is Workplace Essential Skills (WES), a curriculum package from PBS LiteracyLink. While WES is designed to prepare learners for the world of work, many of the skills on which it focuses are essential for pre-GED work. The WES website, www.pbs.org/literacy/wes, provides charts that correlate WES skills to pre-GED skills. WES competencies are also correlated to the major measures used for federal and state accountability.

The complete package includes 24 half-hour video programs, four student workbooks to reinforce the video lessons, a teacher's guide with learning objectives and lesson plans, 24 web-based lessons tied to the videos and workbooks, a CD-ROM of video clips to assist users who have slow Internet connections, and an optional online management system that allows instructors to give feedback on a learner's portfolio and provides data for tracking student progress and demographics. ■

Alison Kaplan, Interim Director, NYCPDC

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.



resources]

Black History Month

Instructors who want to devote all or part of February to lessons related to Black History Month know that a wealth of curricular materials on the African Diaspora are available. The difficulty is not so much finding materials as sorting through a lot of books and websites to select high-quality materials that are appropriate for your learners. The two sets of materials listed below come with the recommendation of program staff members at the LAC.

Caribbean Connections is a set of five books featuring primary sources including fiction, nonfiction, oral histories, interviews, poetry, drama, and songs, along with introductory materials and teaching ideas. Published jointly by the Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean and by the Network of Educators on Central America, the series is appropriate for learners from intermediate to GED level. The five volumes, *Haiti*, *Jamaica*, *Moving North*, *Overview of Regional History*, and *Puerto Rico*, can be purchased as a set or individually from Teaching for Change, 800.763.9131 or www.teachingforchange.org. Individual volumes are available for review in the LAC Clearinghouse.

Free Speech TV, at www.freespeech.org, offers multimedia resources you can use for instruction during Black History Month to supplement the standard autobiographical readings and essay-writing projects. The site includes a wide variety of primary-source audio and video features, including an interview with poet June Jordan; an audio performance by James Cagney, Jr., of his essay "Ebonic Plague"; a Dyke TV profile of Sapphire, author of *Push* and a Brooklyn resident; an entire section on Mumia Abu-Jamal; and video interpretations of poems by Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, and Chinua Achebe. As an example of how such resources might be used in the classroom, the poetry videos, because they provide a first-person viewpoint on race, could provide a classroom platform for writing about each learner's perspective on race and how issues of race are played out in American culture.

Work-Related Learning

Paul Jurmo, Deputy Education Director at the Consortium for Worker Education, recommends the following websites for information on work-related learning and literacy. See his related article, "Key Ingredients of Effective Work-Related Education," on page 3.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education www.ericacve.org

Click on Publications for a treasure chest of online resources for adult educators, including many articles and digests on work-related learning.

National Institute for Literacy www.nifl.gov

The NIFL site includes the Equipped for the Future (EFF) standards, which focus on preparing adults for work, family, and citizenship roles, as well as a listserv and a special collection on work-related literacy.

Working for America www.workingforamerica.org

The site of the AFL-CIO Working for America Institute provides links to union education programs and other union-related information.

Websites for Teachers of Children & Youth

Gabrielle Aponete, in her final days as Youth Literacy Specialist at the LAC, offered this short list of web-based resources for after-school practitioners.

Children's Literature Web Guide

www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown This site provides a wealth of Internet resources on books for children and youth. It has a great "list of book lists" and many other resources for teachers, parents, and others interested in children's literacy.

The Internet for Teachers

<http://train.rps205.com/tift2> For educators interested in using technology in creative ways with students, this site is superb. A teacher-training site, it reviews webquests, collaborative projects, and scavenger hunts, all useful learning tools for students.

Children's Picture Book Database

www.lib.muohio.edu/pictbks This site from the library of Miami University of Ohio provides abstracts of over 4,000 children's picture books. Its search capabilities allow teachers to create literature-based thematic units.

Useful Web Tool

Backflip, at www.backflip.com, is a free web-based service that allows you to bookmark your favorite websites and access them from anywhere on the web. Sign up for free, and Backflip will walk you through a simple process of organizing your current bookmarks. Then, as you discover interesting new web pages, use Backflip to save and organize them. Because it's web-based, your Backflip personal directory is available to you no matter what computer you're using.

Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE)

Many New York City practitioners are unfamiliar with COABE, the national professional organization whose mission is to provide leadership, professional development, networking opportunities, and advocacy for adult literacy practitioners. COABE publishes the *Adult Basic Education Journal* three times a year and hosts an annual conference (www.coabe2002.org), to be held this year May 8–11 in Charleston, SC. For information on joining COABE, go to <http://206.82.75.28> or contact Ms. Carol Shefrin, MCIDC Plaza Building 58, 6395 SR 103 North, Lewistown, PA 17044, carcar@aejtc.org. ■▲◆

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Culture in the Classroom

Cultural conflict, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination have become major issues in ESOL programs as students and other community members respond to the events of September 11 and its aftermath. In response to these issues, the LAC will offer a three-day ESOL Cultural Development Institute on Culture in the Classroom on April 11 and 12 and May 10, 2002. Facilitated by Winston Lawrence, Ed.D., Coordinator of Adult Literacy Services at the LAC, the institute will give teachers an opportunity to develop curricular materials and lesson plans that promote cultural sensitivity and understanding in the classroom. Participation in the institute is by application only. Download the application at www.lacnyc.org or call 212.803.3323 to request a hard copy. Applications are due March 15.

Call for Manuscripts

The editors of *Perspectives: The New York Journal of Adult Learning*, published by the New York Association of Continuing Community Education and Fordham University Graduate School of Education, invite submissions from adult educators, program directors, and graduate students. Articles should address the needs and interests of those involved in educating adults in the areas of adult literacy, adult education, community education, continuing education, and higher education. The journal will be published twice a year beginning in late 2002. For detailed information on submissions, visit www.fordham.edu/gseladed/perspectives, email Perspectives@fordham.edu, or mail Perspectives: The New York Journal of Adult Learning, Dr. Kathleen King, Editor, Fordham University, 113 W. 60th St., Rm. 1102, New York, NY 10023.

Read Across America

On the birthday of Dr. Seuss (Theodore Geisel), the National Education Association (NEA) calls for every child in America to be reading in the company of a caring adult in its Read Across America initiative. Dr. Seuss's birthday is actually March 2, but the NEA is suggesting that local Read Across America events take place on Friday, March 1. For information, go to www.nea.org/readacross.

TESOL 2002

The 2002 annual convention of TESOL, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, will be held April 9–13 in Salt Lake City. The convention theme is "Language and the Human Spirit." Featured speakers include Jim Cummins of the University of Toronto on "Taking the Bump out of the Grade 4 Slump: Technology-Supported Instruction for Academic Language Development" and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas of the University of Roskilde, Denmark, on "Linguistic Diversity, Biodiversity, and the Future of the Planet." TESOL members will receive the preliminary program and registration information in the mail or electronically. Nonmembers should fill out an online information request form at www.tesol.org or use TESOL's Fax on Demand service at 800.329.4469. Early registration closes March 1.

Career Education Conference in NYC

The NY State Education Department's Office of Workforce Preparation and Continuing Education (OWPCE), in collaboration with the NYC School-to-Career Office, is sponsoring a regional professional development conference, "Connecting Education, Careers, and the Workplace: Preparing Youth and Adults for the 21st Century" on March 14 in New York City. The conference, coordinated by the University at Albany Two-Year College Development Center, is designed to help educators with the implementation of the new Regents Policy for Career and Technical Education; the Learning Standards for Career Development and Occupational Studies; and workforce development, family, adult, alternative, and continuing education initiatives. To register, contact the NYC School-to-Careers Office at 718.935.3469 or visit www.albany.edu/twoyear/regmeet.htm.

High School Graduation/Dropout Rates

A study sponsored by the Black Alliance for Educational Options and prepared by Jay P. Greene of the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research uses a new method to calculate high school graduation vs. dropout rates. It suggests that graduation rates for minority students are lower than previously believed. Nationwide, the graduation rate for the class of 1998 was 74%. The graduation rate for white students was 78%; for African-American students, 56%; and for Latino students, 54%. Georgia had the lowest overall graduation rate at 57%; Iowa had the highest at 93%. Wisconsin had the lowest graduation rate among African-American students at 40%, while West Virginia had the highest rate at 71%. For Latino students, Georgia had the lowest graduation rate at 32%; Montana had the highest at 82%. For the complete report, go to www.manhattan-institute.org.

Editing Course

New York City Technical College Division of Adult and Continuing Education, in collaboration with the LAC, is offering a course on Copyediting and Proofreading for Freelancers this spring. Taught by Jan Gallagher, Ph.D., Director of Publications at the LAC, the class will meet at the LAC on ten Tuesday evenings, 6:30–9 pm, beginning March 5. The course is appropriate for literacy practitioners and other professionals who want to hone their editing skills and consider freelance work in publishing. The fee is \$320. For information on course content, contact Jan Gallagher, publications@lacnyc.org or 212.803.3332; to register, contact NYC Technical College, 718.260.5757. ■

February

Calendar of Events

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

March

[7]

Technology & Innovation Study Group

Project-Based Learning

Thursday, February 7, 9:30 am–3 pm

Facilitator: Marguerite Lukes

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

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or jaynellw@lacnyc.org.

Sponsor: LAC

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GED 2002 Series

Science Curriculum Design

Tuesday, February 12, 1–5 pm

Presenter: Gayle Cooper,
City University of New York

This workshop will introduce participants to lesson ideas and resources created by CUNY staff developers for use in CUNY GED programs. Participants will sample model lessons, reflect on key elements and instructional methods, and work collaboratively to develop science lesson ideas of their own.

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or jaynellw@lacnyc.org.

Sponsor: LAC

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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

Facilitator: Mariann Fedele

In this two-part workshop, part of a year-long series, 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.

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or jaynellw@lacnyc.org.

Sponsor: LAC

[1]

Using Community Newspapers in the ABE/ESOL Classroom

Friday, March 1, 1–4 pm

Presenter: Winston Lawrence, Ed.D.

Community newspapers communicate local and other relevant news to the neighborhood, highlighting issues that confront the communities in which they publish. This workshop will show teachers how they can use community newspapers to enhance instruction and to promote civic and community awareness.

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or jaynellw@lacnyc.org.

Sponsor: LAC

[7]

Technology & Innovation Study Group

Teachers as Learners: Language, Culture & Power in the Classroom

Thursday, March 7, 9:30 am–3 pm

See the March/April Calendar for complete description.

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or jaynellw@lacnyc.org.

Sponsor: LAC

[12]

GED 2002 Series

Social Studies Curriculum Design

Tuesday, March 12, 1–5 pm

Presenters: Anita Caref & Frannie Rosenson, Brooklyn College Adult & Continuing Education

This workshop will introduce participants to lesson ideas and resources developed by staff at the Brooklyn College adult literacy program for use throughout CUNY GED programs. Participants will sample model lessons, reflect on key elements and instructional methods, and work collaboratively to develop social studies lesson ideas of their own.

Next in the GED 2002 Series:

Language Arts Curriculum Design, April 9

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or jaynellw@lacnyc.org.

Sponsor: LAC

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Technology Show ‘n’ Tell Series

Putting Your Lesson Plans Online (Follow-up)

Friday, March 29, 9:30 am–12:30 pm

Facilitator: Mariann Fedele

In this follow-up to the February 15 session, participants will return with lesson plans created for their classrooms to be posted and linked to the LAC site. For participants in the February 15 session only.

RSVP: LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or jaynellw@lacnyc.org.

Sponsor: LAC

Clearinghouse Open Hours

The LAC Clearinghouse is open for browsing on Mondays, 1–5 pm. Browsers can peruse our collection of professional development and curriculum materials, including books, journals, audio- and videotapes, and software. Most materials are available for loan for 28 days.

If you have questions about using the LAC Clearinghouse, please contact Ira Yankwitt at iray@lacnyc.org or 212.803.3356.

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, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, at mariannf@lacnyc.org or 212.803.3325 to reserve a computer workstation.

Computer Learning Center Open Hours for February & March

Date	Time
Tuesday, February 5	1–5 pm
Wednesday, February 13	1–5 pm
Friday, February 22	1–5 pm
Wednesday, March 6	1–5 pm
Friday, March 22	1–5 pm
Wednesday, March 27	1–5 pm

All LAC and NYCPDC 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 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 or fax 212.785.3685. The deadline for job ads for the March/April *Literacy Update* is February 4.

Ads are posted on the LAC website at 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.

Virtual Y After-School Literacy Program Counselor (PT)

M-F, 3-6 pm. At least 2 years of college, exp. working with children.
Résumés to Long Island City YMCA, 32-23 Queens Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101, fax 718.392.0544, ATTN: Gerri, Virtual Y Program. ■

ESOL Teacher (PT, 2 positions)

2 eves/wk, 6-9 pm, plus one 3-hr paid staff development meeting per month, Spring 2002.
Bachelor's & exp. with adult learners; familiarity with portfolio assessment, cooperative learning, thematic instruction, project-based instruction.
Contact Gloria Weber; send résumé to HANAC ESOL Program, 23-16 30th Ave., Astoria, NY 11102, phone 718.626.3232 (6-9 pm), fax 718.721.5425, email hanacesol@yahoo.com. ■

GED Teacher

Work with 15-20 parents of children at CS 146 weekday afternoons, 2-3 hrs twice a week. Bachelor's, exp. teaching GED; bilingual Spanish a plus.
Résumé & letter to Cheryl Williams, Parent Coordinator, The Children's Aid Society at CS 146, 968 Cauldwell Ave., Bronx, NY 10456, fax 718.861.5936, phone 718.861.5935 or 718.843.2251. ■

Program Manager

Manage student intake & assessment, handle data management and reporting, assist in computer lab. BA, knowledge of computer applications (MS Access & Excel). Exp. with ESOL students, administrative exp. in educational/training programs pref.

Program Coordinator/Staff & Curriculum Developer, ESOL Program

Coordinate & supervise grant-funded ESOL/Civics program & its faculty, develop curriculum & program, teach 6 hrs/wk. MA in TESOL or related, exp. teaching adult ESOL students. Exp. in curriculum development & faculty supervision desired.

Teachers, ESOL/Civics Program

Teach ESOL to adults in the context of civics education, develop instructional & curricular materials, participate in professional development activities. BA in education or related req.; certificate or MA in TESOL or related & exp. teaching adult ESOL pref.

Résumé & letter to Armando Paz, The Center for Immigrant Education & Training, LaGuardia Community College, Room C-352, 31-10 Thomson Ave., Long Island City, NY 11101, email apaz@lagcc.cuny.edu. ■

After-School Site Coordinator (FT)

Coordinate program grades K-6; manage administrative tasks; plan curriculum and academic activities; supervise staff; maintain payroll and budget.
Fax résumé to Laura Cole, Henry Street Settlement, 212.777.1445. phone 212.254.3100 x207. ■

Early Learning Center Director (FT)

Oversee all functions of early learning center; supervise & coordinate teachers. Must be 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.

Early Learning Center Assistant Teacher (FT)

Must be able to help write and execute a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child in a unique bilingual atmosphere. Req. BA or 60 credits; NYS N-6 certified a plus.
Résumé to Roeme Kim, Director, YWCA Early Learning Center, 42-07 Parsons Boulevard, Flushing, NY 11355, fax 718.353.4044, email rkim@ywcany.org. ■

Director of Personnel

Budget Analyst

Director of Worksite Development

Worksite Coordinator

Job Developer

Employment Transition Specialist

World of Work Facilitator

Basic Education Instructor

All positions FT; min. requirement bachelor's or above. BEGIN Managed Programs, serving adult public assistance recipients.

Résumé to beginemployment@aol.com or fax 212.673.4281. ■

ESOL Teachers (PT)

Teach ESOL eves 6 hrs/wk in Brooklyn or Queens. NYC Bd of Ed license req., prior exp. teaching adults pref.
Résumé, letter & copy of license to Rosalie Kavadlo, Office of Adult & Continuing Education, 42-15 Crescent St., Rm. 602, Long Island City, NY 11101, fax 718.392.4768. ■

Education Coordinator

Coordinate museum education dept: facilitate programs, conduct tours, plan & develop education programs, supervise PT employees. BA in education or museum studies, background in or love of history, bilingual Spanish.

Résumé & letter to Director of Education, Lower East Side Tenement Museum, 66 Allen St., NY, NY 10002, fax 212.431.0402. ■

Technology @ Work *cont'd*

Corporate Perspectives

Several key issues and steps emerged as the panelists spoke. Reg Foster of IBM (www.ibm.com/ibm/libmgives) discussed the importance of partnerships between technology developers and community organizations that understand the needs of technology users. These partnerships can result in software innovations to help more people succeed in an increasingly technology-driven world of work.

Representing the employer perspective was Amanda Birnbaum of CitySoft NY (www.citysoft.com), a for-profit web development firm with an explicit social mission to hire new talent from low-income urban communities. To some people's surprise, Birnbaum emphasized as key to success for entry-level workers not hard, technical skills, but "soft" skills. "I can teach people HTML or Photoshop in six weeks," Birnbaum said. "Yet if students don't also learn to pay attention to detail; develop a willingness to take criticism, and [master] all-round conflict resolution . . . it will be tough to keep them employed." Birnbaum stressed that the better prepared students are in these areas, the more likely they are to succeed when they enter the workforce.

Strategies and Training Models

During the keynote panel discussion, Julian Allsid of the Workforce Strategy Center (www.workforcestrategy.org) shared an information technology (IT) career ladder model that his organization has developed for the city of San Francisco. This model represents a collaboration between government agencies and community-based organizations to provide basic computer literacy instruction to all adult

learners and job seekers as soon as they enter the employment-training system and then quickly get those who have aptitude and interest onto an IT career development path. The San Francisco model has three training strands following basic computer literacy training: network administration, office technology, and web design.

Stephanie Creaturo of NPower NY (www.npower.org) and Linda Lopez of Per Scholas (www.perscholas.org) also shared strategies and training models. NPower's strategy is to combine technology technical assistance for nonprofits with IT training for the clients the nonprofits serve. Its new Technology Service Corps is an IT workforce development program that trains young adults from low-income communities to serve as technology staff for nonprofit organizations.

In a large warehouse in the South Bronx, Per Scholas provides hands-on instruction in building and maintaining computers to hundreds of low-income youth and adults each year. The donated computers that the students refurbish are sold to nonprofits and schools at deeply discounted rates. The Per Scholas model brings together several partnerships: businesses donate used computers, job training organizations refurbish the computers, and nonprofit organizations buy the computers. Lopez and Creaturo also echoed CitySoft's Birnbaum in emphasizing the importance of soft-skills instruction in any IT job-training program.

Resources for IT Training

After the panel concluded, conference participants attended workshops on a range of topics, including media evaluation, web resources for job seekers, the video-based resources of TV411, IBM's Adult Literacy Initiative, strategies

for using technology in basic literacy instruction, and web-based lessons for low-level ESOL and BE students. Materials and handouts from several of the workshops have been published online.

Evaluating and Selecting Educational Software and Websites, presented by Marguerite Lukes of the LAC

www.lacnyc.org/resources/workshops.htm

Web Portals for Employment, Career Development, Training, and Labor Market Information & Resources, facilitated by Mariann Fedele of the LAC

www.lacnyc.org/resources/workshops.htm

TV411: Tune into Learning. This interactive web site to accompanies the TV411 video series and workbooks

www.tv411.org

IBM's Adult Literacy Initiative

www.ibm.com/ibm/libmgives/grant/adult/adultliteracy.shtml

The keynote panel describing programs that promote a sustainable and productive approach to workforce development, combined with workshops highlighting exemplary practices in integrating technology into adult education and training, added up to a conference that emphasized the importance of training that enables learners to find and keep real jobs in the growth sector of information technology. ■▲●

teachers' corner]

Beyond Skills and Drills

A LEARNER-CENTERED APPROACH TO GED LESSON PLANNING

by Ira Yankwitt

Director of Adult Literacy Services

The alignment of the GED 2002 exam with rigorous state and national high school standards poses a formidable challenge for classroom teachers, who typically have limited resources, preparation time, and student contact time. However, the new GED's emphasis on subject-area knowledge and higher-order thinking skills presents an opportunity for teachers who are interested in topical, content-driven instruction but who have felt compelled to limit themselves to a traditional skill-and-drill approach to test preparation.

In *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach* (Jossey-Bass, 1994), community educator Jane Vella identifies seven questions—who, what, why, when, where, what for, and how—that guide her process in planning meetings and training institutes for adults. Vella describes her method as learner-centered because it honors learners as the subjects of their own learning. For GED teachers looking to move beyond a skill-and-drill approach, Vella's seven questions provide an excellent framework for developing learner-centered GED lesson plans.

Who?

Whether by conducting formal intake interviews, holding informal discussions, or having students engage in reflective writing, get to know your learners' needs, experiences, and aspirations. This knowledge will enable you to select, from the broad range of subject-matter covered by the GED, topics and materials that reflect your learners' interests and needs.

What?

Once you have selected a topic or materials for a lesson, consider the specific concepts and skills you hope your learners will develop. The learning your lesson promotes should be both **immediate** and **transferable**: its value and usefulness should be immediately apparent, but it should also have value beyond the immediate context. Considering *what* in relation to *who* helps clarify the content of your lesson.

Why?

Next, think explicitly about the rationale for your choices. What specific needs or questions will this lesson address? How does it build on what your learners already know? How can the lesson's theme and content facilitate a discrete set of learning objectives? Clarifying the rationale for your lesson begins the process of selecting, creating, or adapting the materials you wish to incorporate.

When?

When planning a lesson, be mindful of your time frame. Will this lesson fit into one class session, or is it a mini-unit that will require two or more sessions? If the latter, how important is it to devote that much time to the topic? Would it be better to pare the lesson down to a single session? If you choose to extend the topic over several days, how will you accommodate learners who are not present for the initial sessions?

Where?

Research in situated cognition suggests that knowledge is intimately connected to the physical environment in which it develops. When planning a lesson, think about the best setting for optimal learning. If you are leading a lesson on nutrition that includes the food pyramid, consider taking a trip to the supermarket and incorporating the products on the shelves as part of your lesson. If you are leading a lesson on the branches of government, take a trip to city hall to observe or participate in a city council hearing.

What for?

All good lessons have clearly defined learning objectives, which can be both content- and skills-based and should include higher-order thinking skills. For example, a lesson that focuses on the U.S. response to September 11, revolving around several short essays with different points of view, might have the following objectives: to explore the history of U.S. involvement in the Middle East, to contrast and draw inferences from different points of view, to practice consensus-building strategies, and to draft and revise an opinion essay.

How?

Next, outline the procedures you will follow and the tasks you will have learners complete. The strategies and activities you use should be logically sequenced, address a range of learning styles, and promote self-directed learning. Typically, learner-centered GED lessons include each of the following: a motivational activity; reading, writing, and whole-class discussion; visual as well as text-based activities; opportunities for learner collaboration; a skill-based mini-lesson; an activity that enables learners to demonstrate or apply the learning; and opportunities for learners to reflect on their thinking and learning.

How Do They Know They Know?

Every lesson should conclude with an assessment of student learning. In a learner-centered lesson, however, the goal of assessment is to evaluate learning not simply for the teacher's purposes, but for the learners' purposes as well. Reframing the question from "how do I know they know?" to "how do *they* know they know?" shifts the emphasis of evaluation to student ownership over learning and the development of metacognition (thinking about thinking). Such an evaluation can be achieved simply by asking learners to reflect on some basic questions at lesson's end: What was the most important thing you learned today? What questions do you have about what you learned? How can you apply what you learned to your life? What did you learn today about your own learning process?

Learner-centered lesson planning is a dynamic, nonlinear process; teachers must be flexible and open to reassessing their decisions. By following Vella's seven-step process, GED teachers can move beyond rote learning to develop lessons that not only prepare learners for the content and higher-order thinking skills tested by the GED, but also are immediately relevant to learners' lives. ■▲●

Learner-Centered Career Education in NYC

THE NEW YORK CITYWIDE SCHOOL
TO WORK ALLIANCE

by Tom Pendleton
Executive Director
New York Citywide School to Work Alliance

Some educators get a wary look in their eyes when I introduce myself as the executive director of the New York Citywide School to Work Alliance (STW Alliance). Any educational initiative with the word *work* in its title can set off alarm bells: Oh, no, another attempt to short-circuit long-term educational goals by training learners for low-wage jobs! Fortunately, it takes only a few minutes to reassure literacy practitioners of the close connection between the goals of the STW Alliance and those of the literacy community.

The Goals of the STW Alliance

The STW Alliance, like other programs created by the School to Work Opportunity Act of 1994, seeks to build the capacity of educators to better prepare young people for future careers. We work with teachers and supervisors to:

- Help students understand what career opportunities are open to them and how classroom activities connect to the skills they need in those careers

- Ensure that what's taught in school is aligned with what's needed in the workplace

Understanding the connection between school and work is a motivating factor for students, providing an answer to their age-old question, "Why do we have to do this?" Aligning classroom activities with the needs of the workplace in turn aligns STW education with educational reform efforts to move from passive, teacher-centered education to active, student-centered learning.

The emphasis on student-centered learning should sound familiar to literacy practitioners. Why is active learning vital specifically to career preparation? Because of the rapid rate of change in today's workplace, driven primarily by technology—not just keyboards and computer technology, but all kinds of technology, such as the technological components of manufacturing. People don't just sit on an assembly line any more. No one takes a job and does the same thing for forty years. Workers are expected to be proactive: to assess and solve problems, to work

in teams, to change jobs frequently. They need problem-solving skills, communication skills, and a capacity for lifelong learning.

The traditional classroom was arranged like the traditional workplace. The teacher/supervisor stood at the front of room and set up tasks for the students/workers, providing lots of supervision and direction. Now the teacher must move from being "the sage on the stage" to serving as "the guide on the side." The teacher still guides the topics and content to be covered, but rather than telling students what to do or what they should know, the teacher sets up an environment in which students discover information in an organized fashion and apply their skills and knowledge to a real-life context.

The Work of the STW Alliance

In order to help educators prepare students for meaningful careers, the STW Alliance pursues several key strategies:

- Providing professional development that helps teachers both understand the need for student-centered instructional strategies and develop the skills to implement them

- Gathering information about successful state and local programs to share with NYC educators

- Reaching out to the business community to form school-business partnerships and organize business leaders' work with educators

We're working on several exciting initiatives to support learner-centered STW education this year. Here is a small sample:

GED 2002. The STW Alliance is working with the LAC to develop materials and build best practices to support new instructional strategies in GED classrooms, promoting student-centered learning and linking instruction to career exploration and employability skills. The higher-order thinking skills required to pass the new GED are the same skills required to succeed in the modern workplace.

After-school career education. We're doing a similar project with the Fund for the City of New York to develop best practices for Beacon after-school programs. Newly developed materials will

be implemented in conjunction with a professional development series to promote activities centering around career exploration, employability skills, and workplace preparation in after-school programs.

Integrated curriculum. The STW Alliance is working with public high schools to help them integrate their academic and occupational programs and curricula—for instance, building workplace communication skills by integrating English language arts instruction in occupational courses or including math skills in a carpentry class. Staff development for teachers is key to this effort.

School-business partnerships. We're working on several fronts to help schools make the most of business partnerships. One effort involves helping schools not only develop comprehensive educational plans but also actually use these plans to inform instruction, rather than just sending them to the superintendent's office. Such plans usually involve business partnerships, but school personnel may not know how to develop these relationships or manage the resulting activities. So the STW Alliance provides coaching and technical assistance to ensure that teachers and supervisors know how to get the most out of their business partnerships. We're also helping NYC's 18 Career and Technical Education (CTE) high schools (formerly known as vocational high schools) to implement the NY State Regents CTE guidelines. The guidelines include working with industry partners to ensure that the training provided in the high schools meets industry standards.

For More Information

The STW website at www.stw.ed.gov has gathered best practices from across the country to provide an invaluable clearinghouse of materials for teachers. For more information about the New York Citywide School to Work Alliance, visit www.STWAlliance.org or contact me at tomjpen@STWAlliance.org or 212.803.3317. ■

Successful Advocacy for Adult Literacy in Massachusetts

by David J. Rosen

Adult Literacy Resource Institute, Boston

In late November 2001, the Massachusetts legislature slashed adult education spending by 44%. It was late in the fiscal year, and programs were spending at the same rate as the previous year, leaving only enough money to fund programs through January. In addition, because the federal government sees a cut of this size as a failure on the state's part to maintain effort, in the next fiscal year Massachusetts could have lost up to \$10.5 million of its federal funds.

Immediately the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education (MCAE) mobilized programs, students, and friends of adult literacy into high-gear advocacy mode. For many years, Massachusetts has been well organized for adult literacy advocacy. We have good leadership in the state education department and strong grassroots activists. We have a well-run state professional organization and a vital new statewide adult learner organization, the Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Learners. MCAE's Public Policy Committee uses email and electronic lists, a phone tree, fax, and mail to reach its members.

So in late November, legislators and the acting governor received thousands of calls, cards, and letters. By November 30, when students, practitioners, and supporters called the State House, aides answered right off, "Is this about adult education?" Working with mayors and other local officials, we advocated for adult literacy on the radio, in the press, in State House press conferences, on the State House steps, and in legislators' offices.

In mid-December, the legislature passed a supplemental budget that restored \$12.5 million—all but \$500,000 of the \$13 million cut from adult basic education.

What did we learn, and what can advocates in other states learn from our experience?

- 1 With organization, leadership, and determination, adult literacy advocates can make gains at the state level—and maintain them.
- 2 Advocacy must be seen as part of every practitioner's job: teacher, tutor, administrator, researcher, curriculum developer, librarian, whoever.
- 3 The role students play is very important. Theirs are the voices legislators listen to most attentively. Students are, of course, much greater in number than practitioners; with their help, thousands of letters and phone calls are possible.
- 4 The effort requires leaders: people from the field who are ready to dig in and hold on for victory regardless of what it takes. These people understand that such battles are part of the work of adult education; that the battles never go away; that we never are allowed to "just go back to teaching and learning"; that there is overlap with the content of our teaching: In a democratic society, this is how students and teachers learn—firsthand—how democracy works.



Literacy Assistance Center

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www.lacnyc.org

Download 2002 GED testing schedules in NYC.

Access agenda and activities from selected LAC professional development events.

Use the Adult Education Locator to help adult learners find appropriate education and training programs.

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