

# LITERACY

# UPDATE

Sept 02

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News from the Literacy Field

## The 877 Million Left Behind

Reprinted from the July 2002 issue  
of *Education Today*, the quarterly journal of UNESCO's Education Section

"My life is tilling the soil. I don't need to read. The Bible? They tell us about that at Mass. The news? I listen to the radio. The newspaper costs the price of a kilo of salt for my kids," says Godfroid Bimenyimana, a 57-year-old Rwandan farmer.

Godfroid and millions like him have no desire to read and write because they do not see the direct benefits. They think it will not change their lives. So why force literacy on people? For Professor H.S. Bhola, a literacy expert, "reading and writing are the second culmination of our humanity," after speech. By failing to provide literacy, we deprive people of being fully human, he says.

Literacy is important, says Adam Ouane of the UNESCO Institute for Education, "because it's the key to the toolbox that contains empowerment, a better livelihood, smaller and healthier families, and participation in democratic life." A measure of its importance, he says, is the fact that two of the six goals of the Dakar Framework for Action—the international pledge made in 2000 to provide education for all by 2015—mention adult literacy. But since literacy is the "key of keys," it permeates all six goals.

The gains for women in particular are immense. For example, a study in Bangladesh showed

that women with secondary education were three times more likely to attend a political meeting than women with no education.

### The Scope of the Problem

In 2000 there were some 877 million illiterate adults, with 113 million children not attending school. More than two-thirds (68 percent) of these illiterates can be found in East and South Asia. Worst hit are females, who account for up to two-thirds of all illiterate adults. Illiteracy rates in the Arab region and sub-Saharan Africa are respectively 38 percent and 37 percent.

In developed nations, functional illiteracy is also widespread. An adult literacy study of twenty industrialized countries by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development found that at least one in four adults fell below the level needed for coping with demands of daily life and work in a complex society.

### Meeting Local Needs

The will to learn to read is greatest when courses are in the learners' own language and relevant to their lives. Action Aid's innovative grassroots project REFLECT uses materials developed by local communities: maps, diagrams, calendars, stories, drama.

continued on page 9

by Winston Lawrence, Ed.D.  
Coordinator of Adult Literacy Services

## International Literacy Day and the LAC

As the newest member of the International Literacy Network (ILN, [www.theiln.org](http://www.theiln.org)), the LAC is proud to be helping to organize International Literacy Day 2002, to be held at the United Nations on September 5. This year's International Literacy Day conference is being held in New York rather than its usual venue of Washington, DC, partly in recognition of the impact of last year's terrorist attacks on poor and working-class adults and their families. The LAC's contribution to the day's events will highlight the accomplishments of NYC adult learners and spotlight the local programs that serve them.

Some 800 million of the world's adults cannot read and write; two-thirds of this number are women. More than 120 million children worldwide lack access to education. Since 1966, UNESCO—the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization—has helped to address the need for literacy for all by sponsoring International Literacy Day on September 8. (This year's celebration has been moved to September 5 because September 8 is a Sunday.) The purpose of this observance is to highlight the importance of literacy worldwide and to encourage governments to provide basic education for all, especially early childhood education and literacy for undereducated adults.

Each International Literacy Day, UNESCO awards five literacy prizes to programs that have affected the lives of those learning to read and write. This year, prizes will be awarded to programs in Eritrea, Uganda, Pakistan, and Egypt. Thomas Sticht, U.S. literacy consultant, is a member of the international jury that chooses the awards. Since 1979, the U.S.-based International Reading Association has sponsored one of the prizes.

Governments and agencies worldwide initiate their own activities to celebrate the day. Last year, for example, the minister of social development in Lebanon launched a new book on health education, with emphasis on health for youth. New Zealand sponsored a Week for Adult Learners. Thailand conducted a regional forum on lifelong learning. In the U.S., local literacy organizations arrange activities as well. For instance, Cleveland Reads last year sponsored a lunchtime Reading Rally in which city leaders and local media personalities read passages from their favorite children's books. The Palm Beach County Literacy Coalition invited Lawyers for Literacy to speak to adult education classes about the importance of literacy in their lives and careers.

The September 5 conference at the UN, jointly sponsored by UNESCO and ILN with the LAC as local partner, will address two key questions:

What is the role of literacy in developing resilient communities?

As part of the literacy agenda, what should we do to enable voices that are excluded and marginalized?

In the morning, a leaders' roundtable including the Mongolian ambassador to the UN, Dr. Lesley Morrow of the International Reading Association, and VALUE President Calvin Miles will address these key questions. At lunch, local ESOL students will read pieces they wrote in response to September 11. The afternoon session will consist of roundtable discussions on four issues: conflict, gender, language and ethnicity, and families and literacy. The LAC's Pamela Little will co-facilitate the latter roundtable. Exhibits will be provided by various sponsoring agencies—including UNICEF, World Bank, Laubach/Literacy Volunteers, and others—as well as by NYCALI programs.

The guest list for the September 5 event will have been finalized before you read this. However, I hope you will join in celebrating International Literacy Day by inviting staff and students to reflect on the power of literacy in the lives of people around the world. ■▲●

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# NYC Professional Development Consortium

## PLANS FOR THE 2003 PROGRAM YEAR

by Peter Kondrat, *Director*



The past twelve months have been, at best, wobbly ones for the adult literacy community in New York City. The devastation of the September 2001 attacks occurred amidst the rumblings of an already shaky economy. Grieving and rebuilding and coming to terms became a part of our lexicon and our daily lives. Many of our worst fears—of further waves of attacks, of great long-term damage and dislocation, of severe environmental degradation due to the attacks, of virulent new strains of intolerance infecting our body politic—have by and large failed to materialize.

It appears, however, that the quality of our lives as workers in general, and as literacy learners and workers in particular, will be on the mend a lot longer. The end of the economic boom is making itself felt in many ways large and small: dirtier streets, crankier commutes, layoff threats, ominous budget forecasts. The adult education community in the U.S. has always provided a wonderful model of what the French call *débrouillage*: the ability to improvise under taxing circumstances, the knack of building something elegant and functional out of whatever materials happen to be at hand. Out of necessity, adult educators have mastered the art of doing more with less. We are, in fact, better equipped than most segments of society to cope with the fallout from the attacks and to recover from the nation's decade-long economic binge.

In this context, the NYC Professional Development Consortium embarks on the unofficial beginning of the new adult education year. Four NYCPDC offerings in particular this year aim to maximize human resources in the field, in direct response to expressed needs in the adult education community.

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

### Lesson Study Projects

Lesson Study is the cutting edge in professional development in the U.S., although it has long been institutionalized in the Japanese system. What is it? A group of teachers scrutinize a single lesson over an extended period of time. They teach it, and they watch it being taught. They tinker with variables, fine-tune, and document the results. They may ask: What if students work in groups of four instead of in pairs? How can the homework assignment be stated more clearly? Is there too much teacher talk? The lesson itself becomes the object of inquiry with the goal of enabling teachers both to examine in depth the infinite variations that occur when different teachers implement the same lesson plan and to identify for themselves effective strategies and best practices. Teachers in Japan and the U.S. speak enthusiastically of the democratic nature and transformative effects of Lesson Study. The Lesson Study groups will focus on State Education Department priorities, especially GED instruction and integration of technology.

### Action Research Study Groups

Good teachers are researchers. They observe, hypothesize, make connections, and look for patterns. We face an insistent call to support our instructional practice with evidence, to be “research-based,” even as many lament the lack of such research. The NYCPDC’s action research study groups are designed to provide practitioners with a structure for using their classroom as a laboratory to look systematically at some aspect of learning. These facilitated groups will disseminate their findings to the field and help us all to respond in a useful way to the appeal for “research-based practice.” Prime areas of study for the action research groups will center on English Language/Civics topics and lifelong learning.

### Basics Workshop Series

Three stand-alone workshop series—Reading Basics, Writing Basics, and Classroom Basics—will aim to reach practitioners new to the field or those needing a refresher. The first two are self-explanatory; Classroom Basics will look at curriculum and lesson planning, record keeping, and assessment tools.

### Expanded Pre-Service Institute

If you ever participated in the Pre-Service Institute and wondered if anyone ever read those lengthy evaluation sheets you filled out at the end . . . well, we did! The result is a more in-depth Pre-Service Institute: 50 percent more seat-time, additional sessions, and an even more participatory format. The institute is intended for practitioners new to teaching or new to adult education. It is not too late to register for the September sessions; see the Calendar on page 6.

It has become commonplace to state that “everything has changed” since September 11, 2001. Yet while the events of that day changed each of us in ways that we do not yet fully understand, what is most striking is how we have carried on, persevered in great and small ways, and preserved the continuity of our lives as workers and citizens, learners and community members. Helping adults to achieve their educational, vocational, and personal goals in a classroom setting challenges us now as much as it did a year ago.



# resources ]

## International Literacy

### International Literacy Day Toolkit

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

This toolkit contains many ideas on how programs can mobilize public opinion as they seek to celebrate International Literacy Day. It lists many agencies engaged in literacy promotion as well as information on conducting a press campaign.

### Rethinking Globalization: Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World

Bill Bigelow and Bob Peterson, eds.

Rethinking Schools, 2002

Although this book is aimed at teachers of students grades 4–12, it is an excellent resource for adult educators. It gives an in-depth foundation on globalization and poses critical questions on issues of colonialism, the global economy, international debt, child labor, and sweatshops, as well as resources on these topics and accounts of community activism around the world to address these issues. At more than 400 pages—including essays, photos, cartoons, and curriculum ideas—this book provides provocative background reading and inspiration to those who want to address these hard issues in the classroom. Visit the LAC Clearinghouse to use the book, or order it from [www.rethinkingschools.org/rg/](http://www.rethinkingschools.org/rg/).

### Witness [www.witness.org](http://www.witness.org)

Founded by the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights and Peter Gabriel, Witness is a nonprofit organization started in 1992 in the aftermath of the Rodney King riots. By distributing camera equipment to local activists and teaching them the skills to document their realities and then use their footage to jumpstart social change, Witness contributes to the global struggle for justice by using powerful tools to take back power. The Witness website includes background information, opportunities for volunteers, and film excerpts that can be ordered for use in the classroom.

### Learning Throughout Life: Challenges for the 21st Century

UNESCO, 2002

This book brings together the main issues discussed at a UNESCO conference on lifelong learning in Lisbon in 1999. The book is intended for educational planners and policy-makers concerned with ensuring that opportunities for learning throughout life are available in both formal and nonformal contexts. The book is available for free download until December at <http://lupo.unesco.org/booksonline.asp>.

## EL/Civics

Thanks to the recent English Language/Civics grant awards, there is renewed interest in teaching civic participation as part of ESOL and adult education. Below is the first of a two-part list of web-based resources that can provide engaging activities to stimulate learner interest in civic participation.

### The American Memory Learning Page

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov>

From the Library of Congress, this site features lesson plans and activities with a K–12 focus that are adaptable to the adult education classroom. Click on Learning Page for a host of lesson plans and activities on civics and immigration.

### A Road Map to the American Constitution

<http://library.thinkquest.org/11572>

This site offers information about the history and content of the U.S. Constitution as well as links to relevant sites and message and discussion boards.

### The Change Agent

[www.nelrc.org/changeagent](http://www.nelrc.org/changeagent)

This site features teaching and learning resources on civic participation and social justice. The site explores social justice topics in news articles, opinion pieces, and classroom activities as well as in poems, cartoons, and interviews.

### The Civic Participation and Citizenship Collection

[www.nelrc.org/cpcc](http://www.nelrc.org/cpcc)

This site, maintained by the New England Literacy Resource Center (NELRC), offers resources and links to useful advocacy, information, and instructional sites.

### Learning Resources

<http://literacynet.org/cnnsf>

The Learning Resources site provides current and past CNN San Francisco bureau news stories in original and abridged forms or as multimedia options for hearing or viewing the story, with plenty of reading helps like vocabulary lists. The site provides links and follow-up activities for students as well as an instructor's page.

## Family Literacy

The family literacy resources listed here are available for use in the LAC Clearinghouse.

### Read to Me Guidebook and Videocassette

by Susan Straub. Teachers and Writers Collaborative, n.d.

This documentary by Susan Straub chronicles a ground-breaking series of reading workshops for teen mothers sponsored by Teachers and Writers Collaborative's Read to Me program. Intended for professionals who work with new families, daycare providers, early childhood specialists, and children's librarians, the 30-minute video and 28-page guidebook provide users with a foundation for starting their own Read to Me programs. They include practical suggestions on inspiring successful reading, making books for children, and finding guest authors and illustrators.

### The Parent Project: A Workshop Approach to Parent Involvement

by James Volpat. Stenhouse, 1994

This book describes how to use a workshop/process model to involve parents with their children's classroom activities and thus empower them to support their children's education. It provides materials for conducting parent workshops (in English and Spanish) in writing, reading, self esteem, and community building. ■❖●

# {announcing

## Family Literacy Survey

With the help of a grant from the Altman Foundation, the LAC is beginning a study of family literacy programs in NYC to determine what strategies they are using, what works and what doesn't, and how to disseminate effective practices. The three-year project begins in September with a survey of family literacy programs in the city, whose services and locations will be published in a print and online directory. Project leaders will identify the most successful programs and select a sample to study in depth.

Subsequent phases of the project will assess the impact, for both parents and children, of participating in effective family literacy programs and will identify the common characteristics of effective programs. The LAC will disseminate a report on the project to literacy practitioners, funders, and policymakers in order to improve family literacy practices and to expand support for well-constructed family literacy initiatives.

## New Computers in LAC Lab

The LAC's Computer Learning Center (CLC) boasts 16 new Pentium III computers with flat-panel monitors, donated by our longtime supporter IBM. The new machines are faster than the old ones, and flat-panel monitors will make it easier for professional development participants to see each other and the presenters. We thank IBM, and particularly Reg Foster and Pamela Haas, for the donation. Visit the CLC during open hours, 1–5 pm on Mondays beginning September 9; contact Mariann Fedele, coordinator of instructional technology, at [mariannf@lacnyc.org](mailto:mariannf@lacnyc.org) or 212.803.3325, to set up an appointment.

## Videoconference Equipment Now Available

The LAC is pleased to be able to offer videoconference capability to the literacy community. Our new fast videoconference equipment, running over three ISDN lines, allows you to see as well as hear colleagues at remote sites so you can save time and money on travel. Of course, the people with whom you want to videoconference must also have videoconference equipment with an ISDN phone number or an IP address. Contact Elizabeth Rivera at [lizr@lacnyc.org](mailto:lizr@lacnyc.org) or 212.803.3341 for more information or to schedule a videoconference session.

## Free Technical Assistance Sessions

The Foundation Center is sponsoring free, one-on-one consulting sessions on grantseeking, proposal writing, or related areas for under-resourced nonprofits. Each of the 20 selected nonprofits will receive *pro bono* consulting services with a member of the Foundation Center's Fundraising Consultants Network II at the Foundation Center from November 2002 through May 2003. Programs with a budget of less than \$500,000 annually and with no development staff are invited to apply; the application deadline is September 5. For more information, go to <http://fdncenter.org>.

## Conferences & Observances

### Banned Books Week:

#### Free People Read Freely

American Library Association, Sept. 20–27  
[www.ala.org/bbooks](http://www.ala.org/bbooks) or 800.545.2433 x4223

### Third Symposium on Second Language Writing

Oct 11–12, West Lafayette, IN  
Registration deadline: Oct. 1. Fee: \$125  
<http://licdweb.cc.purdue.edu/~silvat/symposium/2002/>  
or contact Paul Kei Matsuda, 603.862.0292

### National Book Festival

Library of Congress, Oct. 12, West Lawn of the Capitol Building, Washington, DC  
Free and open to the public.  
[www.loc.gov/bookfest](http://www.loc.gov/bookfest)

### Annual Technology+Learning Conference

National Education Association  
Nov. 11–15, Dallas  
Fee: \$250 member, \$395 nonmember  
[www.nea.org/technology/insba](http://www.nea.org/technology/insba)

### International Dyslexia Association 53rd Annual Conference

Nov. 13–16, Atlanta  
Fee: \$250 member, \$330 nonmember  
[conference@interdys.org](mailto:conference@interdys.org) or call 410.296.0232

# September

## Calendar of Events

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

[5]

### International Literacy Day

#### Literacy for Diversity: Voices of Resilience

Thursday, September 5, 10 am–4 pm

**Location:** United Nations

The LAC is proud to cosponsor International Literacy Day. See page 2 for details. Reservations are closed, but please join us in celebrating and advocating for literacy around the world.

**Sponsors:** UNESCO, the International Literacy Network & the LAC

[12]

### NYSPlace Test Training

Thursday, September 12, 9:30 am–12:30 pm

**Facilitator:** Winston Lawrence, Ed.D.

This workshop will show new program staff how to administer NYSPlace, the state-approved placement test for ESOL students. Participants will examine both the test's administrative manual and the state's recommended ESOL curriculum.

**Sponsor:** LAC

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

**RSVP:** Unless otherwise noted, RSVP to the LAC Reservation Line at 212.803.3323 or [jaynellw@lacnyc.org](mailto:jaynellw@lacnyc.org).

#### 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.

[13]

### Nuts and Bolts of TABE 7 & 8

Friday, September 13, 9 am–1 pm

**Facilitator:** Ira Yankwitt

This workshop will introduce participants to the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), forms 7 and 8—the main test used by NYCALI-funded programs to place students in ABE classes and to measure educational gain. Participants will familiarize themselves with the test, learn about effective test administration, and discuss the relationship between TABE test scores and class placement.

**Sponsor:** LAC

[18/25]

### Pre-Service Institute

Wednesdays, September 18 & 25, 9:30 am–3:30 pm

**Presenter:** Peter Kondrat, NYCPDC

An introduction to key concepts and exemplary practices in teaching adults, for instructors, tutors, and counselors new to adult education and NYCALI. Includes key concepts in adult learning, an introduction to NYCALI, classroom strategies, intake, resources, and integrating technology.

RSVP: PDC Reservation Line at 212.803.3345

or [athenab@lacnyc.org](mailto:athenab@lacnyc.org)

**Sponsor:** NYCPDC

### LAC Professional Development Center Open Hours

Every Monday, 1–5 pm, beginning September 9

#### Dan Rabideau Clearinghouse

Our library of professional development and learner materials—books, journals, videos, and other media—is being upgraded to a new, easier-to-use cataloging system. Come browse our collection or research a particular topic of interest with the assistance of LAC professional development staff. For information, contact Dr. Winston Lawrence, 212.803.3326 or [winstonl@lacnyc.org](mailto:winstonl@lacnyc.org).

#### Computer Learning Center

Visit our newly revamped computer lab (see page 5) to explore ways to use computers to enhance instruction. Try out instructional software, browse the web for sites that lend themselves to your lessons, or build a project that uses common office software to enhance communication skills. For information, contact Mariann Fedele, 212.803.3325 or [mariannf@lacnyc.org](mailto:mariannf@lacnyc.org).

[20]

### ESOL Teacher Share

Friday, September 20; 1–4 pm

**Facilitator:** Winston Lawrence, Ed.D.

Four sessions will give teachers an opportunity to read about current issues in ESOL instruction and to review recent research. Teachers will explore ways of incorporating what they learn into classroom practice and then share the instructional methods they develop. In this first session, participants will examine effective ESOL grammar instruction. Meeting times for subsequent sessions will be determined by the group.

**Sponsor:** LAC

[26/27]

### Integrating Video into Instruction

Thursday & Friday, September 26 & 27, 9:30 am–4 pm

**Presenters:** Marguerite Lukes & Mariann Fedele

Would you like to use your video camera for instruction? In this two-day institute, participants will learn about media literacy, practice filming with all types of video equipment, work in teams to create video projects, and learn to present video-based images and information. Participants are encouraged to bring their own camera and must attend both sessions.

RSVP: For an application, visit our website at [www.lacnyc.org/events](http://www.lacnyc.org/events) or contact Reion Evans, [reione@lacnyc.org](mailto:reione@lacnyc.org) or 212.803.3344. Application deadline is September 13.

**Sponsor:** LAC

# October

[ 4 ]

## Storytelling in the ESOL Classroom

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Friday, October 4, 9.30 am–4 pm

**Facilitator:** Regina Ress, ESOL consultant

This workshop will show participants how to develop instructional activities that use stories. Participants will work with several folktales to develop pre-reading activities, ways to involve the class in the initial telling of a story, and ways to help students improve their listening and speaking skills by telling, retelling, and changing stories.

**Sponsor:** LAC

[ 9 ]

## Counselors' Exchange Series

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### Youth in Adult Education Programs

Wednesday, October 9, 1:30–4:30 pm

**Presenter:** Martha Kamber, Sunset Park Adult & Family Education Center

An ongoing series for anyone who provides support services in ABE or ESOL programs, the Counselors' Exchange will allow participants to share resources, develop skills, and network. Participants will explore how program policy and design relate to the creation of a supportive environment for students.

This first workshop will address the challenges of providing supportive services for adolescents in adult education programs, providing practical strategies and citywide resources for dealing with the unique needs of this population.

**Sponsor:** LAC

[ 11 ]

## Media Literacy Series

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### Film in the Classroom

Friday, October 11, 12:30–4 pm

**Presenters:** Marguerite Lukes & Mariann Fedele

Our partnership with P.O.V., public television's award-winning showcase for independent nonfiction films, continues with a workshop on the feature documentary *Two Towns of Jasper*. In 1998 in Jasper, TX, James Byrd, Jr., a black man, was chained to a pickup truck and dragged to his death by three white men. Two film crews, one black and one white, subsequently documented the trials of the three men. In the workshop, participants will discuss techniques for actively viewing primary source films, explore ways of using the film and its associated POV curriculum materials in the classroom, and learn how to use the themes and issues of the film in classroom projects.

**Sponsor:** LAC

[ 15 ]

## Reading Basics

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Tuesday, October 15, 1–4 pm

See the October *Literacy Update* for details.

**Sponsor:** NYCPDC

[ 16 ]

## Program Managers' Series

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### Professional Development

Wednesday, October 16, 9 am–1 pm

**Facilitators:** Peter Kondrat, NYCPDC  
Marguerite Lukes & Ira Yankwitt, LAC

In this ongoing series, adult literacy program managers, education directors, and administrators meet with their colleagues to discuss areas of common concern. In the first session of the program year, participants will explore how best to design, deliver, support, and evaluate professional development for instructional staff to ensure that teachers continue to grow and that programs meet their goals and maintain their vitality. Administrators with no articulated professional development plan will learn to develop one, and those who have a plan can reexamine their approach.

RSVP: PDC Reservation Line at 212.803.3345  
or [athenab@lacnyc.org](mailto:athenab@lacnyc.org)

**Sponsors:** LAC & NYCPDC

[ 16/17 ]

## ESOL Skill Building

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### Counseling Learning

Wednesday & Thursday, October 16 & 17, 1–4:30 pm

**Facilitator:** Jenny Rardin, Counseling Learning Institutes

In the counseling learning approach to language teaching, students are seen more as a group than as a class, with the teacher as counselor. In this workshop, participants will "learn" a language and language counseling skills via this whole-language approach to education. Participants will reflect on the underlying principles of counseling learning, see videotape excerpts of adult ESOL classes, and work in small groups to design lessons for their own classes.

**Participants must attend all sessions.**

RSVP by October 4.

**Sponsor:** LAC

[ 18 ]

## Popular Education in the Classroom Study Group

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Friday, October 18, 1–4 pm

**Facilitator:** Winston Lawrence, Ed.D.

This ongoing study group will read and share ideas about the philosophy and practice of popular education. Participants will examine their approach to classroom instruction and discuss ways to improve their practice, learning how colleagues have used particular methods in the classroom and how student learning has been affected. Meeting times for subsequent sessions will be determined by the group.

**Sponsor:** LAC

[ 22 ]

## Writing Basics

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Tuesday, October 22, 1–4 pm

See the October *Literacy Update* for details.

**Sponsor:** NYCPDC

[ 25 ]

## GLBT Practitioners Group

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Friday, October 25, 1–4 pm

**Facilitator:** Mariann Fedele

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered adult education practitioners will discuss their work and practice as educators as well as the challenges for GLBT students in adult education programs. In this first session, participants will establish goals for the group for this program year.

RSVP: Reion Evans, 212.803.3344 or [reione@lacnyc.org](mailto:reione@lacnyc.org).  
**Sponsor:** LAC



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 October issue of *Literacy Update* is September 3, for the November/December issue, October 3. 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.

## LAC Hotline Director (FT)

Manage & direct the expansion of the LAC's Hotline, which provides services to adults & youth seeking literacy, ESOL, GED, and occupational training or volunteer opportunities. Supervise experienced team of phone referral specialists; update & maintain referral database; compile, analyze & report on inquiries handled by the Hotline, web-based program locator, and automated voice information system. Develop initiatives to strengthen service delivery, broaden the scope of outreach & referral services, and increase public awareness of literacy programs. Bachelor's & 5+ years supervisory experience; demonstrated commitment to providing sensitive, high-quality services. Strong oral & written communication skills; strong computer skills, experience with database systems. Understanding of NYC adult & youth literacy, training, or social service programs preferred. Spanish, French Creole, Chinese, Russian, or other languages a significant plus. Salary in the \$50s.

Letter & résumé to E. Rivera, LAC, 32 Broadway, 10th fl., NY, NY 10004, email [HR@lacnyc.org](mailto:HR@lacnyc.org), fax 212.785.3685. ■

## FUN Project Director (FT)

Develop & implement collaborative programs & events; supervise staff; participate in longitudinal evaluation process; secure, maintain & monitor budget, materials & other resources for FUN, a creative arts & educational after-school & summer day camp program for 6–12-yr-old children of LIU students. Master's in education or related with 2–5 yrs exp. working with children. FT with eve hours.

Résumé & letter to Charlotte Marchant, Learning Center for Educators & Families, Long Island University, One University Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11201, fax 718.246.6499, email [cmarchan@liu.edu](mailto:cmarchan@liu.edu). ■

## ESOL Teacher (PT)

Two classes, one eve/wk Tues. 7–10 pm, 10-wk semester beginning 10/1. ESL for adult beginners & ESL II for adults with exp. to improve reading, writing, conversation skills.

## English & Reading Teachers (PT)

Licensed, certified teachers for 10-wk semester beginning 9/28, Sat. 9–12. Test prep & remedial reading for elementary grades.

Community center in NW Bronx. Call 718.796.4882, 9 am–2 pm, or fax résumé to 718.796.0414. ■

## ABE Instructor (FT)

Instruction, curriculum development, assessment, record keeping & reporting NYCALI program requirements. MA in education or equiv. pref. with teaching exp. Sensitive to needs of multicultural population.

Letter & résumé to Sr. Aileen Halleran, Flowers with Care, 23-40 Astoria Blvd., Astoria, phone 718.726.9790, fax 718.728.8817. ■

## Program Director

Impart vision, oversee daily operations, supervise staff, communicate with funding sources (proposal writing & reporting). Master's in education or related; strong management & supervisory exp.; 5 yrs exp. teaching ESOL, literacy & pre-GED; committed to learner-centered philosophy. Bilingual Spanish or Chinese pref.

Résumé & letter to Beatriz Caldada, Discipleship Outreach Ministries, Inc., 5220 4th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11220, fax 718.439.3963, email [bcaldald@tpdomi.org](mailto:bcaldald@tpdomi.org). ■

## ESOL Program Director

Recruit, supervise & evaluate ESOL staff at 3 sites. Develop & implement ESOL curriculum & staff training. Ensure contractual & grant obligations are fulfilled. Bachelor's req., master's pref.

Résumé to Qwuanda Jones, Cypress Hill Local Development Corporation, fax 718.647.2805. ■

## GED Instructor (FT)

Plan and teach pre-GED/GED mixed-level class for 17–25 yr olds, including a career education component. BA + exp. teaching GED to young adults, community-building & computer skills essential. Bilingual a plus.

Résumé to Lori Edelman, Henry Street Settlement, fax 212.529.9636, email [earnfair@yahoo.com](mailto:earnfair@yahoo.com). ■

## Volunteer Reading Tutors

Work one-on-one with young person age 10–15 who has significant reading delays. Build decoding & comprehension skills, develop positive relationship & love of reading. 1 hr. twice a week.

## Volunteer Tutors

Work with a student who is struggling with homework or a specific academic skill. 1 hr. a week with the same student.

## Volunteer Homework Helpers

Work with small group of 3–4 students to prioritize and complete homework assignments. Participate in 1, 2, or 3 of 3 weekly sessions.

Call Interfaith Neighbors, 212.472.3567, or email [IFNcperucci@aol.com](mailto:IFNcperucci@aol.com) for more information. ■

## Job Readiness Teacher

Prefer master's in social work, psychology, or education & exp. with disadvantaged populations. Job readiness & mental health program for impoverished adults in Brooklyn Heights.

Letter & résumé to The HOPE Program, fax 718.852.9681, email [jobs@thehopeprprogram.org](mailto:jobs@thehopeprprogram.org). ■

## Program Director (FT)

Immediate opening with new ESOL/Civics program in Rego Park. Preferred qualifications: MA in TESOL, English, or related; 3+ yrs agency exp. Requires knowl. of grant administration & reporting, teacher supervision, curriculum, coordinating program for adult learners.

## ESOL Instructors (PT)

Up to 15 hrs/wk. Exp. teaching ESOL to adults, at least BA in TESOL or English req. Bilingual Russian pref.

Résumé to Jackie Feldman, Springboard Program, Educational Center for Russian Jewry, fax 718.997.1226. ■

## Pre-GED Teacher (PT)

Teach reading, writing, math & social studies, fall 2002, T & Th 6–9 pm. Exp. with adult students, thematic or project instruction & computer integration a plus.

Résumés, letters & inquiries to Jana Sladkova, Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation, fax 212.928.4180, [janasladvkova@nmic.org](mailto:janasladvkova@nmic.org). ■

## The 877 Million Left Behind cont'd

Community learning centers, run by UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) in eighteen countries from Central Asia to Papua New Guinea, is another successful initiative. The centers are outside the formal education system and managed by local people. Their services are tailored to local needs, from basic literacy to education for developing skills and generating income. Unlike school, there is no standard curriculum and no fixed age group.

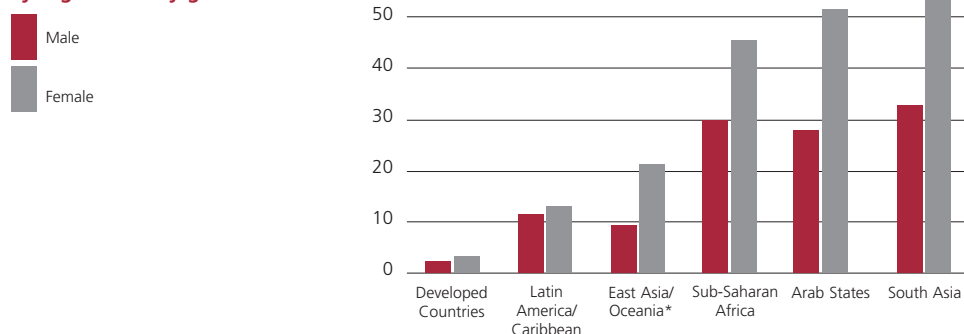
Small-scale efforts can often show the way, says UNESCO consultant Clinton Robinson. In an area where the school system hardly functions in the Democratic Republic of Congo, volunteers teach in the local language, Ngbaka, through which they introduce Lingala, the national language, and French. "It has continued despite the war because it's run by local people, adapted to their needs, at low cost," says Robinson.

### Reluctant Governments

If literacy can improve people's lives, why do governments not invest more in it? Non-formal education, which includes adult literacy programs, rarely receives more than 5 percent of national education budgets. Some governments apparently prefer to forget about adults and concentrate on formal schooling for children to ensure literate future generations. But experts agree that this approach is short sighted. "Why oppose adult literacy to school and children's education when their interdependence is evident?" questions Ouane. "If parents are illiterate, it's an effort for children to have meaningful experiences at school."

Another theory is that some countries are reluctant to educate and therefore empower the masses because of the obvious link between literacy and democracy. "Governments fear that once you make people literate, they won't be able to misinform them," says Michael Omelewa, Nigeria's ambassador to UNESCO.

Estimated world illiteracy rates, by region and by gender



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics  
\*Not including Japan, Australia, or New Zealand

But even when governments want to address the issues, they are handicapped by the information gaps: the number of illiterates, who they are, and who is doing what to reach them. "The methodologies to collect data are lacking and the capacity to assess and monitor literacy is inadequate," says Margarete Sachs-Israel of UNESCO's Literacy and Non-Formal Education Section. This means, she says, that "the impact of literacy programs is simply not known." UNESCO is currently developing Non-formal Education Management Information Systems to collect, process, and analyze non-formal sector data.

### Do Literacy Campaigns Work?

"Literacy campaigns work every time and continue to work if we stick with them. Nothing is sustainable if it isn't sustained," says Bhola. The campaigns that succeeded, he adds, were typically those that took place in "mobilizing" societies and were conducted by socialist movements. They involved the people and mobilized extensively.

The challenge to literacy campaigns of the past has been the absence of reading materials. The printed word in some Indian communities can boil down to one, written on a temple wall: Shiva. Some villages have no road signs, health services, clinics, or banks. "You can't talk of literacy and not create a literate environment," says Bhola. "If governments provided appropriate services, communities would automatically become literate and a print culture would follow."

Creating a literate society is a matter of generations, says literacy expert professor C.J. Daswani. "Taking a totally illiterate family to total literacy is a matter of planning for three generations," he says. To shift from the absence of print to a dynamic literate

environment requires a quantum leap. This is, nevertheless, one of the aims of the UN Literacy Decade which starts in 2003.

Some new literates have found solutions to the lack of things to read: they create their own materials by writing about their lives, local events, and the history of their people; they then share their texts aloud. Mobile libraries satisfy the demands of other groups and, more recently, the multipurpose community centers in Africa and Asia, equipped with newspapers and Internet, are increasingly responding to the needs of medical students, farmers, and housewives.

What would Godfried from Rwanda think of these new developments? Some years on perhaps he too—much like his fellow farmers in Uganda's community centers—will be getting the market price of his farm products from the Internet. 📖🌐

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*"On September 8th of this year, celebrate the adult literacy workers of the world who—working in the unbearable heat of desert; the cold chill of high mountains; across windy, dusty plains; in hot, humid jungles; crowded, uncaring cities; and nearly unreachable rural villages; in classes on the ground, in burnt out buildings; without books, with sandboxes for writing, and with little else besides their uncompromising dedication to their students—light the lamp of literacy for untold millions of adults around the globe."*

Thomas Sticht

Post on the NIFL-NLA listserv, July 23, 2002

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# teachers' corner

by Charissa Ahlstrom  
Jamaica Plain (MA) Community Center's  
Adult Learning Program

## Defining Families

A different version of this article  
was published by  
SABES/World Education  
in *Bright Ideas*,  
Vol. 9, No. 3, Winter 2000.

Adult education materials that include gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered (GLBT) people and concerns are incredibly scarce. Those of us who want to address sexual preference have to document and share our lessons so we have materials to work with.

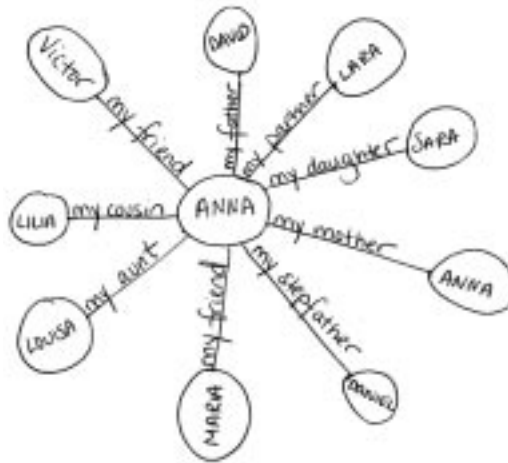
This lack of resources is evident in addressing the topic of family. Many texts use family trees and define families as one mother, one father, and various children. Some texts expand this notion of family to include extended and single-parent families, but they still usually fail to use GLBT terms.

Yet GLBT students are in our classes, whether teachers are aware of it or not. As an example of how to include lesbian and gay family issues in ESOL instruction, I gathered the activities below from classes that addressed family issues over the course of a year. For this article, I selected activities that allowed participants to define *family* themselves or specifically involved discussion of gay and lesbian families.

I am a white woman in a lesbian relationship, raised middle class in New York City. As teacher and coordinator in the ESOL department in the Adult Learning Program, I work with a beginning-level class of Latino, Haitian, and African adult learners. I assume that all my work is affected by these elements.

### Activities

**Define family.** I asked students to write a definition of *family* and then share their definitions, either aloud or on newsprint. Sometimes I added my own definition or used a dictionary definition. This process allowed the class to reflect on the meaning of *family* and compare how different individuals might include different circles of people in their definitions.



**Family wheels.** Students drew a circle with their names in the middle. Then they drew lines from the circle and wrote the names of all family members—immediate, extended, other—in circles at the end of each line. I encouraged students to write the name of the relationship on the line. Students could thus add anyone to their circle without needing to fit their family into the traditional family tree format. In addition to excluding some participants, the family tree structure is difficult for some students to understand. They can get caught up in the format rather than focusing on sharing information about their family.

**Family location charts.** I had students fill out charts listing names of relatives in Massachusetts, in other states, in their native country, and in other countries. I encouraged students to write the name of the state, city, or country next to the name of the person: "Amina is my sister. She lives in the Sudan." Students then put dots on a world map to indicate the regions where they had family.

**Pictures of gay and lesbian families.** Photos can help students visualize real people if you have discussed gay and lesbian families only in the abstract. For example, some students had difficulty understanding when I spoke about my partner and her daughter. I brought photos during our family photo-sharing days to make the relationship clearer. You can find photos of GLBT families in gay-friendly magazines and newspapers; around Gay Pride Day some mainstream papers may carry pictures as well.

**Family literacy.** One month, students chose to read, practice, and present a children's book to the class. They could choose any book, but I brought in some selections as well. One title, *One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dads, Blue Dads* by Johnny Valentine, is gay-friendly, approaching the serious theme of understanding different families in a lighthearted and subtle way.

### Integrating Gay and Lesbian Vocabulary into Language Exercises

**Definitions.** I gave student a list of family-related words: *widow, lesbian, adopted, divorced, half-sister, stepfather, great-grandmother*. We had already discussed some words, but some were new. Each student pair or group received two or three words to define. While they could come up with answers as a group, I asked each individual to do the actual writing of one definition. They could write their own or use a dictionary.

**Guessing the word.** To review vocabulary, I gave each student a family-related word we had discussed before. The student would explain the meaning of the word so the rest of us could guess what the word was.

### Results and Responses

Introducing gay and lesbian issues in the classroom and being out with my students was easier than I expected. While some expressed surprise or dislike, students did not challenge my identity or disrespect me as a teacher. No doubt the inherent social power in the teacher's role played a part in their response. Two students did communicate to a substitute teacher that they did not approve of gay and lesbian relationships because such relationships were against their religion. Some learners were sincerely interested in asking questions about gay men and lesbians. These learners are now more informed about the gay community and have had an opportunity to discuss how GLBT people are treated. The students have names to put on these "taboo" relationships and have been exposed to them in a way that validates their place in discussions about family. ■●●

## ALIES Goes Statewide

by Venu Thelakkat  
*Director of ALIES and Data Analysis*

On October 1, programs across New York State will begin receiving the ALIES data management software. Developed and improved over the last three years by LAC staff, the ALIES software has long been the primary data management software used by programs funded by the NYC Adult Literacy Initiative. The new software is designed to streamline data collection according to National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines.

The LAC will provide not only the software, but also plenty of training and support for NYS

programs. Megan Swiderski, associate director of ALIES, is currently implementing a train-the-trainer program. In partnership with the NYS Education Department (NYSED) and the staff development consortia (SDCs), ALIES will train thirteen trainers to teach NYS programs in the seven regions statewide to use ALIES for data collection and reporting. For NYC programs, LAC staff will continue to be directly responsible for ALIES training and support.

We look forward to this statewide rollout as an opportunity to improve the quality of

services that we offer to all our constituents, old and new. NYS adult literacy programs have responded with enthusiasm. In a statewide survey conducted by NYSED and the LAC, an overwhelming majority of programs chose the ALIES system over other software packages. In the years ahead, the LAC, NYSED, and the SDCs will work together to improve the quality of data collection, use, and reporting through improvements in the ALIES software and through targeted training and support.



## Linda Headley-Walker

With her daughter Lori Walker, Linda Headley-Walker (right) of the NYS Education Department celebrates the Lifelong Achievement Award she received at the LAC's Literacy Recognition Ceremony on May 23, 2002.

## New Director at DAEL/OVAE

Cheryl L. Keenan has been appointed director of the Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL), Office of Vocational and Adult Education in the federal Department of Education. As Pennsylvania State Education Director, Keenan played a pivotal role in shaping and implementing the requirements of Title II of the Workforce Investment Act. On beginning her work at DAEL, Keenan established long-term priorities including reauthorization of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, improving program quality, and realigning management structures.



James Earl Jones reads essays written by the young women of GirlSpace at the Verizon Academic All America Hall of Fame Community Event held on June 27 at GirlSpace, a project of Interfaith Neighbors in East Harlem.



April Singleton, a GirlSpace participant, and Ivan Seidenberg, president and CEO of Verizon, applaud Jones's reading of young women's essays from the GirlSpace collection "Great Expectations: A Journey to Excellence."



Bob Elliot, former New Jersey Net player and an inductee of the Verizon Academic All America Hall of Fame, makes a point about the importance of academic achievement at the June 27 GirlSpace event.



Literacy Assistance Center

32 Broadway, 10th Floor ▲ New York, NY 10004

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

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

Download LAC publications: *Literacy Harvest, Directory of NYCALI Programs, NYCALI Final Report, and back issues of Literacy Update.*

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