

By the Numbers

USING DATA FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

by Megan Swiderski, Associate Director of ALIES and Data Analysis

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International Literacy Day

If you mention the terms *data* or *data analysis* to most literacy teachers and program managers, their eyes begin to glaze over. To most people, data is boring, not particularly useful, and stressful to gather. However, the eyes of a few literacy practitioners begin to sparkle at the thought of the power that data can bring to an adult literacy organization. This minority sees the potential of data to prove hunches, make points, improve student learning, and entice funders. For example, we may believe that program activity decreases during the holiday season, but wouldn't it be interesting to prove the point with graphs and charts depicting trends in student attendance? To take another example, we have a strong hunch that the greater the number of contact hours a student spends in a program, the more educational gain that student will achieve. Wouldn't it be great to confirm this hunch with tables and graphs demonstrating this trend over time?

In this era of accountability, we must realize that data is not only a requirement for city, state, and federal reporting. Data—when it is not just gathered and reported, but also analyzed—can provide useful information and knowledge that helps programs improve their services and operate more effectively. The adult

literacy community has heard a lot about “data for program improvement” lately, but what does this phrase really mean? How can data “improve a program”? Can data shape the way teachers teach, managers manage, and students learn? The people behind the National Reporting System (NRS) are hoping to spread the message that data—when it is accurately gathered, input, reported, and analyzed—can really make an impact on the adult literacy community.

Good Data Driving Good Decisions

So, how can programs effectively use NRS data collection systems such as New York State's ALIES (Adult Literacy Information and Evaluation System) to make an impact on services? The answer lies first in effective data collection and input. You may have heard the computer system expression “garbage in, garbage out.” Data that has been carelessly collected or input is not very useful for analyzing program trends. In contrast, careful collection and input ensures that accurate information is available to help inform instructional and programmatic decisions.

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by Elyse Barbell Rudolph
Executive Director

In Kind

I am regularly asked to put a dollar value on the in-kind contributions the LAC makes to the literacy community. I find this to be a great challenge. What is the sum of the hours we spend providing technical assistance to faith-based programs who feel an overwhelming need to help their members achieve self-sufficiency? How much are the hours we spend preparing our professional development offerings worth? To whom, I wonder: Learners? Teachers? Peers? Policymakers?

The LAC and the literacy community as a whole are so often the recipients of kindness from others that I resist measuring our "kindness output." Marian Wright Edelman says, "Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time." Edelman's words could be the motto of the literacy community, and of the individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies who give of their time, their money, their services. Day after day we have the honor of working with people who have dedicated their lives to service and kindness.

The Bookbinders' Guild sponsors a softball game in Central Park to promote literacy. West Indian women dance for hours in beautiful clothing. Their children come to our table to receive free books provided by Paul Stanley and the Bookbinders' Guild. Thirty-five people give up the last perfect Sunday of summer to help promote the cause of literacy.

Verizon provides New Yorkers with the opportunity to donate one dollar to literacy each month using their phone bills.

Six hundred people—ambassadors, national and international literacy leaders, local literacy practitioners, adult learners—gather to celebrate International Literacy Day on September 5 at the United Nations.

Liz and Sol and Zenia clean out their bookshelves in order to donate volumes of classics to the community.

Thousands of volunteers give up their time to work with adults who are learning English or learning to read.

If I had to put a value on each of those examples of kindness, what could I say?

Verizon dollars donated for literacy	\$20 million
Dollars raised at Bookbinders softball game	\$15,000
Books donated by individuals	1,000
Hours donated each by literacy volunteers	35,000
Kindness in service to people striving for a better life	priceless

NYC Professional Development Consortium

SPEEDING UP GED SCORE REPORTING

by Claudia Dean, GED Testing Office, NYS Education Department



Note: The LAC spent much of its energy last year helping program managers and instructors cope with the transition to GED 2002. As part of our mandate to translate and implement NYS Education Department policy in New York City, the NYCPDC offers this article from the state GED Testing Office. Now that students have been taking the new test and receiving their scores, Claudia Dean offers some nuts-and-bolts advice for programs who want to help ensure that their students get their test results in a timely manner. Please see page 12 for more about the LAC's and the NYCPDC's partnership with NYSED in preparing practitioners for GED 2002.
Peter Kondrat, NYCPDC Director

The transition to GED 2002 has been a challenge for teachers, students, test administrators, and the state GED Testing Office staff alike. The new 2002 series involves a considerable amount of paperwork, so we've had to develop and adjust to new procedures. Our Information Technology Services staff had the monumental task of designing a new database to scan and score the new tests. After initial delays in processing, candidates who took the test in summer 2002 have received their results in as little as two to three weeks—if their data was clean.

What do we mean by “clean” data? In order for a test to load into the database properly, a candidate must properly bubble in his or her name, address, social security or other ID number, and date of birth. Additionally, because the name, ID number, and date of birth are bubbled onto multiple answer sheets, errors on the separate sheets cause mismatches in the data, which means that fewer than five subtests actually make it into the candidate's test file. If GED preparation programs train their students in correctly entering this data, they can help ensure that students will receive their results in a timely manner.

The largest number of errors occur in the candidate date-of-birth field. Some candidates neglect to bubble in all or part of the date; many more enter the date of the test instead of their birth date. Address data is problematic as well. Every year, we have hundreds of documents returned as undeliverable for individuals who do not specify an apartment number. City abbreviations such as BX for Bronx or LIC for Long Island City cannot be used. Also, “Queens” is not a mailing address; candidates must specify Jamaica, Far Rockaway, Flushing, or whatever.

Another issue involves testers under 19 years of age in Alternative High School Equivalency Preparation (AHSEP) programs. These students must bring to the test a school-completed GED Options form, which includes the program's five-digit GED program preparation code. Because enrollment in the AHSEP program is the criterion that grants the student eligibility to test, failure to supply students with the form could result in their being unable to take the test or in their being designated as ineligible. If your students are receiving ineligible notices, verify your program preparation code with the GED Testing Office.

Besides preparing students in the content areas of the new test, you can also give them practice in bubbling computer scan forms. Samples of many GED 2002 forms can be found in the New York State GED Testing Schedule and Information Guide, available from the GED Testing Office at 518.474.5906 or at ged@mail.nysed.gov. You might go over mailing addresses with your students to verify that the address is complete and will fit in the number of spaces provided. Learners with visual discrimination difficulties who find it difficult to work with columns of letters and numbers can use a plain straight edge **with no markings** or a blank piece of scrap paper to ensure that information is bubbled into the correct column.

Small errors in filling out basic information can result in lengthy delays in receiving that long-awaited diploma. If you familiarize your students with GED forms and procedures in advance, you will help to minimize these preventable errors so that we can generate documents in a timely manner.

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.



resources

Family Literacy

Family and Intergenerational Literacy in Multilingual Communities

www.cal.org/ncle/digests/FamLit2.htm

In five clear, easy-to-read pages, this ERIC digest summarizes the history of family literacy programming and outlines various approaches to program planning, goal setting, and curriculum design. The article ends by describing some innovative approaches that promote literacy among generations by building on family and cultural strengths.

Adult and Family Literacy:

Current Research and Future Directions

www.nichd.nih.gov/crm/cdb/AFL_workshop.htm

A panel of experts from various disciplines gathered to assess what is known and not known about the role of family literacy programs in improving the literacy skills of parents and children. This workshop summary opens a window into the Bush administration's approach to scientific, evidence-based research and practice. See also a critique of this article posted by George Demetron of Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford on the NIFL-NLA listserv at www.nifl.gov/nifl-nla/2002/0259.html.

EL/Civics

This is the second in a two-part list of web-based resources that can help practitioners who are providing instruction in English language in the context of civic participation.

California Distance Learning Project

www.cdiponline.org

CDLP maintains student-created and teacher-supported web pages for adult new readers, including interactive and audio features for student use as well as teacher resources.

Topic areas include civic participation, family, and employment.

NYC Settlement Houses Community Learning Centers

<http://clc.unhny.org/programs/>

This site, supported and maintained by United Neighborhood Houses, offers access to "Life Stories," writing produced by adult immigrant students. Using an online template, adult learners can post their own stories on the site.

The Key

www.keynews.org

Published monthly by the Milwaukee Area Technical College Office of Grants and Development, *The Key* is a newspaper for new readers—all the news stories are written to be accessible to adults with limited reading skills. The stories can be freely reproduced for use in educational nonprofit settings.

The Learning Edge

<http://thewclc.ca/edge>

This online interactive newspaper for adult learners covers a variety of content areas—including social studies, science, and reading—all presented in practical contexts. Multimedia functions, games, and quizzes help maintain student interest.

Topics

www.rice.edu/projects/topics/Electronic/Magazine.html

Topics: An Online Magazine for Learners of English features articles written by students. In the Teachers' Corner, teachers share class projects and teaching techniques.

Project-Based Learning

The professional development staff of the LAC espouses project-based learning (PBL) as an effective strategy both for adult education and for staff development. Here are few of the resources that have helped inform the LAC's PBL-centered professional development offerings.

Knowledge in Action:

The Promise of Project-Based Learning

by Heide Spruck Wrigley

www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/fob/1998/wrigley.htm

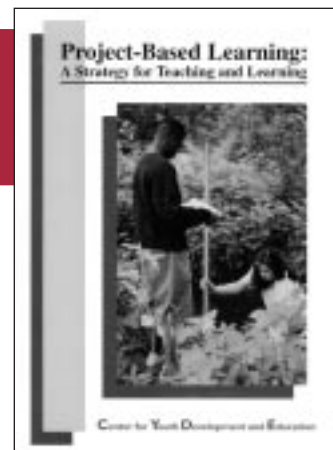
This article from *Focus on Basics*—the quarterly journal of the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL)—offers a clear and concise overview of general principles and beliefs about PBL. A short introduction to the research on and history of PBL provides a context for practitioners who consider using this methodology.

Less Teaching and More Learning

by Susan Gaer

www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/fob/1998/gaer.htm

Another *Focus on Basics* piece, this article is an ESOL teacher's firsthand account of how she used PBL in her classroom; it includes examples of class work.



Project-Based Learning: A Strategy for Teaching and Learning

by the Center for Youth Development and Education (CYDE), together with the Corporation for Business, Work, and Learning, 1999

Developed by CYDE staff members, this manual incorporates examples of classroom projects. Highlights include an overview of PBL that correlates PBL to SCANS and EFF as well as connecting PBL to new understandings about teaching and learning; a detailed description of the planning, implementation, and assessment processes of PBL; and other PBL resources. To order the book, contact the Corporation for Business, Work, and Learning, The Schrafft Center, 529 Main St., Boston, MA 02129, 617.727.8158.

Project-Based Learning for Adult English Language Learners

by Donna Moss and Carol Van Duzer

www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed427556.html

This ERIC digest provides a rationale for PBL in the adult education classroom, describes steps for doing PBL, and gives examples from the field. A list of references is given to enable further research.

Technology Supports for Project-Based Learning

by Barbara Means and Kerry Olson

www.ed.gov/pubs/SERI/Technology/ch8.html

Chapter 8 of *Technology and Education Reform: Technical Research Report* offers a constructivist approach for using technology to support PBL in the classroom. Though this research has a K–12 focus, it can be used to inform the efforts of adult education practitioners to use technology in PBL.

Perspectives on CALL for Project-Based Learning

by Heidi Spruck Wrigley

www.cyberstep.org/TESOL

This web-based presentation, given at the 2000 TESOL conference, describes the principles of adult learning, language, and literacy that are the basis for PBL. Each principle is illustrated with examples from the field. ■

{announcing

Amnesty for LAC Clearinghouse Books

Do you have books or other materials from the LAC Clearinghouse sitting around your office or home? (Are you *sure*?) This is our plea: Please check your shelves, your dining room table, wherever your professional materials accumulate. Look for the label on the spine that identifies a book as belonging to the LAC. We've been revamping and recataloging our collection, and we need our books back in order to make them available to the rest of the literacy community.

Please, save yourself (and us) the embarrassment of letters and phone calls asking you to return our materials. If you bring back your books—any weekday 9–5—before October 31, you won't be charged a fine, no matter how long it's been since you checked the materials out.

Literacy Recognition Awards

It's time to start thinking about outstanding NYCALI literacy practitioners who deserve to be recognized for their contribution to the field at the LAC's 2003 Literacy Recognition Award Ceremony. Information on a revised nomination process will be sent to NYCALI program managers later this month and will be published in the November *Literacy Update*. In the meantime, think about your colleagues, your staff, your volunteers, your mentors—which of them most deserves the recognition of their peers in the NYC literacy scene? Remember, this award is open to NYCALI program staff or volunteers only.

All Write!

Bring your students to the acclaimed adult literacy program Selected Shorts: ALL WRITE! at Symphony Space theater. Professional actors will read poems and stories at the first performance and then, at the second, will read selected original student work. Texts, study guides, and workshops are provided. The program is free and runs from December through May. Space is limited. For an application, call Madeline Cohen at 212.864.1414 x221. Application deadline is November 15.

TV411.org

ALMA, the Adult Media Literacy Alliance, has recently launched a new website based on its award-winning television series, TV411. The website, www.TV411.org, offers hands-on lessons and activities in reading, writing, and math that learners can use with or without the assistance of an instructor. Game-like formats make the lessons truly interactive. For example, users can do a lesson about how to write a business letter and then practice the skills learned by creating their own letter through a "drag-and-drop" game. Thematically, TV411.org presents its content around the subjects of money, parenting, people, and health. TV411.org was made possible by a grant from the Department of Education's Office of Vocational & Adult Education (OVAE) as part of their Cyberstep initiative.

Children's Book Awards Announced

The Jane Addams Peace Association has announced the inners of the 2002 Jane Addams Children's Book Awards:

Picture Book: *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, written by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Bryan Collier, and published by Jump at the Sun, an imprint of Hyperion Books for Children

Older Children: *The Other Side of Truth*, written by Beverley Naidoo and published by HarperCollins

The Jane Addams Children's Book Awards annually acknowledge books published during the previous year in the U.S. that effectively address themes promoting peace, social justice, world community, and/or equality of the sexes and all races.

The awards will be presented on Friday, October 18, beginning at 1:30 pm at 777 United Nations Plaza. For additional information, contact Executive Director Theresa Graham, Jane Addams Peace Association, 777 United Nations Plaza, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10017-3521, phone 212.682.8830, e-mail japa@igc.org.

National Book Scholarship Fund Applications

Grant applications are now being accepted for the National Book Scholarship Fund (NBSF), sponsored by Laubach Literacy International. NBSF grants distribute New Readers Press books and educational materials to qualified adult literacy providers. The NBSF gives special emphasis to grant applications from family literacy programs, followed by ESOL and adult basic educational initiatives. For more information about the NBSF or to apply, visit www.nbsf.org or write the National Book Scholarship Fund, Laubach Literacy, 1320 Jamesville Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13210. The deadline for grant applications is December 5, 2002.

National Conferences

AAACE Annual Conference
American Association for Adult & Continuing Education
Nov. 19–24, St. Louis
Fee: \$250 member
www.aaace.org or 301.918.1913

NCTE 92nd Annual Convention
National Council of Teachers of English
Nov. 21–26, Atlanta
Fee: \$150 by Oct. 28, \$180 after
www.ncte.org or 800.369.6283

October

Calendar of Events

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

[3]

ALIES Training

Follow Up Report Workshop

Thursday, October 3, 10 am–noon

Presenter: Megan Swiderski

This workshop, designed for all NYCALI program staff, provides an overview of the data required for the follow-up report, including definitions and explanations of each field, a review of the data check reports, and a discussion of the calculations behind the follow-up report table.

RSVP: Don Campbell at 212.803.3319
or donc@lacnyc.org

Sponsor: LAC

[4]

Storytelling in the ESOL Classroom

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.

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

Sponsor: LAC

[8]

ALIES Training

What's New in ALIES Release 4.0

Tuesday, October 8, 10–11 am

Presenter: Megan Swiderski

This overview of the new features of ALIES release 4.0 is designed for all ALIES software users—new and old. The session will highlight new features of release 4.0 as well as addressing potential issues and challenges.

RSVP: Don Campbell at 212.803.3319
or donc@lacnyc.org

Sponsor: LAC

[9]

Counselors' Exchange Series

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.

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

Sponsor: LAC

[11]

Media Literacy Series

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 discover how to use the themes and issues of the film in classroom projects.

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

Sponsor: LAC

[15]

Reading Basics

Tuesday, October 15, 1–4 pm

Facilitator: Peter Kondrat

What do we do when we read? How do adults acquire reading skills? How best can we assist adult readers? This new workshop in the Basics series aims to familiarize practitioners with the essential knowledge and tools they need to help adult learners improve their reading. More in-depth than the NYCPDC's Pre-Service Institute, this workshop is intended as a primer for new teachers or a refresher for seasoned practitioners. Please register in advance—online at www.lacnyc.org/events if possible—in order to receive the packet of materials before the workshop.

RSVP: PDC Reservation Line at 212.803.3345 or
athenab@lacnyc.org

Sponsor: NYCPDC

[15/24]

ALIES Training

ALIES Data Entry Training

Tuesday & Wednesday, October 15 & 16, 10 am–4 pm
OR

Thursday & Friday, October 24 & 25, 10 am–4 pm

**Please choose ONE two-day session
and attend BOTH days.**

Presenter: Sylvia Torres

This two-day training for new ALIES data entry staff provides a step-by-step introduction to the ALIES data entry process. Highlights include installation and setup of the ALIES system; navigation of ALIES data entry screens; inputting students, classes, and instructors; and entering outcomes, tests, contact hours, and turnaround documents. Participants will also learn to use ALIES reports including standard, ad hoc, and data check reports.

RSVP: Don Campbell at 212.803.3319 or
donc@lacnyc.org

Sponsor: LAC

LAC Professional Development Center Open Hours

Every Monday, 1–5 pm

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.

[16]

Program Managers' Series

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
Sponsors: LAC & NYCPDC

[16]

ESOL Skill Building

Counseling-Learning

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

Facilitator: Jenny Rardin, Ph.D.
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 both sessions.

RSVP by October 4.

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

Computer Learning Center

Visit our newly revamped computer lab 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.

[18]

Popular Education in the Classroom Study Group

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.

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

[22]

Writing Basics

Tuesday, October 22, 1–4 pm

Facilitator: Peter Kondrat

How can teachers best help their basic education students acquire essential writing skills? Like Reading Basics on October 15, this workshop is designed to provide practitioners with the knowledge and tools they need to help adult learners improve their writing; it can serve as an introduction for new teachers or as a refresher for experienced practitioners. Please register in advance—online at www.lacnyc.org/events if possible—in order to receive the packet of materials before the workshop.

RSVP: PDC Reservation Line at 212.803.3345 or athenab@lacnyc.org
Sponsor: NYCPDC

[23]

ALIES Training

ALIES Program Managers Training

Wednesday, October 23, 10 am–1 pm

Presenter: Megan Swiderski

Designed for program managers who have never been to an ALIES training, this session discusses effective procedures for managing ALIES from setup and implementation to reporting and data analysis. Highlights include a plan for ALIES implementation including staff and technology resource preparation, management tactics for programs using ALIES, the ALIES support system and website, and hands-on experience in high-level data analysis.

RSVP: Don Campbell at 212.803.3319 or donc@lacnyc.org
Sponsor: LAC

[25]

GLBT Practitioners Group

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
Sponsor: LAC

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

ALIES User Groups

ALIES users will meet on Tuesday, October 15, at 1 pm in the Computer Learning Center. No RSVP is necessary.



Literacy Assistance Center

N Y C

P D C

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 November/December issue of *Literacy Update* is October 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.

HIPPY Coordinator

Direct Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters program. Bachelor's, bilingual English/Chinese. Excellent leadership skills & exp. coordinating school and/or community-based projects. 37.5 hrs/wk, benefits. Call Julie at The Educational Alliance, 197 E. Broadway, phone 212.780.2300, x363. ■

Literacy Assistant (PT)

Take over library story time for 3 daycare classes; some library maintenance. Must love reading & reading aloud to children, have some training in child development, have some college credits. Call 718.584.4400 or send résumé to Jo Anne Kraus, Concourse House, 2751 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10468. ■

Youth Assistant

Supervise group of 10-15 children, facilitate & instruct recreational sports, develop lesson plans for children 6-10. Looking for highly motivated and energetic individual, min 2 yrs exp. with school age children, lesson & activity planning, games, arts & crafts. 1 yr college pref., computer application & software for children a plus. Letter & résumé to Noelia Rodriguez, After-School & Summer Programs Coordinator, The Mount Hope Housing Company, 2003-05 Walton Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453, fax 718.466.4788. ■

Executive Assistant

Seasoned professional to work directly with VP in the management/oversight of all program components. Research programmatic & funding resources, manage grants, organize meetings, take minutes, draft correspondence, maintain calendar & office records. MS Word, MS Publisher, Excel, Internet. Exp. with database mgmt a plus. Min. BA or equivalent work history.

Coordinator of Construction Training

Develop & implement training & educational curriculum for Project R.E.A.D.Y. (Resources for Employment & Academic Development for Youth). Create workshop trainings, develop detailed construction plans & schedules, define weekly work assignments. Identify & develop trainee internships, assist in development of job opportunities, maintain relationships with unions, contractors & other public/private sector organizations. BA or equivalent trade exp., demonstrated exp in building trades & construction management, exp. with educating adolescents, supervisory skills.

Senior Case Manager

Work with inner-city grade school & adolescent youth & their families. Exp. with inter-team coordination & decision-making, supervision, administration, program management & service delivery. Prior work with adolescents & families essential. MSW + 2 yrs. post-masters exp, computer skills, bilingual Spanish a plus. Letter & résumé to Estel Fonseca, VP of Youth Services, The Mount Hope Housing Company, 2003-05 Walton Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453, fax 718.466.4788. ■

More Jobs Online!

Job ads that do not make our print publication deadline are regularly posted on our website. For the most complete and timely listings of New York City positions in literacy, go to www.lacnyc.org and click on Jobs in Literacy.

Youth Development Specialist (PT)

Work with inner-city high school students in after-school program: develop & implement lesson plans & workshop materials, administer classroom instruction. Prior work with adolescents, exp. in inter-team coordination. 2 yrs college exp., 2-4 yrs working with adolescents, computer skills, strong verbal & written skills. Bilingual Spanish a plus.

English Tutor

Work with inner-city high school students in after-school program. Assist youth in improving their ability to analyze literature; write essays, term papers, & poetry; prepare for exams. 2 yrs college exp. req. with 2-4 yrs exp. tutoring adolescents.

Science Tutor

Science tutor to work with inner-city high school students in after-school program. Assist youth in improving their comprehension of earth science, biology, chemistry & physics; help them prepare for exams. 2 yrs college exp. req. with 2-4 yrs exp. tutoring adolescents. Letter & résumé to Melissa Figueroa, Coordinator of Youth Development Services, The Mount Housing Company, Inc., 2003-05 Walton Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453, fax 718.466.4788. ■

VISTA Members

Bronx CDC specializing in affordable housing, employment services, youth programs, real estate development & asset building programs seeks 3 VISTA members. VISTA compensation includes a living stipend & education award to be used for student loans or post-secondary education, plus other benefits. Call Brenda D. Jones, VISTA Coordinator, at 718.294.4319 x12 for more information about the VISTA program & job descriptions for Work Internship & Community Development Coordinators and Youth Outreach & Resource Specialist. ■

By the Numbers *cont'd*

For example, if a teacher tries a new method of instruction, she might like to see if her students made more gain on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) with this new method. In order to find out, she needs accurate data. First, the test scores from the previous class cycles must have been accurately input in ALIES. In addition, the number of hours each student attended class in the previous cycles must be tracked, because only students who attended the class for a significant number of hours should be included in the analysis. Now, if the teacher carefully tracks both the number of hours students attend class during her teaching experiment and their test scores at the end of the cycle, she can perform a fascinating analysis. If she sees that TABE scores increased for students with a high number of contact hours during her experimental class, she may be willing to try this method again. If she sees a decrease in TABE scores, she may decide to do away with her new method. The teacher might also look at individual students to see how the new method of teaching affected their TABE performance. An analysis like this is most effective when completed over time with many samples of students. However, the teacher could never even begin to perform the analysis if data such as test scores and contact hours was not accurately collected and input into ALIES.

Once data has been collected, the analytical reports in ALIES or other data management systems can be used to manage programs, improve teaching, and plan for the program year. Program managers with an intimate knowledge of their data can make decisions regarding the types of classes to offer, the number of teachers to hire, and other important programmatic strategies. For example, a manager may generate a report to see how many students stated the goal of obtaining a job during the intake process.

If the number of students is high, the manager may plan to run several career development workshops during the year. However, if the number is low, perhaps there is no need for career workshops this year. This analysis would be impossible without data reports including student demographics and goals. Thus, the data required for NRS becomes more than a reporting hindrance—it can help improve service delivery.

Improving Data Quality in New York

Recently I attended, together with representatives from the NYS Education Department and the NYS Staff Development Consortium, a workshop in Washington, DC, called “Improving the Quality of National Reporting System Data.” Members of the adult literacy community from states throughout the nation attended this workshop or one of the three similar workshops held in other areas of the country this summer. The workshop was designed to help participants learn about uses for NRS data reports and identify what is meant by “quality data.” In addition, participants reflected on their own state’s data collection process and worked together to devise more effective methods of managing data collection and of providing staff development opportunities around data management.

One of the most exciting aspects of this workshop was the opportunity for representatives of different states to talk about their data collection systems and processes. I learned that, while many states have, like New York, selected or designed a data collection system and are in the process of rolling it out statewide, other states have not selected a data collection system and are still struggling with pen-and-paper NRS reports. Other states have advanced web-based data collection systems, though some of these seem to be designed primarily to meet NRS requirements rather than to help inform program management.

During the workshop, NYS representatives reflected on data collection processes in programs throughout the state and came up with a strategy for improving data quality. Changes planned for New York State include:

- Adoption of ALIES data collection system or other electronic individual record system across NYS

- Staff development on implementing ALIES, including training on data entry, NRS reports, and reports for program management

- Staff development on intake processes, goal setting, improving data quality, and using NRS data for program improvement

The NYS team noted that, once a data collection system is in place, the biggest challenge for programs might be to implement effective goal setting and surveying procedures, which is the reason we began to plan for staff development in this area.

The ultimate goal of the drive for data accountability is to help programs use data effectively in their day-to-day operations. NRS data, particularly when reported with an electronic data collection systems such as ALIES, can give program managers and teachers valuable new insights into their practices and methods. As one program manager said to me, “Even though this is a change and takes time, data collection is actually a good thing in that it has the potential to help me serve the students better.” ■▲●

teachers' corner]

by Jennybelle Rardin, Ph.D.
Counseling-Learning® Institutes

Community Language Learning in the ESOL Classroom

Community Language Learning (CLL) is an innovative, humanistic approach to education in general and to language learning in particular developed in the 1960s at Loyola University of Chicago by Charles A. Curran and his associates. Earl Stevick introduced the approach to the TESOL world in the early 1970s, and the principles and techniques of CLL continue to affect ESOL, EFL, and ABE instruction. In his article "Language Instruction Must Do an About-Face" (*Modern Language Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 8, Dec. 1974), Stevick said:

A fundamental distinction—perhaps *the* fundamental distinction—which sets humanistic education apart from other kinds of education has been drawn by Curran. He contrasts two kinds of learning, one "defensive" and the other "receptive." . . . I believe that "receptive" learning can produce results that are superior in quantity, and are at the same time more wholesome in their effects on the total personality of the student.

Rogsonian Techniques in Language Learning

Curran did his doctoral work with Carl Rogers at Ohio State University in the 1940s. The counseling process they developed, known as *nondirective counseling* or *client-centered counseling*, is intended to empower clients to solve their own problems. In Rogsonian counseling, therapists respond in specific ways to what the client says. The therapist attempts to create a **supportive, non-judgmental space** so the client can work with his or her own issues.

Curran and his associates applied this principle of supportive, nonjudgmental space to language learning. In an educational context, Rogsonian counseling ideas help to:

Create learner space

Empower learners to take responsibility for their learning in a community setting

The Principles of Community Language Learning

Participants in my workshops experience a kind of total immersion in a language they do not already know, replicating the experience of an ESOL learner. The following principles guide a CLL counselor in structuring learning activities:

Learners are assisted to be **secure users** of the language from the beginning of the process.

Language counselors design **meaningful communicative tasks** from the outset. Student-generated conversations allow for student investment and responsibility.

Nondefensive learning occurs through a process that moves from dependence on the teacher-counselor to **cooperative interdependence** with teacher and classmates.

Six elements are necessary for nondefensive learning: security, attention, assertion, reflection, retention, and discrimination.

The language counselor **listens** to the students' learning experience and develops the skill of knowing intuitively when to teach and when to enter into the learner's world.

Unique Practices

One important purpose of any learning activity is to help learners to stay engaged and motivated even when the learning process moves from the fun of being in control of the material to the challenge of learning aspects beyond their control. The three examples below help illustrate CLL's unique approach to this challenge.

Focus on learner space. At the beginning of the process, instead of using a predetermined text, learners generate conversation among themselves, saying what they want to whomever in the group they choose in as much English as they can muster. The language counselor, standing behind the speaker, provides the correct target language in small chunks. For instance, if the learner says, "Come New York new," the counselor might say, "I am new to New York" or "I have just come to New York." These sentences are tape-recorded or written for use as the class

"text." The learners, in generating personally relevant and authentic group communication, fill more of the learning space than does the teacher-counselor.

Learner control. The Human Computer is another way in which learners control their learning activity. A learner chooses one of the sentences from the previous conversation and says that sentence as best he or she can. The teacher repeats the sentence with the correct phrasing and intonation. If the learner says the sentence again, the teacher repeats it again. The learner decides when to end the repetitions. This process helps the learner develop inner criteria for the sounds and structure of the target language.

Focus on both fluency and accuracy. Most communicative language teaching methods focus on fluency at the expense of accuracy or form. The CLL approach focuses on both fluency and accuracy at different times and in different ways. For example, once learners have generated and then practiced their conversation, they study the form of their sentences. Their personal investment in the conversation allows them to internalize the grammar and structure of this highly contextualized material.

How to Learn More about CLL

As with any innovative process, an actual experience with a trained representative of the approach is the best way of finding out how the practices "sit with" you. Thus, the best way to learn more about CLL is to attend my workshop at the LAC on October 16 and 17 (details in the Calendar on page 7). However, if you cannot make it to the workshop, you may find the principles and techniques outlined in the four core CLL textbooks useful in your teaching: *Education in a New Dimension; Understanding: An Essential Ingredient in Human Belonging; Counseling-Learning: A Whole-Person Model for Education; Counseling-Learning in Second Languages*. These books are available in the Dan Rabideau Clearinghouse at the LAC; please contact me at Jennyrardin@hotmail.com or 928.282.2523 for more information or to find out about workshops being offered in your area. ■

International Literacy Day

Under the title “Literacy for Diversity: Voices of Resilience,” a coalition of local, national, and international education organizations celebrated International Literacy Day 2002 on September 5 at the United Nations. The event was sponsored by UNESCO and the International Literacy Network, with the LAC as local partner and with support from Verizon.

Representatives of the UN, the World Bank, the U.S. Department of Education, and the International Reading Association—as well as New York’s own Calvin Miles, president of the national learner organization Voice for Adult Literacy United for Education (VALUE)—participated in a panel discussion on the role of literacy in developing resilient communities.

2002 International Literacy Prizes were also announced. These included the International Reading Association Literacy Day Prize, which was awarded to the Adult Education Division of the Ministry of Education of Eritrea. “Supporting this award reflects our international mission of improving literacy worldwide,” said Lesley Morrow, president-elect of the International Reading Association. Morrow cited the ministry’s effort to reduce Eritrea’s adult illiteracy rate—once estimated at 70 percent—and particularly its focus on improving women’s literacy levels.

For many participants, the highlight of the day was the luncheon, where adult learners from New York City ESOL programs read pieces they had written about the terrorist attacks last year. In “Come Back, Our Love,” Xi Chen, who studies at the Chinese American Planning Council, wrote that she was at her job in the gift shop on the observation deck of the World Trade Center on September 11. “Under the firemen’s help, I came out of the building. Then I saw the buildings on fire. I was shaking like a leaf in the wind.”

In his message to the conference, Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director-General, noted, “On International Literacy Day, we celebrate

the dedicated efforts of those who work so hard to bring learning opportunities to others. They are a reminder to UNESCO and its partners at international and national levels that our role must be to strengthen local capacity and to support community initiatives. Indeed, it is vital that learners themselves, in their own contexts and guided by their own aspirations and hopes, shape the literacy agenda.”

Later this year, the UN will officially announce International Literacy Decade, to begin in January 2003. In April 2000 at a conference in Dakar, Senegal, 164 UN member nations affirmed their commitment to the Education for All movement begun ten years earlier. One of six goals of the Dakar Framework for Action was increasing adult literacy by 50 percent by 2015 as well as ensuring that children have access to free, compulsory, high-quality primary education. The International Literacy Decade is designed to refocus UN member nations’ energy and resources toward achieving this goal. ■

Literacy a Prerequisite for Peace

International Literacy Day is an annual reminder of a fundamental inequality in our globalizing world: Almost one in every seven people is illiterate. This tragic injustice is compounded by a second one: Out of a total of 880 million illiterate adults, more than 500 million are women.

This state of affairs is unacceptable. It is an affront to individual human dignity, and damaging to the future well-being of humankind. Literacy is essential to the development and health of individuals, communities and countries. It is a condition for people’s effective participation in the democratic process. It is the basis for the written communication and literature that have long provided the main channel for cross-cultural awareness and understanding. And, at the same time, it is the most precious way we have of expressing, preserving and developing our cultural diversity and identity. Literacy, in short, is a prerequisite for peace.

*from the International Literacy Day Message
by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan*



Overcome by emotion during her reading at International Literacy Day, Hanifa Begum is flanked by Melissa Stephenson, her teacher at Forest Hills Community House, and Richard Fish, Assistant Commissioner for Literacy Programs in the Department of Youth and Community Development.

GED Certificates Awarded

Eight New York City GED practitioners were recognized by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) for exceptional work in preparing the field to align instruction in high school equivalency classes with the new GED examination. Each educator was a GED 2002 trainer in the city; each prepared lesson plans to assist GED teachers in meeting the needs of learners who took the new test beginning in January 2002.

Each certificate is signed by Linda Headley-Walker, the NYSED Project Leader for Adult Education, and Konrad Raup, GED State Administrator. The certificate reads, "This certificate of recognition is issued... for your efforts and commitment to helping GED practitioners improve instructional practice and prepare learners for the GED 2002 Test Series."

The LAC congratulates the NYC practitioners who received certificates:

Betty Aderman
Anita Caref
Gayle Cooper
Linda Correnti
Marsha Davis
Sandra Parris
Lisa Simon
Ira Yankwitt



Literacy Assistance Center

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