

Still Standing Tall

by Elyse Barbell Rudolph, Executive Director

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Please Fill Out Our Survey!

I have never liked to make the LAC the focus of this newsletter; I'm always saying that this is the *Literacy Update*, not the *LAC Update*. But many of you have already heard about what's happening to the LAC's budget and are wondering how it will affect our services, and those who haven't yet heard need to know where we are and what we are planning. That's why I've moved my message to you from my usual quiet spot on page 2 to the front page of our newsletter.

New York City's budget woes have finally landed here at the Literacy Assistance Center. Due to mandated cuts in services provided by New York City, the newly merged Mayor's Office of Adult Literacy and the Department of Youth and Community Development have reluctantly decided not to renew our contract. As of November 30, 2002, we will receive no city funds.

Many of the deliverables you have come to expect from the LAC now need to find new benefactors. We have already had to curtail the services of our Hotline; literacy referrals are now available only through our automated voice information system and on our website. Other things you may not see for a while

include things we (and I hope you) love: some of our staff, our publications (including this newsletter), the recognition ceremony honoring those who dedicate their lives to service, our Clearinghouse, certain professional development offerings—they all hang in the balance. While these are important services, what we are trying hardest to hang on to is our connection to literacy providers and students throughout New York City.

Every day at the LAC, we spend our time making sure that every minute that parents, workers, or teenagers carve into their busy day to improve their literacy or English language skills is a productive, enriched minute; that every hour spent by dedicated volunteers and professional staff to help those learners reach their goals is an hour they know is well spent. We serve and support hundreds of literacy programs in their need for professional development, resources, referral, and data collection. We see ourselves as inextricable from the front line of service providers. We work to convey the messages from the field to policymakers and bring the policymakers to the field. While the core of our constituency is NYCALI-funded literacy programs, we also help countless

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congregations and social service organizations connect with or establish instructional programs. Our pre-service institute has oriented 500 new teachers and volunteers to the adult literacy profession. Our professional development staff provide technical assistance many, many times a day in person or via email or phone. Though we may have to curtail some services and postpone others, our commitment to building a system of quality literacy services for all New Yorkers is undiminished.

As I write in early October, I do not know exactly which services will be affected and by how much. We will be offering a (probably reduced) schedule of professional development events this winter and spring, but we may be able to invite you to them only electronically via our website or email, since at this moment we do not plan to publish any more issues of this newsletter. If you would like to be added to our email list for announcements of coming events, please send your name and email address to subscriptions@lacnyc.org.

How can you help? First of all, take time to fill out the survey on page 7 or online at www.lacnyc.org. You can help us prioritize which of our services are most important to you. Secondly, you can write a letter—on your organization's letterhead, if appropriate—in support of funding for the LAC to Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott at City Hall.

Finally, you can be assured that all is not lost. The LAC is a strong organization. We will continue our nineteen-year history of service to New York City. With the endorsement of the City of New York and the support of the New York State Education Department and our private foundation and corporate sponsors, we will keep the doors open and continue to offer high-quality services. Stick with us! Soon you'll see a leaner, more precisely focused LAC working to serve the city in the best way we know how. ■▲●



Literacy Update is published 8 times a year.
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Funding for the LAC is provided by the New York City Mayor's Office, the New York State Education Department, and a wide range of philanthropic foundations, corporations, and individuals.

by Pamela Little.
Director of Youth Literacy Services

Suitcases Filled with Stories

As I walk through the senior center, careful to step around the brightly decorated suitcases on the floor, my students are attentive and absorbed in the conversations at hand. Alongside each child sits an older person from the community: a new acquaintance for most, a grandparent figure for a few. Voices are hushed. Every so often, I hear laughter. I strain to hear individual conversations. One man speaks of difficult times during the Depression. Another relates a story of a brother lost in World War II.

I was teaching fourth-graders in a small alternative public school in Manhattan. My yearlong writing project brought students and senior citizens together to exchange stories about life experiences—stories from which the students created handmade books. With some adaptation, a project like this could be used in an after-school or family literacy program both to facilitate writing instruction and to connect students with elderly residents of the community in order to learn from them about other cultures and traditions.

The project began with a request for old suitcases. I needed a way for our students to transport and store books, art supplies, and writing materials. As suitcases began to fill my classroom, it became clear that each held its own history. Thinking about ways that my students could hear the stories the suitcases would tell if they could talk, I cultivated interest in sharing their lives with young people among local retirees through phone calls and an informational meeting at the local senior citizen housing cooperative. After local artists helped the students decorate their suitcases—sessions full of energy, artistry, and lots of hot glue and paint—we were ready to “take our show on the road.”

In preparation for our first meeting with the seniors, each student wrote a short autobiography and made it into a book.

The students used these books to introduce themselves to their senior partners. They then asked a number of interview questions to start gathering material for the biographies they would be making about their new acquaintances. Students and seniors came away from this meeting knowing a surprising amount about each other.

Throughout the year, groups of two or three met with “their” senior monthly. I chose a theme for each meeting that I thought would resonate with both seniors and students. In December, for instance, students and seniors talked about favorite traditions and holiday memories. Images, sounds, and smells came vividly to life as a Native American student talked about attending powwows with his mother and sister, while an elderly man from Scandinavia spoke of traditional foods such as rice pudding, lefse, and lutefisk that complemented his family’s Christmas celebration.

Two boys in my group seemed genuinely to value the time they spent with “Bob Shea,” 89. One day, as I listened in the wings, Bob described the chores he did as a boy. He explained in detail how he kept the farm’s waterwheel operating with the help of the family workhorse. Then he told a more intimate story: When he was thirteen, Bob’s mother died while giving birth to his youngest sister. Speaking softly, Bob recalled how his six surviving siblings were farmed out to aunts and uncles around the country. All the while he held in his weathered hands a black-and-white photo of his happy, intact family on the front porch of their large whitewashed farmhouse. Bob spoke in simple language of needing to grow up quickly and having to go to work.

The boys were troubled by the intensity of Bob’s story. After reflecting on their meeting, the boys designed beautiful books

for Bob. Instead of writing about his loss, they chose to retell stories about his farm chores. I didn’t interfere with this decision; I was there to support, not direct, their writing.

In preparing this project, I was inspired by such writing process “gurus” as Lucy Calkins, Ralph Fletcher, Nancie Atwell, and Donald Graves. Each recommends creating a community in the classroom in which students are accountable to each other in fostering meaningful writing. From the beginning, my students were passionately involved in creating a writing workroom. We spoke of determination and diligence—values reinforced by their conversations with the seniors. We discussed what constitutes positive criticism, and my students learned to listen with respect and to rely on each other to improve their writing.

Another person who informed this project is Paul Johnson, the author of *A Book of One’s Own* and other works. Johnson believes that in order for children to write meaningfully, they need to write in book form. Even the most cautious writers become excited about filling the pages of a book, while students who have a passion for writing are given a vehicle to express themselves fully.

But the unique aspect of this project was the interaction between the students and the seniors—another form of community building. The seniors provided meaningful subject matter and context for the students’ writing, while the students deepened their understanding of history and of other cultures. The students learned that seniors are not by nature scary or boring. And nothing could have made the students’ respect for the seniors more evident than the handmade keepsake books of their own life stories that the students presented to them at the end of the project. ■▲●

November

Calendar of Events

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

[1]

ESOL Teacher Share

Friday, November 1, 1–4 pm

This series provides teachers with an opportunity to read about and discuss current issues in ESOL instruction. In this session, teachers will share their classroom experiences and discuss ways of improving practice, focusing on the development of listening and pronunciation skills in the second-language classroom. Participants are encouraged to bring materials to share.

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

[13]

Counselors' Exchange Series

Creating a Supportive Environment for Adult Learners

Wednesday, November 13, 1:30–4:30 pm

Facilitator: Martha Kamber, Sunset Park Adult & Family Education Center

Participants will compare the ways they identify individual student needs during intake and orientation. They will discuss counseling and intervention strategies and will examine ways to develop community partners to whom students can be referred. Participants are encouraged to bring samples of intake and orientation materials as well as suggestions for community resources.

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

[15]

Using Technology with Low-Level ESOL Students

Friday, November 15, 9:30 am–1:30 pm

Presenter: Mariann Fedele

This workshop will explore strategies and methods for working with low-level ESOL students and discuss how technology can support their learning.

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

[20/22]

ALIES Training

Turnaround Document Training

Wednesday, November 20, 10 am–1 pm

OR

Friday, November 22, 10 am–1 pm

Attend only one session.

Presenters: Megan Swiderski & Sylvia Torres

This training for those who fill out ALIES turnaround documents or train others to do so will provide an in-depth understanding of the documentation of test scores, contact hours, goals, and outcomes. Participants will learn the nuances of completing the turnaround documents, including the purpose for every column. They will also learn how to interpret test scores, contact hours, and outcomes that have been documented on the turnarounds.

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

[22&6]

Participatory Approaches to Civics Education

Friday, November 22, 9 am–4 pm

Friday, December 6, 9 am–4pm

Facilitators: Winston Lawrence, Marguerite Lukes & Ira Yankwitt

Have you struggled to integrate concepts of civics and civics participation into your instruction in ways that are truly meaningful for students? In this two-session institute, participants will examine approaches to teaching civic education that actively engage students in civic institutions and community affairs.

The first session will introduce participants to the **problem-posing method**, an approach to literacy and community education developed by Paulo Freire. Participants will explore techniques for identifying and analyzing community issues, as well as discussing ways to design instructional activities that develop communication skills through civic involvement.

The second session will examine **project-based learning**, an instructional approach that is an ideal extension of the problem-posing method. Participants will examine examples of civics education projects and develop a framework for designing civics education projects with their classes.

Participants who complete both sessions will be invited to join a monthly civics education network to share projects and support each other's work.

By application only. Participants must attend both days. Application deadline: November 11. Download an application at www.lacnyc.org/events or call Reion Evans at 212.803.3344.

December

[4]

Using Technology with Intermediate- and High-Level ESOL Students

Wednesday, December 4, 9:30 am–1:30 pm

Presenter: Marianne Fedele

This workshop will explore strategies and methods for working with intermediate- and high-level ESOL students and discuss how technology can support their learning.

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

[11]

Counselors' Exchange Series

Wednesday, December 11, 1:30–4:30 pm

Topic TBA

[13]

Media Literacy Series

Film in the Classroom 4: Brother Outsider

Friday, December 13, 12–4 pm

Facilitator: Mariann Fedele

This workshop will center around a screening of the documentary *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin* from P.O.V., public television's showcase for independent nonfiction films.

During his 60-year career as an activist, organizer, and "troublemaker," Bayard Rustin formulated many of the strategies that propelled the American civil rights movement. But his open homosexuality forced him to remain in the background, marking him as a "brother outsider." Workshop participants will discuss techniques for actively viewing films, explore ways of using the film and associated P.O.V. curriculum materials in the classroom, and discover how to use the themes of the film in classroom projects.

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

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

ALIES User Groups

ALIES users meet on the second Tuesday of each month—November 12 and December 10—at 1 pm in the computer lab. No RSVP is necessary.



Literacy Assistance Center

LAC Professional Development Center Open Hours

Every Monday, 1–5 pm

The Dan Rabideau Clearinghouse and the LAC computer lab will be open on Mondays, 1–5 pm, except December 23 and 30. Professional development staff will be available to assist you. Clearinghouse materials can be used only in the library. For information on the Clearinghouse, contact Winston Lawrence, 212.803.3326 or winstonl@lacnyc.org; for the computer lab, contact Mariann Fedele, 212.803.3325 or mariannf@lacnyc.org.

announcing}

Onsite Professional Development

The LAC is pleased to announce the availability of workshops at your program site. Any program or group of programs with at least 12 participants can contract for an onsite workshop provided by our Adult Literacy Services or Instructional Technology units. Adult literacy workshops include such topics as GED instruction, culture-based ESOL instruction, and Freirean approaches to education. In instructional technology, topics include media literacy, distance learning, workforce development, and enhancing writing using technology. See our website at www.lacnyc.org/resources for a complete list. For more information, contact Ira Yankwitt, 212.803.3356 or iray@lacnyc.org, or Marguerite Lukes, 212.803.3322 or mlukes@lacnyc.org.

Tech Grants for Youth Organizations

With support from the Oracle Corporation, the Help Us Help Foundation assists K-12 public schools and youth organizations in economically challenged communities to obtain information technology tools, including computer equipment and software. For complete guidelines and application forms, go to www.helpushelp.org. Deadlines for grant applications are February 28 and August 31, 2003.

TV411 Schedule

TV411, the television series designed to improve pre-GED reading, writing, and math skills, is now being broadcast every Monday at 1 pm on WNET Channel 13. TV411 viewers can call Channel 13 at 212.560.3105 for tutorial help. They can also visit the TV411 website at www.tv411.org for pre-GED-level lessons. The Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA) produces TV411 in NYC. For more information, contact ALMA at 212.807.4242 or aquinn@edc.org.

Call for Manuscripts

Family Literacy Forum, a new journal published by the National Even Start Association, seeks manuscripts for upcoming issues. Manuscripts are due January 6, 2003. For submission guidelines, contact Claudia M. Ullman at aceullman@worldnet.att.net.

NYACCE Conference

The New York Association for Continuing Community Education (NYACCE) will hold its 52nd annual conference April 27-29, 2003, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Rochester. Sign up at www.nyacce.org or call 888.492.7900 to be placed on the mailing list for conference registration.

GED 2002 Scoring Clarification

As most GED practitioners know, if a candidate fails the essay portion of the Language Arts-Writing test, the multiple-choice portion is not scored and the candidate fails this subtest. The GED Testing Office of the NY State Education Department would like to remind programs that when this happens, the score on the Language Arts-Writing test is reported to New York State candidates as 200—not as an asterisk, as was reported in some GED 2002 trainings last year.

Call for Presenters: NYC ABE Conference

The 2003 ABE Conference committee has extended a call to presenters for the 24th Annual ABE Conference to be held on Saturday, May 3, 2003, at Fashion Industries High School in Manhattan. This conference serves the needs of ABE, ESOL, BENL, Pre-GED, and GED educators; the theme this year is "Sense and Sensitivity." If you would like to present, send a synopsis of your proposed workshop to NYC Consortium for Adult Basic Education, Old Chelsea Station, P O Box 472, NY, NY 10011, or call Carolyn Fernando, 212.243.5458.

jobs in literacy]

Family Literacy Consultant

Direct research into family literacy programs & practices in NYC. Strong background in family literacy & adult ed, knowl. of various models of family literacy & emerging practices, advanced degree pref.

Elizabeth Rivera, LAC, 32 Broadway, 10th fl., NY, NY 10004, fax 212.785.3685, hr@lacnyc.org. ■

Director of Youth Services (FT)

Develop & manage after-school, summer camp & teen programs. Master's & supervisory exp., management & program development skills, well versed in youth development research.

Stephen Tosh, Exec. Dir., Phipps Community Development Corp., 43 W. 23rd St., NY, NY 10010, fax 212.366.5108, stosh@phippsony.org. ■

Reading Lab Assistant (FT & PT)

One FT, one PT position (20 hrs/wk). Work w/tutorial pairs, tutor students. Graduate work in reading pref. Familiar w/explicit approaches to teaching decoding, fluency & comprehension.

Alice Vogt, Interfaith Neighbors, fax 212.472.5317, atv5@worldnet.att.net. ■

Itinerant Adult Education Instructors (FT)

Exp. literacy & ESOL instructors to teach homebound pregnant women on TANF. Start mid-Nov.

Complete description at www.rfcuny.org. Fax 718.741.9779 or 212.650.5873. ■

GED Teacher (PT)

Morning job readiness class for homeless adults. BA in education or related; recent exp. with GED; solid math. HR, Project Renewal, 200 Varick St., NY, NY 10014, jessicaa@projectrenewal.org. ■

Teacher Educator

Prepare prospective Hispanic teachers for NYC pre-employment & NYS teacher cert. exams.

Req: M.Ed., NYS cert., 5 yrs teaching exp.

Pref: teacher training & curriculum development skills; knowl. of Latino community, exc. Spanish.

Personnel, National Puerto Rican Forum, 31 E. 32nd St., 4th fl., NY, NY 10016, fax 212.685.2349. ■

Community Organizer (FT)

Work with parent action committee on systemic improvement of school district. Min. 2 yrs exp. in organizing, proven track record in community outreach, research & campaign development. Bachelor's; MSW pref. Bilingual Spanish pref.

M.N., PAC Search, New Settlement Apartments, 1512 Townsend Avenue, Bronx, NY 10452. ■

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Please fill out this survey
 as soon as possible and return to:
Jan Gallagher, Director of Publications
Literacy Assistance Center
32 Broadway, 10th floor
New York, New York 10004
Fax 212.785.3685

What matters to you at the LAC?

Contact information—OPTIONAL

Name _____
 Organization _____
 Street Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

May we contact you about your response to this survey? ____ Yes ____ No

1. Below is a list of the services LAC has been providing to New York City literacy programs.

Please rank each one as follows:

- A = Indispensable to me or my program
- B = Important to me or my program
- C = Useful to me or my program
- D = Not very important to me or my program
- E = Not relevant to me or my program—we don't need or use this service

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALIES data management software & forms | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development on adult literacy, ESOL & GED | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Update monthly newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALIES training | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development on program management | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Harvest annual journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALIES user support | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development on youth and family literacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Directory of NYCALI Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Referral Hotline phone | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development on instructional technology | <input type="checkbox"/> NYCALI Final Report |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy referral online | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual technical assistance from professional development staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Online job listings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clearinghouse (library) | <input type="checkbox"/> Annual literacy recognition awards | <input type="checkbox"/> Online professional development calendar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer lab | | <input type="checkbox"/> Online curricula & lesson plans |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Online professional development workshop outlines & materials |

2. How often, on average, do you personally use services or materials provided by the LAC?

At least weekly 2–3 times a month Once a month Every 2 or 3 months 2–3 times a year Once a year

3. Please share any comments you have about LAC services you use.

THIS IS THE LAST ISSUE OF *Literacy Update*

See page 1 for details. When we obtain alternative funding, we will resume publication of the LAC newsletter.

jobs in literacy cont'd

Leadership Development Specialists (2, PT)

Enhance critical thinking through gender-specific & teen-issue workshops. Understanding of group dynamics.

Employment Specialist (PT)

Facilitate job readiness workshops, establish internship sites, coordinate special events & Sat. field outings.

Background in job readiness.

Assistant Visual Arts Instructor (PT)

Facilitate culturally based arts program, coordinate special events & Sat. field outings. Strong background in any field of visual/fine arts.

Sports Education Specialists (2, PT)

Facilitate male evening basketball program and/or female sports academy.

Academic Tutors (2, PT)

Provide study skills seminars, monitor homework progress. Background in math, science, or language arts.

Media Arts Instructor (PT)

Introduce fundamentals of media literacy; coordinate special events & Sat. field outings. Background in media arts production, journalism, or related.

All Positions

Evening teen program. College degree or currently enrolled; exp. with youth development.

Michael Rodriguez, Evening Teen Program Director, New Settlement Apartments, 1512 Townsend Ave., Bronx, NY 10452, fax 718.294.4085. ■

Science Adventures Assistant

Facilitate fun, hands-on science activities.

Math Adventures Instructor

Facilitate (with assistant) fun, hands-on math activities.

Both Positions

Multi-Cultural After School Program serving youth ages 7-11. Experience with youth, knowl. of subject matter req.

Maria Santana, After School Program Director, New Settlement Apartments, 1512 Townsend Avenue, Bronx, NY 10452, fax 718.294.4085. ■

Associate Director of Education

for Adult Basic Education (FT)

Manage ABE Tutorial, Bridge & Enrichment programs. BA req., graduate degree pref. 5+ yrs exp. in adult literacy education. Established expertise in curriculum development, staff & tutor training, program evaluation, supervision. **Job Search #1.**

Assistant to the President & CEO (FT)

3+ yrs exp. as admin. asst. Bachelor's & exp. supporting at senior level a +. Exc. communication skills, Outlook, Word, Excel. Powerpoint & Access a +. **Job Search #2.**

Director of Education Programs

Direct all aspects of adult education program. MA & 8-10 yrs relevant exp.; research & advocacy expertise, industry contacts, oral & written presentation skills, budget development & program management skills. **Job Search #3.**

Family Literacy Coordinator

BA & 2 yrs teaching or equiv. exp., preferably in ESOL; ability to motivate students & volunteers, program & class management skills. Bilingual Spanish a +. **Job Search #4.**

Adult Tutorial Education Center Coordinator

Direct, coordinate & supervise adult tutorial education site. BA req., M.Ed. +. Literacy training or experience, preferably with adult students. **Job Search #5.**

Assistant Education Center Coordinator

BA pref. Literacy training or exp. with adult students; organizational, communication, interpersonal skills; basic computer literacy. **Job Search #6.**

Center Assistant

GED or HS diploma req.; candidates w/ experience & commitment to earning GED considered. Strong organizational, communication, interpersonal skills. **Job Search #8.**

Family Literacy Program Assistant

GED or HS diploma req.; candidates w/ experience & commitment to earning GED considered. Exp. with children a +. **Job Search #9.**

Fiscal Assistant (PT)

Spreadsheets, fiscal records, general clerical. Knowl. of bookkeeping, good math skills. Exc. spreadsheet skills; MS Office. **Job Search # 13.**

Literacy Partners, 30 E. 33rd St., 6th fl., NY, NY 10016, fax 212.725.0414, jobsearch@literacypartners.org. Refer to Job Search #. ■



www.lacnyc.org

Some LAC information will be available only on our website for what we hope is a short time.

Visit us on the web for:

Referrals to literacy, GED, and ESOL programs in NYC

Announcements of winter & early spring professional development events

Job ads

Contact the LAC

General:

212.803.3300

Fax:

212.785.3685

TTY:

800.662.1220

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