



# LITERACY UPDATE

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Literacy Assistance Center

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## Reading Next—

### A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy

> Gina Biancarosa and Catherine E. Snow  
*Harvard Graduate School of Education*

*Note:* Three years ago, the LAC began to take a closer look at the literature on adolescent literacy. At the time, our interest was driven by two factors: the influx of older adolescents into adult literacy programs, and the number of GED teachers in programs targeted at 16–24 year-olds who were approaching us about innovative instructional strategies just as the state and country were adopting the new GED test. As we quickly learned, not only does the literature on adolescents address many of the same concerns that we have for our adult learners, much of it also promotes the very same content-rich, active learning approaches to literacy development that the LAC promotes in our work with adult educators. This executive summary of a report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York was designed for middle school and high school educators, but its “Fifteen Elements of Effective Adolescent Literacy Programs” can also serve as valuable guides for adult literacy programs.

Ira Yankowitz *Director of Professional Development/ NYC Regional Adult Education Network*

#### The Issue

American youth need strong literacy skills to succeed in school and in life. Students who do not acquire these skills find themselves at a serious disadvantage in social settings, as civic participants, and in the working world. Yet approximately eight million young people between fourth and twelfth grade struggle to read at grade level. Some 70 percent of older readers require some form of remediation. Very few of these older struggling readers need help to read the words on a page; their most common problem is that they are not able to comprehend what they read. Obviously, the challenge is not a small one.

Meeting the needs of struggling adolescents readers and writers is not simply an altruistic goal. The emotional, social, and public health costs of academic failure have been well documented, and the consequences of the national literacy crisis are too serious and far-reaching for us to ignore. Meeting these needs will require expanding the discussion of reading instruction from Reading First—acquiring grade-level reading skills by third grade—to Reading Next—acquiring the reading skills that can serve youth for a lifetime.

Fortunately, a survey of the literacy field shows that educators now have a powerful array of tools at their disposal. We even know with a fair degree of certitude which tools work well for which type of struggling reader. However, we do not yet possess an overall strategy for directing and coordinating remedial tools for the maximum benefit to students at risk of academic failure, nor do we know enough about how current programs and approaches can be most effectively combined.

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# LITERACY UPDATE

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foundations, corporations, and individuals.

## From Conception to Reality: 20th Anniversary Reflections

> Marian Lapsley Schwarz *Founder & Board Member*

I was fortunate to be in the right place—special assistant for education to Mayor Ed Koch—at the right time—1983, when the city received a whole lot of money from the Municipal Assistance Corporation. A totally unprecedented amount, \$35 million, was dedicated to adult literacy education. This windfall enabled a group of us who cared about literacy to radically expand literacy education in New York and to form the New York City Adult Literacy Initiative. This was a unique opportunity to build a literacy education system out of a set of disparate service providers.

I, along with Greg Farrell, Jacqueline Cook, and others, designed the LAC to be the “glue” holding this network together. The LAC’s job was to help programs share ideas, resources, and best practices and to enable them to become a coordinated force for improving services citywide. The LAC’s referral hotline, workshops, and clearinghouse, for example, give literacy practitioners access to powerful information that the entire community can share. When a national figure in the literacy field comes to town, the LAC draws the community together so all can benefit. When the latest “big thing” comes to literacy education and literacy funding—whether it’s technology or family literacy or health literacy—the LAC provides professional development and technical assistance to help programs, for example, use computers in instruction or re-tool themselves as family literacy providers.

Through 20 years of curricular turmoil in the field of education, I am proud that the LAC has kept our eyes on the ball. In the face of testing mania, we’ve remained focused on learner-centered, project-based instructional strategies. As language and logic—the basic tools of democracy—are perverted throughout the land, the LAC has remained committed to helping teachers help students to think critically and “talk straight” as they seek to improve their lives.

One of my original goals for the LAC was to help adult literacy develop a more unified and powerful voice by allowing the talented people who make up the field to be heard more widely. The LAC celebrates individual practitioners at the annual Literacy Recognition Award Ceremony, where their gifts and triumphs are trumpeted. This newsletter and the annual *Literacy Harvest* provide ways for practitioners to bring their wisdom and experience to a broad audience.

Another key reason for developing a more powerful voice for the community is effective advocacy for funding. ALIES—the LAC’s information management system—was originally developed to demonstrate the outcomes of literacy programs in a way that the city’s Office of Management and Budget could respect. Demonstrating outcomes in this way is basic to maintaining funding.

The adult literacy field needs to continue to develop its research base, including university research, so we can demonstrate to corporate and foundation, as well as government, funders that literacy is often the key to solving the social, economic, and human problems they care about. When the LAC had to go after private funding, it played an important role by helping foundations understand why they should fund adult literacy. We must continue this process. More appreciation of what the field is—and does—will lead to more funding.

Proud as I am of the contributions the LAC has made over the past 20 years, these are perilous times. We cannot afford to rest on our laurels. There is much work to be done. The board and staff of the LAC look forward to shouldering that work with you. ●

# SPOTlight

## Seeking Foundation Support

> Lisa Gale Van Brackle Deputy Director

*New York Public Library secured multi-year funding from Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and Carnegie Foundation to support staff development and outreach. While the projects are now over, both sources of funding provided a tutor training model that the library continues to use.*

*In the past, Union Settlement received multi-year funding from Barclay's Bank to support general operating expenses. Currently, this multi-service community organization (with an established development office) has funding from Verizon.*

*The Literacy Assistance Center receives funding from the Altman Foundation to support its health literacy initiative. Interestingly, adult literacy is not included among the funding priorities of this foundation.*

*Sunset Park Adult Learning Center (which participates in our health literacy initiative and therefore has indirectly benefited from Altman's largesse) receives funding from Independence Community Foundation. This hospital-based program is re-envisioning itself as a provider of comprehensive workforce development services.*

*Literacy Partners is funded entirely by the private sector. In addition to corporate grants, the organization raises funds through direct mail campaigns, individual donor contributions, and other private foundations.*

New York City is home to three dozen headquarters of Fortune 500 companies and more than two dozen private foundations that support adult education. This is a surprising and provocative find, especially at a time when government funding for literacy is once again up in the air.

Traditionally, literacy programs have not applied for private funding. The grants—which tend to be small, one-shot, one-year investments—are generally earmarked for enhancements, such as staff development and outreach, rather than core expenses, such as staffing. In addition, the process for obtaining the grants is often more subjective and particular than the process for obtaining public money. Finally, courting foundations and corporations can require interminable schmoozing—not only to obtain the grants, but also to keep them. Often the *return* does not seem worth the *investment* of our already meager staff resources.

That said, foundations and corporate giving programs are in the business of granting money to worthy causes. Properly cultivated relationships with grant makers have the potential to generate grants for our programs. This money is no more guaranteed than public revenue—

All foundations are not created equal. In the private realm, there are five different vehicles of charitable contributions:

- > **Community foundations** are made up of funds from an assortment of donors. Endowments—or trusts—are independently administered to improve a particular community.
- > **Company-sponsored foundations** derive their assets from the contributions of a corporate parent; however, they are legally distinct entities from the corporation.
- > **Corporate giving programs** exist within a corporation, providing charitable funding to organizations. Unlike company-sponsored foundations, they are not separate legal entities. They also have less stringent reporting obligations.
- > **Independent foundations**, also known as family foundations, are created by the wealthy to manage grant making.
- > **Operating foundations** direct grant making to support a specific program or effort and infrequently accept unsolicited proposals.

but it's also no less secure. Additionally, diversifying revenue leaves programs slightly less vulnerable in times when the sitting administration—be it federal, state, or city—does not support literacy.

Going after private funding isn't for everyone. Almost without exception, the organizations that secure funding from the private sector have the necessary infrastructure—sufficient funds and staff—to support the development process. Smaller organizations with connections to foundations, however, should also consider pursuing the venture.

### Getting Started

Private grants cannot—and *should not*—replace public funding. However, programs with the capacity—or the connections—should consider supplementing their budgets with private funds. Here are some starting steps:

#### 1. Identify Foundations

> Talk with your board—and anyone else you can think of—to identify existing connections to private money. Such connections can make the arduous process of soliciting private grants worth the effort.

> Approach corporate “outposts” such as banks, retail stores, and supermarkets in your community to learn about discretionary or corporate giving programs for which you might be eligible.

#### 2. Engage in Research

> Visit the Foundation Center, [www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org), to develop a prospect list and to get pointers on how to prepare grants.

> Obtain “giving guidelines” and annual reports of the foundations you intend to pursue. Review foundation giving histories, ranges, and interests to help you determine your pitch.

#### 3. Develop Your Pitch

> Develop a basic “case statement” that clearly outlines your program's needs. Real stories are extremely effective in painting a portrait of your organization's work.

> Build on your case statement by developing a customized proposal for each funding prospect, including a budget that details the size of your project and how the requested funds will be used.

#### 4. Cultivate Relationships

> If you receive funds, keep in touch with the program officer and comply with the reporting schedule. Program officers are eager to learn how things are going and even more interested in helping you think things through if the project goes astray.

> If you don't get a grant, try to contact someone at the foundation to find out why. Having that information will help you for the next application, either to that foundation or to others on your prospect list.

The LAC is holding a workshop on May 12 (see Calendar on page 6) to explore the issue of private funding more fully. Foundation representatives will be on hand to discuss what attracts their support. More importantly, the session will help to elucidate for literacy programs and foundations alike the inner workings of the other's grant activities, providing each with a greater understanding of the potential of such partnerships.

# RESOURCES >> Poverty, Literacy, and Invisibility

> Eric Rosenbaum *Director of Staff Development, BEGIN Managed Programs*

## The Working Poor: Invisible In America

By David K. Shipler

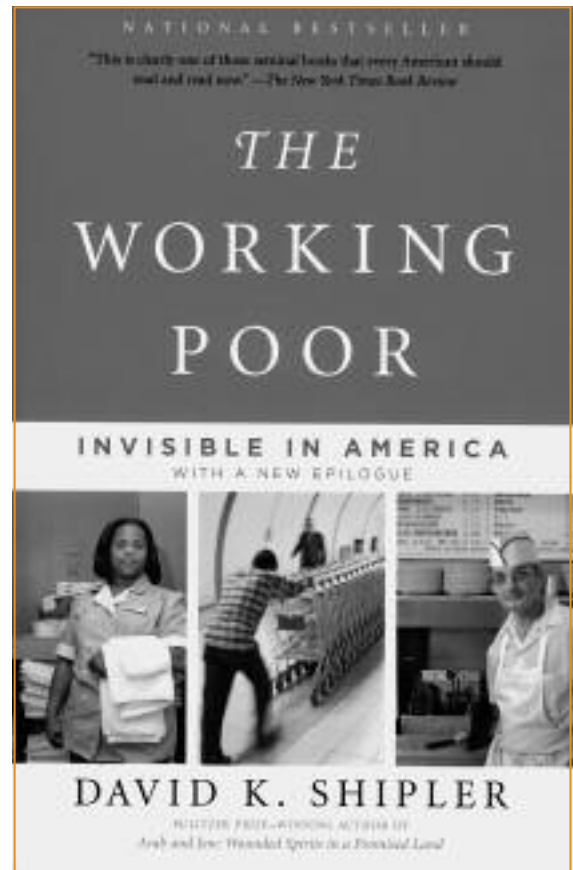
Vintage Books, 2005

No matter where adult literacy practitioners find ourselves on the continuum from destitution to prosperity, the impoverished can hardly be invisible to us. The inextricable link between poverty and literacy brings our worlds together on a daily basis. So we are clearly not the target audience for *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*, Pulitzer Prize winner David Shipler's account of what happens in an era when holding a low-wage job entitles the bearer to nothing beyond the dignity that is supposed to be the virtuous product of personal responsibility.

The intended reader is the honest, unpolarized citizen Shipler presumes to still exist in the American public. This reader is a person of goodwill and some means who, in our era of compassionate conservatism, might be surprised—or even shocked—at the extent to which work at the low end of the wage scale has been uncoupled from hope for upward mobility. In the current climate of social discourse, even to imagine an audience occupying a middle ground unsaturated by the ubiquitous pre-fabricated notions of experts and propagandists is bold—or perhaps naïve. When one lane has a speed limit of a hundred miles per hour and the other has a speed limit of ten, finding a middle-of-the-road perspective is a dizzying task. Entering the debits and credits on Shipler's balance sheet of personal flaws and social hypocrisy, readers might sum up their experience by doubting whether the final, not-quite-balanced tabulation really adds up.

If we can get past these misgivings, however, we might want to consider the extent to which the invisibility of the working poor is equivalent to the invisibility of the adult literacy field. The Bush administration's proposed decimation of literacy classes is the logical extension of a national value system in which the myth of The American Dream has been supplanted by the myth of a united people hunkering down to defeat The Terrorist Menace. What can we gain from confronting Shipler's stories of how the "pile up" of catastrophes resulting from seeming nuisances—no babysitter is available for a sick child, a car breaks down, a shift changes at a job—stacks the cards against all but the most fortunate of the poor?

I see the potential for this book to sharpen our focus on the role of literacy programs in the solution, starting with the recognition that invisibility can be as much the result of over-familiarity as of unfamiliarity. We might question whether we, too, have been perpetuating our students' invisibility. By compartmentalizing the relationship, limiting our obligation to doing what comes easily, we run the risk of seeing the *student*, but not the whole person. The few bright notes in the book are instances in which someone unexpectedly cared enough to help individuals who had come to see themselves as unimportant. We in the literacy community are well positioned to offer such interventions.



*The Working Poor* can also be a rich source of ideas for curricula. We can even use or adapt it as a text. One significant direction in which the book points is re-evaluation of math in the classroom. Can we afford to accept the rampant math phobia in the profession that causes us either to ignore math or to teach it in the very same way that didn't work for most of us? We can learn together with our students and, in the process, explore the consequences of an outdated concept of the poverty line based solely on food expenses. We can calculate the gains and losses from the numbers rackets of Rapid Refunds and unconscionable profit margins. Problem solving can take its rightful place as a habit of mind necessary to counter the simplistic solutions that have become the coin of the realm.

If the situation of the working poor makes us angry, what can we do? We can accept that literacy cannot solve all of our students' life problems in a society not constructed with the poor in mind. We can integrate ourselves into networks whose goal is to promote the well being of the "invisible" in order to pursue Shipler's "series of interlocking solutions" that provide personalized answers to complex situations. With delicacy, with tolerance toward those who are uncomfortable with viewing life through a political lens, and with vigilance against the temptation to impose our own values, we can open avenues for exploration of the fundamental reality of political power. Until the impoverished, together with those who believe society defines itself by the opportunities it extends to the have-nots, become more visible, the fundamental situation of the poor—working or otherwise—is only going to get worse. ●

# 20<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL LITERACY RECOGNITION CEREMONY

The Board of Directors of the Literacy Assistance Center invites you to join us for the 20th Annual Literacy Recognition Award Ceremony. Sharon Robinson, Education Consultant for Major League Baseball and author of *Promises to Keep: How Jackie Robinson Changed America*, will be the keynote speaker. The Literacy Recognition Award Ceremony is sponsored by The Bookbinders' Guild of New York and by Scholastic, Inc.

THURSDAY, MAY 19  
9:30 AM–12:30 PM

SCHOLASTIC, INC., AUDITORIUM  
557 Broadway, 2nd floor  
(between Prince and Spring Sts.)

Registration and breakfast reception at 9:30 am  
Award ceremony at 10 am  
RSVP is essential! Please call 212.803.3323 to reserve your space.

## Recognition Award Recipients

**James Bell** *Volunteer Tutor*  
Brooklyn Public Library  
Bedford Learning Center

**Charles Brover** *Staff Developer*  
HRA-BEGIN Managed Programs

**Bruce Carmel** *Deputy Executive Director  
of Educational Services*  
Turning Point

**Eileen Duffell** *Pre-GED/GED Teacher*  
NYC Department of Education  
Office of Adult & Continuing Education, School 4

**Mary Ann Gottlieb** *ESOL Teacher*  
Catholic Charities of Brooklyn and Queens  
Flowers with Care

**Osmara Lopez** *Assistant Director*  
City University of New York  
Bronx Community College Literacy Program

**Stephen Meyerson** *BE/GED Instructor*  
NYC Department of Education  
Mid-Manhattan Adult Learning Center

**Elaine Sohn** *ESOL Instructor*  
City University of New York  
NYC College of Technology Adult Learning Center

## ESOL Family Literacy Conference

The Queens Borough Public Library (QPBL) and the LAC are sponsoring an ESOL family literacy conference, "Literacy for the Generations," on Saturday, June 4, 10 am–3:30 pm. Supported by the Altman Foundation and the NYS Education Department, the conference will take place at the QPBL Flushing Branch, 41-17 Main Street. Designed for educators in both public and privately funded family literacy programs throughout the city, the conference will emphasize approaches to ESOL family literacy that accommodate immigrant families in New York City. For more information or to register, email [familylit@lacnyc.org](mailto:familylit@lacnyc.org).

## NYC ABE Conference

The New York City Consortium for Adult Basic Education is holding its annual ABE conference on Saturday, May 7, from 8 am–4 pm, at Fashion Industries High School, 225 West 24th Street (between 7th and 8th Avenues). Entitled "Learner Needs, Limited Resources, Positive Outcomes," the conference will feature a plenary session discussion, "The Fight for Adult Literacy Education"; panel discussions on family literacy and immigrant rights and support services; and innovative workshops in ESOL, ABE, GED, BENL, family literacy, health literacy, and literacy through the arts programs. For more information, contact Carolyn Fernando, 212.243.5458.

## The Adult Literacy Education Wiki

The Adult Literacy Education (ALE) Wiki is a free, online environment for practitioners, researchers, adult learners, and others who are interested in the connections among research, professional knowledge, and practice in adult basic education, adult secondary education, and English language learning. Like other wikis, ALE Wiki is a text environment where users can not only read what others have written, but also easily contribute their own knowledge, opinions, and observations. The ALE Wiki includes discussions and resources on a number of topics ranging from adult basic literacy to assessment, from workplace education to public policy. Resources include links to relevant research, bibliographies, glossaries. To visit the site, go to [www.wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://www.wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Main_Page).

## CONFERENCES

### May

**54th Annual NYACCE Spring Conference**  
*On the Right Track: Leading the Way  
in Lifelong Learning*  
New York Association for Continuing/  
Community Education  
May 15–17, Saratoga Springs, NY  
[www.nyacce.org/](http://www.nyacce.org/)

### June

**2005 Adult Education Research Conference**  
Adult Education Research Conference  
June 3–5, Athens, GA  
[www.gactr.uga.edu/conferences/2005/Jun/02/aerc.phtml](http://www.gactr.uga.edu/conferences/2005/Jun/02/aerc.phtml)

**Adult Education in Family Literacy:  
ABE Reading Instruction**  
National Center for Family Literacy  
June 14–16, Louisville, KY  
502.584.1133 x121 or  
[www.familit.org/Training/adulted.cfm](http://www.familit.org/Training/adulted.cfm)

**Service Learning: Creating Community  
and Developing Citizens**  
U.S. Department of Education  
June 21, 8–9 pm, Live Satellite Broadcast  
<http://registerevent.ed.gov/>

**TESOL Academy 2005**  
Teachers of English to Speakers of Other  
Languages, Inc. (TESOL)  
June 24–25, Washington, DC  
[www.tesol.org/](http://www.tesol.org/)

### July

**Workforce Innovations 2005**  
U.S. Department of Labor and the American  
Society for Training and Development (ASTD)  
July 11–13, Philadelphia, PA  
[www.workforceinnovations.org/](http://www.workforceinnovations.org/)

**National Institutes in Reading Apprenticeship**  
Strategic Literacy Initiative at WestEd  
July 24–29, Baltimore, MD  
[www.wested.org/stratlit/whatsNew/new.shtml](http://www.wested.org/stratlit/whatsNew/new.shtml)

### August

**21st Annual Conference on Distance Teaching  
and Learning**  
University of Wisconsin, Madison  
August 3–5, Madison, WI  
[www.uwex.edu/disted/conference](http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference)

## May 6

### Mathematical Exploration and Inquiry in the Pre-GED and GED Classroom

This four-session series is designed to introduce math instructors to methods and resources that will enable them to better facilitate instruction around the four major strands of the new GED math test: Number, Data, Geometry, and Algebra.

#### Session 3: Geometry

Friday, May 6, 1–5 pm

**Presenters:** Charlie Brover and Solange Farina, NYC Math Exchange Group

Explore a series of engaging math problems appropriate for pre-GED and GED classes. Many of these problems will be drawn from actual math curricula, including that currently used by the NYC Department of Education, funded by the National Science Foundation. Develop your own problem-solving strategies, and learn how to generate a problem-solving culture in your classroom.

This is an encore presentation of last year's series designed for those who have not already participated.

Session 4 will be held on June 3. Attendance at all four sessions is not required; however, space is limited. Registration is essential.

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

## May 11

### BEST Plus Test Administrator Training

Wednesday, May 11, 9:30 am–4:30 pm

**Facilitators:** Mariann Fedele and Alecia D'Angelo

Become a certified BEST Plus administrator. Practice administering the print- and computer-based versions of the test, and familiarize yourself with the scoring rubric. Participants will receive a test administrator guide and practice CDs.

This training will also be held on May 20. Please attend only one session.

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

## May 12

### Seeking Foundation Funding

Thursday, May 12, 9 am–noon

**Facilitator:** Lisa Gale Van Brackle

Learn from experts how to solicit and secure funding from private grant makers. Recognizing the challenges of pursuing private funding, representatives will candidly discuss how to approach foundations and will share details on the process of securing funding for adult literacy programs. Consultants and advisers, including Sara Collins from the Foundation Center and Donna Panton, board member of the Alliance for Nonprofit Governance and founder of Rillbrook Consulting, will offer strategies for how to pitch literacy to private funders. Foundation representatives, including Anne Lawrence from the Bowne Foundation, Pam Haas from IBM, and Hope Harley from Verizon, will discuss their grant-making processes. This workshop is designed for program managers, grant writers, development directors, and individuals involved in the process of securing resources for literacy programs.

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

## May 13

### Instructional Methods for the Adult Literacy Classroom

Are you interested in using student-centered practices in the classroom? Are you looking for new ways to encourage student participation? Designed for ESOL, GED, and ABE instructors, this hands-on, activity-oriented series introduces various instructional methodologies for the adult literacy classroom.

#### Session 4: Using Authentic Materials in the ESOL Classroom

Friday, May 13, 9:30 am–4 pm

**Facilitator:** Alecia D'Angelo

From a child's report card to an electric bill, a job application to the evening news, authentic materials are the various texts we all encounter in our everyday lives. Research shows that using these kinds of materials in ESOL classes increases student motivation. In this interactive workshop, participants will examine reasons for using authentic texts in the classroom, explore ways of introducing and teaching with these texts through hands-on lesson planning, and discuss how they can be used to connect reading and content area instruction.

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

## May 17

### ALIES Data Entry

Tuesday, May 17, 9 am–4 pm

**Facilitator:** Olga Gazman

This newly formatted one-day training provides a comprehensive introduction to the ALIES data entry process. New data entry users, as well as those who need a refresher, are invited to attend.

**RSVP:** ALIES Support at 212.803.3357 or [aliessupport@lacnyc.org](mailto:aliessupport@lacnyc.org).

## May 17 & 18

### Teaching Adults with Learning Disabilities

Tuesday, May 17, 9:30 am–4:30 pm

Wednesday, May 18, 9:30 am–4:30 pm

**Presenters:** Patti White and Klaus Neu, Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center

This interactive training focuses on instructional strategies and accommodations for adults with learning disabilities in ABE classes. These methods and materials can enhance all students' ability to process and retain information, not only those who have been identified as learning disabled. Contents include learning disabilities awareness issues and the use of hands-on materials and resources. Learn strategies for teaching metacognitive skills, the building blocks for cognitive skills that are lacking in many adults with learning disabilities. The workshop will also focus on the use of instructional manipulatives for teaching reading, writing, and math concepts.

This is an encore of last year's training, with an additional assistive technology component. Attendance at both sessions is required.

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

## May 20

### BEST Plus Test Administrator Training

Friday, May 20, 9:30 am–4:30 pm

**Facilitators:** Mariann Fedele and Alecia D'Angelo

See May 11 for description.

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

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

## May 24

### **ALIES Management Reports**

Tuesday, May 24, 9:30 am–1:30 pm

**Facilitator:** Olga Gazman

In this hands-on exploration of the ALIES reports, learn how to use ALIES data for program management and improvement. Exciting new reports from ALIES Release 5.3—including the ability to disaggregate NRS data—will be featured. Highlights include data management reports for student and class information, ad-hoc reports, NRS data check reports, turnaround documents, and mailing labels. This workshop is designed for experienced ALIES users.

**RSVP:** ALIES Support at 212.803.3357 or [aliessupport@lacnyc.org](mailto:aliessupport@lacnyc.org).

## May 27

### **Popular Education Study Circle**

Friday, May 27, 2–4:30 pm

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

This series explores practical approaches for teaching adults to develop an awareness of social justice issues, both in and out of the classroom. Read materials on popular education and discuss how to apply those theories in the classroom.

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

## June 3

### **Mathematical Exploration and Inquiry in the Pre-GED and GED Classroom**

**Session 4: Algebra**

Friday, June 3, 1–5 pm

**Presenters:** Charlie Brover and Solange Farina, NYC Math Exchange Group

See May 6 for description.

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

## June 8

### **Instructional Methods for the Adult Literacy Classroom**

See May 13 for series description.

**Session 5: How We Are Smart, Not How Smart We Are: Multiple Intelligences in Adult Education**

Wednesday, June 8, 10:30 am–5 pm

**Facilitator:** Silja Kallenbach, New England Literacy Resource Center, World Education

This workshop will introduce Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory and the Adult Multiple Intelligence (AMI) study, the first systematic MI-based research and development project in adult literacy education. Learn about and participate in practical applications of MI theory for the ESOL, ABE, and GED classroom. Develop your own MI-based lessons and reflect on the possibilities and barriers for using MI-based activities in the classroom. Each participant will receive a packet of handouts, including sample lessons from the AMI study.

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

## June 10

### **ESOL Teacher Share**

Friday, June 10, 2–4:30 pm

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

Explore and discuss appropriate methods for teaching English language learners. Share promising practices from your own classrooms, and receive feedback from your colleagues. Designed for ESOL instructors, the ESOL Teacher Share is an opportunity for you to develop a network that you can go to for professional advice and support.

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

## June 16

### **ALIES Data Entry**

Thursday, June 16, 9 am–4 pm

**Facilitator:** Olga Gazman

See May 17 for description.

**RSVP:** ALIES Support at 212.803.3357 or [aliessupport@lacnyc.org](mailto:aliessupport@lacnyc.org).

## June 17

### **Popular Education Study Circle**

Friday, June 17, 2–4:30 pm

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

See May 27 for description.

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

## July 14

### **Troubleshooting NRS Reports with ALIES**

Thursday, July 14, 9 am–1 pm

**Facilitator:** Olga Gazman

Learn how to apply ALIES data check reports to troubleshoot NRS data. Explore the program evaluation report, as well as the new NRS disaggregate data interface. Walk through a step-by-step process for determining “why this student does not show up on my report.” Designed for ALIES users responsible for submitting NRS data, this workshop will also be held on July 26 and August 3. Please attend only one session.

**RSVP:** ALIES Support at 212.803.3357 or [aliessupport@lacnyc.org](mailto:aliessupport@lacnyc.org).

## July 26

### **Troubleshooting NRS Reports with ALIES**

Tuesday, July 26, 9 am–1 pm

**Facilitator:** Olga Gazman

See July 14 for description.

**RSVP:** ALIES Support at 212.803.3357 or [aliessupport@lacnyc.org](mailto:aliessupport@lacnyc.org).

## August 3

### **Troubleshooting NRS Reports with ALIES**

Wednesday, August 3, 9 am–1 pm

**Facilitator:** Olga Gazman

See July 14 for description.

**RSVP:** ALIES Support at 212.803.3357 or [aliessupport@lacnyc.org](mailto:aliessupport@lacnyc.org).

# NYC RAEN Advisory Board

The LAC has selected the following local practitioners to serve on the New York City Regional Adult Education Network (NYC RAEN) advisory board. Funded by the New York State Education Department (SED) Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development, the NYC RAEN's primary functions are to:

- > Provide professional development and technical assistance to SED-funded adult literacy, family literacy, and EL-Civics programs
- > Facilitate initiatives that better align adult literacy education with higher education, K-12, and the workforce development system

The primary responsibilities of the NYC RAEN advisory board will be to identify local professional development and technical assistance needs, review the NYC RAEN's annual workplan, and assess the success of the NYC RAEN in addressing local needs. If you have any questions about the NYC RAEN or the advisory board, please contact Ira Yankwitt, director of professional development/NYC Regional Adult Education Network, at 212.803.3356 or [iray@lacnyc.org](mailto:iray@lacnyc.org).

**Phyllis Berman** *Director*  
Riverside Language Program

**David Bloomfield** *Chair*  
Graduate Program in Educational Leadership,  
Brooklyn College, CUNY; LAC Board Member

**Victoria Cardone** *ESOL Project Manager*  
Brooklyn Public Library

**Mariann Fedele** *Coordinator of Professional Development*  
LAC (Ex-Officio)

**David Greene** *ABE Instructor*  
NYC Department of Education, Office of Adult  
and Continuing Education

**Michael Hunter** *Family Literacy Program Director/*  
*ESOL Teacher*  
University Settlement

**Jay Klokker** *ESOL/ABE Instructor*  
NYC Technical College

**Suma Kurien** *Director*  
Center for Immigrant Education and Training,  
LaGuardia Community College

**Jeanne Lambert** *ESOL Program Coordinator/Instructor*  
Queens Civics Collaboration of CUNY,  
Queensborough Community College

**Carol Lummm** *Program Specialist*  
1199 Training and Upgrading Fund

**Calvin Miles** *Co-Chair*  
Grassroots Literacy Coalition

**Yvonne Neal** *Instructional Facilitator*  
Mid-Manhattan Adult Learning Center,  
NYC Department of Education, Office of Adult  
and Continuing Education

**Leslee Oppenheim** *Director of Literacy Programs*  
City University of New York

**Jane Purcell** *Tutor*  
St. Agnes Center for Reading and Writing,  
New York Public Library

**Tim Reedy** *ESOL/Citizenship Teacher*  
Forest Hills Community House

**Eric Rosenbaum** *Director of Staff Development*  
HRA-BEGIN Managed Programs;  
*ESOL Instructor*, Bronx Community College

**Gina Sclafani** *ESOL/Family Literacy Instructor*  
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation

**Bona Soanes** *Center Manager*  
Elmhurst Adult Learning Center, Queens Borough  
Public Library

**Eric Thomas** *GED Instructor*  
East Side House

**Wendy Wen** *ESOL Instructor*  
NYC Department of Education, Office of Adult  
and Continuing Education

**Carolyn Wright** *ABE Teacher*  
Carroll Gardens Neighborhood Women

**Ira Yankwitt** *Director*  
NYC Regional Adult Education Network, LAC

## LAC Professional Development Center Open Hours

Every Monday in May, 1-5 pm  
(except Memorial Day, May 30)

Alternate Mondays, June-August:  
June 13, 27; July 11, 25; August 8, 22

### Computer Learning Center

Visit our 16-station Internet-connected 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](mailto:mariannf@lacnyc.org).

### Dan Rabideau Clearinghouse

Explore the city's largest collection of materials for adult literacy education. The collection of books, journals, and audiovisual materials encompasses professional development materials as well as curriculum and reading materials for ESOL, ABE, and GED learners. For information, contact Dr. Winston Lawrence, 212.803.3326 or [winstonl@lacnyc.org](mailto:winstonl@lacnyc.org).

### Offices for Rent

The LAC has two offices for rent at 32 Broadway, each approximately 15 feet by 30 feet, with direct access to the elevator lobby. Take advantage of all LAC facilities. For information, contact Craig Tozzo at [craigt@lacnyc.org](mailto:craigt@lacnyc.org).

## Reading Next *continued*

### The Approach

To help address this problem, a panel of five nationally known and respected educational researchers met in spring 2004 with representatives of Carnegie Corporation of New York and Alliance for Excellent Education to draw up a set of recommendations of how to meet the needs of our eight million struggling readers while simultaneously envisioning a way to propel the field forward. The resulting paper was reviewed and augmented by the Adolescent Literacy Funders Forum (ALFF) at its 2004 annual meeting. Although this report originally was targeted to the funding community, it offers information that will also prove invaluable to others, including researchers, policymakers, and educators.

### The Recommendations

#### The Fifteen Elements of Effective Adolescent Literacy Programs

This Report delineates fifteen elements aimed at improving middle and high school literacy achievement right now.

1. Direct, explicit comprehensive instruction, which is instruction in the strategies and processes that proficient readers use to understand what they read, including summarizing, keeping track of one's own understanding and a host of other practices
2. Effective instructional principles embedded in content, including language arts teachers using content-area texts and content-area teachers providing instruction and practice in reading and writing skills specific to their subject area
3. Motivation and self-directed learning, which includes building motivation to read and learn and providing students with the instruction and supports needed for independent learning tasks they will face after graduation
4. Text-based collaborative learning, which involves students interacting with one another around a variety of texts
5. Strategic tutoring, which provides students with intense individualized reading, writing, and content instruction as needed
6. Diverse texts, which are texts at a variety of difficulty levels and on a variety of topics
7. Intensive writing, including instruction connected to the kinds of writing tasks students will have to perform well in high school and beyond
8. A technology component, which includes technology as a tool for and a topic of literacy instruction
9. Ongoing formative assessment of students, which is informal, often daily assessment of how students are progressing under current instructional practices
10. Extended time for literacy, which includes approximately two to four hours of literacy instruction and practice that takes place in language arts and content-area classes
11. Professional development that is both long term and ongoing

12. Ongoing summative assessment of students and program, which is more formal and provides data that are reported for accountability and research purposes

13. Teacher teams, which are interdisciplinary teams that meet regularly to discuss students and align instruction

14. Leadership, which can come from principals and teachers who have a solid understanding of how to teach reading and writing to the full array of students present in schools

15. A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program, which is interdisciplinary and interdepartmental and may even coordinate with out-of-school organizations and the local community

Since implementation of only one or two of these elements is unlikely to improve the achievement of many students, this report recommends that practitioners and program designers flexibly try out various combinations in search of the most effective overall program. Furthermore, any combination should include three specific elements: professional development, formative assessment, and summative assessment. No literacy program targeted at older readers is likely to cause significant improvements without these elements, because of their importance to ensuring instructional effectiveness and measuring effects. However, they should not be seen as sufficient in themselves to address the wide range of problems experienced by older struggling readers; rather, they act as a foundation for instructional innovations.

#### Balance Purposes

This report stresses that improving the literacy achievement of today's and tomorrow's youth requires keeping action balanced with research. The report outlines a balanced vision for effecting immediate change for current students and building the literacy field's knowledge base.

Stakeholders should select programs and interventions according to the inclusion or exclusion of the fifteen elements—thereby creating a planned variation—and evaluate the implementation using a common process to allow for comparisons across programs. In line with the recommendation, outcomes and procedures for evaluation are detailed to promote cross-program comparisons. By collecting data according to the recommended design, public and private funders, districts, and researchers will be able to disaggregate students and describe the different sources of their difficulty and the differentiated effects of programs and program components. Such disaggregation will provide a rich base for experimental research.

#### The Relevance

We believe that if the funding, research, policymaking, and education communities embrace these recommendations, the literacy field will make significant strides toward the goal of meeting the needs of all students in our society, while also strengthening our understanding of exactly what works, when, and for whom. We will thereby strengthen the chances for striving readers to graduate from high school as strong, independent learners prepared to take on the multiple challenges of life in a global economy. ●

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# A Healthy Approach to Literacy

## Responding to Students' Health Care Needs

> Tilla Elahi *ESOL Instructor, OACE, Mid-Manhattan Adult Learning Center*

Do you need to be well-versed in obscure medical terminology or have a biology background to engage in health literacy instruction? No. Health literacy instruction is not about imparting expert knowledge; it's about teaching basic literacy skills—reading, writing, speaking, listening comprehension, problem solving, and numeracy—only teaching them through the context of health-related content and health care situations.

The New York City Health Literacy Initiative (NYCHLI) was launched in the fall of 2003 to enhance the health literacy of low-income and immigrant New Yorkers enrolled in literacy programs. Directed by the LAC, and using materials developed by Dr. Rima Rudd of the Harvard School of Public Health, the NYCHLI has been holding a series of study circles designed to train educators to create and integrate health literacy into their curriculums. The study circles focus on three major themes: helping students navigating the healthcare system, managing chronic diseases, and participating in preventative activities to improve one's health.

### Needs Assessment

What health-related information do your students find troublesome? What specific barriers have they faced? What health-related issues do they want to learn more about? Performing a needs assessment to find out what topic your students are interested in exploring is an essential first step of health literacy instruction. This can be done through brainstorming sessions or journal writing.

In my ESOL Clerical Pre-Vocational class, I paired students and asked them to think about questions they have—or problems they've encountered—relating to health care in the U.S. They wrote down questions and problems on sticky notes, and discussed the issues with their partners. Students then placed the sticky notes on the blackboard and read the comments aloud. As a class, we reviewed the issues mentioned. We discussed how health care differs in their countries of origin and created a chart on newsprint.

Next, I distributed a lesson study circle participants received at our first session, which consisted of a reading about a young mother who needed to take a test at a hospital. The problems she encountered—feeling nervous about hospital settings, not knowing how to travel there, not being able to read the signs in the hospital to find the correct room, not understanding why she had to fill out so many forms—fostered further discussion among my students. As we explored the various barriers people face in health care settings, students had an opportunity to practice their skills in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

### Health Literacy Lesson Plans

Part of the health literacy study circles involved creating our own lessons based on a particular navigation task. I created a lesson on understanding rights and responsibilities.

I began the lesson by asking learners to think of one important right in which they thought all patients should have. I wrote their responses on the blackboard. I then posted a large-print, simplified version of a patient bill of rights on the board and handed out printed copies. Students then read each right. I went over new vocabulary words making sure the students understood each right. Students then worked in pairs on vocabulary exercises, including a crossword puzzle I had developed.

I then posted cards with specific rights onto the board. I shared a scenario about a woman who had been neglected in the hospital and asked students which of the rights were violated. I then had students form into groups of three or four. Each group selected one of the cards and came up with an incident where the right was violated. After sharing the stories, students selected an incident and created a dialogue based on the incident. Later, they performed the dialogues.

Diana Raissis, a colleague at Mid-Manhattan Adult Learning Center, developed a lesson plan on insurance policies, which I adapted slightly and used with my students. I began the lesson, entitled "Exploring Health Plans," by surveying my students to find out who had health insurance, what kind of health insurance they had, and whether or not people in their country of origin had health insurance. Then, using a free managed care pamphlet that I ordered online, we read about the differences between managed care programs and traditional health insurance policies. As the lesson progressed, students were given an opportunity to practice filling out health insurance charts and forms, to evaluate insurance policies, and to compare and contrast various health care options, all the while developing their English literacy skills.

Health literacy engages students immediately. It teaches them vital skills and at the same time accelerates their general literacy. ●

## Legislative Update

Since the announcement of the president's proposed budget, with its drastic cuts in adult education funding, the LAC has been working with local literacy leaders to keep the field abreast of advocacy efforts and breaking developments. The best source of current information is our website, [www.lacnyc.org](http://www.lacnyc.org), where we post frequent updates on policy issues along with a wide range of advocacy tools. When urgent action is needed, we post the need and send emails to our extensive list of contacts urging you to be in touch with the appropriate officials. Here is what we know about the status of federal WIA and budget legislation as of early April when this publication goes to press.

**Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Reauthorization** H.R. 27, the Job Training Improvement Act of 2005 (the House of Representative's proposed new name for WIA), was passed by the House on March 2. The bill passed without the inclusion of a "WIA Plus Consolidation Block Grant," which could have had dire consequences for adult literacy. This was a great victory for the field.

S. 9, the Lifetime of Education Opportunities Act of 2005 (the Senate's proposed new name for

WIA), was introduced on January 24. According to staff members on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee, a bill should be drafted and reported out of committee by early May.

### Federal Budget

The House and Senate both passed their 2006 budget resolutions on March 17. These bills establish the overall spending caps that are taken into consideration by the House and Senate appropriations committees when they draft the legislation that allocates specific funds to specific programs, such as adult literacy education. The Senate's bill included Senator Kennedy's amendment to add \$5.5 billion dollars to the budget for education, including \$2.3 billion for job training, adult literacy, and vocational education. The Kennedy amendment passed by a vote of 51-49; we owe a special thanks to our colleagues in Ohio, Maine, Rhode Island, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania who convinced Republican Senators De Wine, Collins, Snowe, Chafee, Coleman, and Specter to support the amendment. Unfortunately, a similar amendment put forth by Representative Obey, which would have restored adult education funding to the House budget bill, was defeated by a vote of 242-180.

The two budget resolutions must now go to a conference committee to reconcile the competing House and Senate versions. Then the focus will shift to the House and Senate appropriations committees, which are responsible for drafting the bills that will ultimately determine the funding level for adult literacy education. Thus, the passage of the Kennedy amendment does not guarantee additional funding, but the vote does put the Senate on record that education in general and adult education in particular is a higher priority for them than it is in the President's budget.

### Federal Appropriations

The House and Senate appropriations committees began hearings on the FY 2006 budget in March. The appropriations committees are responsible for actually writing the 13 large spending bills that set the funding levels for federal programs. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings testified before the House and Senate subcommittees, and Bob Bickerton, State Director of Adult Education of Massachusetts, and Chair of the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education, was slated to testify before the House Appropriations Committee in April. ●

## Immigrant Family Literacy Alliance



At the second Immigrant Family Literacy Alliance (IFLA) summit on March 9, Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott (left) announced that the city has committed \$1.8 million dollars to support immigrant family literacy programs through the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). DYCD Commissioner Jeanne Mullgrav and Guillermo Linares, commissioner of the Office of Immigrant Affairs, also participated in the summit.



Jack Rosenthal of the New York Times Company Foundation has hosted both IFLA summits. He is joined here by Elyse Barbell Rudolph of the LAC. The Times Company Foundation, the LAC, DYCD, and the Altman Foundation are spearheading the formation of IFLA. The alliance has committed to raising 50 cents of private funding for every dollar of city money, bringing the total commitment for immigrant family literacy to almost \$3 million.



Nina Mogilnik of the Altman Foundation and Azadeh Khalili of the Office of Immigrant Affairs (third and fourth from left) co-facilitated one of three roundtable discussions at the March 9 IFLA summit. About 70 leaders from city departments, foundations, corporations, and nonprofits participated. ●

# That Was Then, This Is Now

**Then** The bad news: The Reagan Administration's proposed budget cuts for the Department of Education for fiscal year 1986 total \$2 billion. . . . Now the good news. . . . There will be a priority placed on literacy in the Youth Bureau's RFP for fiscal year 1987 funding.

Unsigned article "Funding/Legislation,"  
*Information Update* vol. 1, no. 4, July 1985

**Now** We're having our own good news/bad news joke this year, though nobody's laughing. The Bush administration's 2005 budget not only proposes deep cuts in adult education but also reduces overall Department of Education spending. In the meantime, however, on the local level, the city has earmarked \$1.8 million for immigrant family literacy (see page 11). Often it seems like the literacy field is continually fighting for our lives, buffeted by changes over which we have little control, surviving the crisis that seems certain to swamp us only because a lifeboat appears from an unexpected direction.

This kind of hand-to-mouth existence does at least give us a great deal of empathy for the challenges our students face. And we can take a lesson from them: The ones who succeed in spite of the many barriers they face do so because they are steadfastly determined to reach their goals.

Jan Gallagher, Director of Communications

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