

## Safety for teachers, tutors, supervisors, case managers, and front-line office staff

By Kim McConnaughey, regional coordinator of adult education, RESA VI

Do you deal with or work with difficult individuals? Do these individuals come from troubled backgrounds and deal with many issues? Some may be high school dropouts, unemployed, single parents, depressed, substance abusers, sex offenders. Many have mental, physical, and/or learning disabilities. They may be anxious, angry, frustrated.....and coming to you for assistance!

Are you a teacher, tutor, case manager, supervisor, or front-line staff member who wants to gain a better understanding of how to ensure the safety, security, welfare, and care of your students/clients as well as yourself?

For more than 25 years, the Crisis Prevention Institute has supported the work of professionals who work with challenging or potentially violent individuals by providing a relevant, practical behavior management program. It's called the *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® training program, and more than 5 million professionals—spanning from facility administrators to front-line mental health providers to bus drivers—have participated in this program to learn how to resolve conflict at the earliest possible stage. (source: <http://www.crisisprevention.com>)

On May 11, 2006, representatives from adult basic education (ABE), SPOKES, WorkForce WV Career Centers, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services attended a “non-violent crisis intervention” training session at RESA VI in Wheeling, WV.

The session was conducted by Mr. Scott Martin, director of special education at RESA VI, who is a certified trainer in non-violent crisis intervention. Participants learned that the focus of the training is the safety, security, welfare, and care of the student/client.

Although this training is not designed as a self-defense class, it provides an introduction to crisis prevention that emphasizes early intervention and nonphysical methods for preventing or managing disruptive behavior. Personal safety techniques are demonstrated. By participating in this program, teachers and others gain the confidence necessary to handle crisis situations with minimal anxiety and maximum security. The training session includes interactive exercises and a workbook is provided.

*“By participating in this program, teachers and others gain the confidence necessary to handle crisis situations with minimal anxiety and maximum security.”*

Mr. Martin will provide “non-violent crisis intervention” training at the fall conference in October at Lakeview Resort in Morgantown. Please visit the WV Adult Education Association, Inc. website at <http://www.wvaea.org> for more information. ■

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This past weekend I had the daunting task of helping my daughter sort through the old farmhouse and barn which she inherited from her grandmother. Now this was not your normal “getting things ready for an estate sale auction.” You have to know that her grandmother lived in a house where three generations were raised, none of whom ever discarded anything.

In my effort to keep from becoming frustrated and discouraged when it seemed that things were only being moved from one pile to another, I began to take time to look at each piece of “history” and hold onto it for a moment. I wondered why someone would keep an old dried flower, a dirty pair of worn-out shoes, or a grocery list or receipt. As I examined each item, I realized that I didn’t need to know *why* – I just needed to know that these were once important items in someone’s life – someone’s treasure.

We all have our treasures – some we can touch or see, and some we call memories that are buried within our hearts and minds forever.

You are probably wondering what this has to do with *Networks*. Well, this issue is full of treasures – of dreams fulfilled, of lives touched, and of futures filled with hope. From Pam Bryan’s grandfathers who inspired her love for literacy to

the students who held on to their “old pair of worn-out shoes” and persevered until they reached their goals.

Now sit back, relax, read, and smile as I share a portion of a great email I received from a friend. See how many of these things you remember and “treasure” from years past.

Do you remember when . . . All the girls had ugly gym uniforms? Telephone numbers had a word prefix . . . (Raymond 4-6011)? Nearly everyone’s mom was at home when the kids got home from school? Roller-skates had keys? Laundry detergent had free glasses, dishes, or towels hidden inside the box?

How about . . . Lying on your back in the grass with your friends and saying things like, “That cloud looks like a . . .”? McDonald’s hamburgers for 15 cents? Candy cigarettes? Summers filled with bike rides, baseball games, Hula Hoops, bowling and visits to the pool, and eating Kool-Aid powder with sugar?

Didn’t that feel good just to go back and say, “Yeah, I remember that?” ■

*Kathy*

## Fall conference registration to open in August

By 2006 conference committee

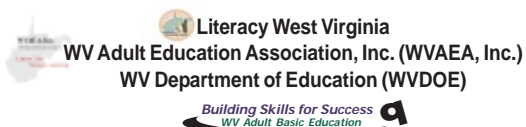
The 2006 annual fall conference sponsored by the West Virginia Adult Education, Inc. (WVAEA, Inc.) will be held October 25-27, 2006 at Lakeview Resort in Morgantown, West Virginia.

This year’s theme is centered around health and safety issues for teachers, tutors, and students. Only one evening session is scheduled for Wednesday entitled *Agency Collaboration = Jobs*. This session will highlight how all of us work together to help our clients succeed.

Participants will have the opportunity to participate in a Mystery Dinner Theatre on Thursday evening, and of course you won’t want to miss the awards luncheon on Friday.

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# Meet the staff of Literacy West Virginia

By Pam Bryan, Literacy West Virginia regional technical assistant

*Editor's Note: Recently Literacy West Virginia held a conference at the Blennerhassett Hotel in Parkersburg, West Virginia. A brochure was circulated with the bios of each of the regional technical assistants and director, Judy Azulay. Their literacy experience, educational accomplishments, and some personal history was included. The Networks editorial staff decided to honor these individuals by sharing the information with you, our readers. This issue highlights Pam Bryan, the technical assistant for the Southwestern region of West Virginia.*

Pam Bryan is a native of Huntington, West Virginia and recently received her masters in Business Administration from the Lewis College of Business at Marshall University (MU). As an undergraduate at MU she received her bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Public Relations. She has a twin sister, Tammy, and a daughter, Marie. Pam is married and has two step-children Rob and Krista and two grandsons—Billy and Blayne. Her home is also the castle of two brother cats—Leo and Tigger.

In 1996 Pam became the coordinator of Tri-State Literacy Council located in Huntington at the Cabell County Public Library. Both of her grandfathers could not read. They were hard working farmers who helped to shape her perspective on life and literacy. Since he could not read, Pawpaw Knapp would listen as his wife read the Bible. He was able to tell the stories in such a way that it even captivated his seventeen-year old granddaughters.

While at Tri-State, she trained volunteers, recruited students, and marketed the program to the community. Pam became a certified trainer for Laubach Literacy while she was at Tri-State Literacy Council and trained 50 volunteers every year with a team which included Jean Green and Marilyn Shaver.

Pam is now one of the regional technical assistants for Literacy West Virginia and is employed as the special



projects coordinator for West Virginia adult education. Her office is located at Regional Education Service Agency III (RESA III) in Dunbar, West Virginia. She coordinates and delivers Literacy West Virginia tutor training workshops for volunteers, and as a certified CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System) trainer, trains adult education teachers across the state on the use of this assessment instrument and on the TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) assessment tool. She also conducts training workshops on identifying learning disabilities and obtaining accommodations for students with disabilities. ■

## Fall conference . . . **SAFE & SOUND** Continued from page 2

Dr. Carolyn Browning from Bluefield State College will be the keynote speaker on Thursday, and will also present a workshop that afternoon on motivating clients. Other sessions include Ruby Payne's *Culture of Poverty*, non-violent crisis intervention, self-esteem, ethics, retirement and Social Security, healthy living, and more.

We also plan to have an expanded variety of vendors ranging from academics to relaxation therapy.

Registration will begin August 20, 2006, and online registration and PayPal will again be available this year.

Go to <http://www.wvaea.org> for the most recent program update. ■

# Volunteer describes what it is like to work at the Mercer County Academy of Adult Learning

By Margaret Brady, volunteer teacher

*Foreword by Marcia Ware, coordinator, Mercer County Academy of Adult Learning:*

*Margaret Brady, a volunteer at the Mercer County Academy of Adult Learning, was recognized for her outstanding contributions to the center. Pam Neese, AmeriCorps member, presented Margaret with a certificate and gift on April 26, 2006 as part of National Volunteer Week. Margaret is a retired teacher, and her love for teaching continues at the learning center. The center is so fortunate to have Margaret's expertise and inspiration. She volunteers eight hours per week at the center, and she wrote these thoughts in regard to her experience here.*

When I began teaching many years ago, I would annually tell my husband that it was the best class I ever had. Finally, he pointed out that I would say that every year. I have taught elementary, middle and high school, both regular and special education. Now, I come home from the learning center and tell him that these are the best students, and that this is the best teaching situation I ever had. He smiles at me condescendingly as I insist that it REALLY IS!!

As a teacher volunteer at the adult learning center, I feel privileged to have the opportunity to help these adults pursue their goals. All the instructors work together to evaluate, plan, and teach lessons tailored to the needs of each student. Everyone works in a friendly and cooperative manner. There are no egos here! The only objective is to help the students, and to do the best we can.

There are a variety of situations in which we find people of all ages who are participating in our program. So many have endured unfortunate circumstances in their lives that have prevented them from attaining levels of success that most of us have taken for granted.

The playing field is not always even for everyone. Everyday at the learning center we work with people who are struggling to overcome obstacles that have prevented them from getting a good education. Imagine if you will, a young man in his early twenties, married, and with a wife and young infant to care for. He is working so very hard to get his GED in order to get a job and be able to provide for his family. I'm sure that living in an isolated area far from the center brings added difficulties. Perhaps going to school was not very important in the scheme of things when he was growing up, but it certainly is now. How

unfortunate for him to have lost the opportunity to gain a foundation upon which to build a good life.



There are young women who may be victims of physical or emotional abuse who are trying to gain skills needed in order to become independent and take care of themselves. Some have children to care for which makes it even more difficult. Gaining confidence, self respect and the courage to escape an abusive or domineering relationship goes hand in hand with a good education.

It is heartwarming also to work with older students who, for whatever reason, just want to achieve that which was lost to them in their youth. There is a retired military gentleman who still enjoys learning and wants to master long division. There are mothers who have raised their children and want to keep up with them, or who want to start a new career. Each situation is unique and deserves special attention.

I don't think there is anything more rewarding than teaching adults who are eager to learn. At the Academy of Adult Learning those who come to further their education have a particular reason for doing so, and the instructors have devised unique strategies with which to meet their needs. I am glad to be a part of this program that does so much for those who need assistance. ■

# The Marion County adult education program had one great year!

By Donna Metz, dean of students, Marion County Adult and Community Education Center

The Marion County Adult and Community Education Center (MCACEC) began the 2005-06 school year by celebrating the announcement that one of its students had received the West Virginia Literacy Foundation Scholarship. This scholarship is in cooperation with the Governor's Council on Literacy and the West Virginia Literacy Foundation. The school year ended with news that one of its adult education test prep students had been accepted to participate in the National Science Foundation Summer Internship Program. From start to finish, the year has been one full of activity.

The learning center has a presence on the Fairmont State University/Fairmont State Community and Technical College campus. Through the Middle College Plan, adult education has placed a staff member on campus to enable students to experience a smooth transition from high school/adult education to higher education. This placement is part of the five-year strategic plan for adult education, and success has been evident through the services provided. A partnership was also formed with Fairmont State Community and Technical College in the field of Medical Transcription.

All staff from the learning center attended the annual adult education conference at Snowshoe Resort in the fall where staff development hours were acquired by all who attended.

The Marion County Adult and Community Education Center sponsored several community events this year. The SPOKES Program, (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success), hosted a fashion show and luncheon. The students and staff worked very hard to provide this informational and entertaining event.

In December, the center and the Fairmont WorkForce Partnership Team sponsored a Community Event Day to promote local programs and services that are available in the community. Many partners attended the event to encourage local placement.

The Full Circle program, housed at the Fairmont WorkForce WV Center, had a productive year

assisting clients with resume writing, electronic application and resume submission, and researching employment opportunities in the surrounding areas.

The winter months and holiday season kept everyone busy at the learning center. The staff and students worked together assembling a float for the Fairmont and Barrackville Christmas parades. This proved to be a unique bonding experience for the adult education learning community, and the students' pride was evidenced through their dedication and participation.



Marion County graduates.

An incentive program was established for students to encourage retention. Students who met 80 percent attendance and who earned a required score on the GED Practice Test qualified for a monthly GED scholarship. Students acquired raffle tickets for each day that they attended for the time that they were scheduled. At the end of the month, a drawing was held for a valuable prize.

The computer integrated manufacturing (CIM) class was productive this year as well. An Advisory Council comprised of local employers in the electrical and adult education field was established to make recommendations for specializations in the electrical field. The CIM class studied programmable logic controls

*Continued on page 6*

## Marion County adult education program . . .

### *Continued from page 5*

for a 150-hour segment of their program. Each student completed a project, and the projects were judged by local professionals in the electrical field.

The annual graduation ceremony was held Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at the center. Many students were recognized for their accomplishments throughout the year. Family and friends attended to celebrate students' successes. The staff, students, friends, and families were very honored to have Debra Kimbler, state GED administrator, as the special guest for the

ceremony. What a perfect ending to an exciting year!

A website was developed and activated this year <http://www.mcacec.com>, and can be directly linked from the Marion County Board of Education's website. Visit the site to obtain more information about what the learning center has to offer, and what it has planned for the upcoming year. ■

## Boone County ABE program stands out at EXPO

By Tyann Douglas, adult basic education instructor/coordinator, Boone County

On April 27, 2006 the Boone County adult basic education (ABE) program participated in the Boone County Community Services Expo sponsored by the county's Crime Victim Volunteers. The purpose of this Expo at the Madison Civic Center was to promote a better-educated, well-served community by providing information about all the free community services available to the citizens of Boone County that can help reduce crime and promote safety and stability.

Of course this was an excellent opportunity to let our light shine and promote the services offered by ABE throughout the county, but there was a problem. Our budget did not have money to provide any items to give away or to use on a display table. WHAT DO I DO??!!

WVAEA, Inc. offers special events funding to any ABE or literacy program, and the application process is easy. Just go to <http://www.wvaea.org> and download the Special Events Application, fill it out, and submit it to the public relations committee for consideration.



Thanks to the Special Events Program provided by the West Virginia Adult Education Association, Inc. (WVAEA, Inc.) we were able to secure funds to purchase display boards, balloons, give-away items, printed materials, t-shirts for staff, and candy. Our presentation was one of the very best, and many people came to our table to find out what we had to offer.

The event was a great success, and we were very proud to tell the community about the adult learning center.

And, because of the generosity of WVAEA, Inc., we had the best display at the EXPO! We are deeply grateful for this funding because it enabled the Boone County ABE programs to STAND OUT in our community! ■

# Jackson County graduates honored at ceremony

By Thelma Carr, adult basic education instructor/coordinator, Jackson County

Seventeen of the forty-nine 2005-06 Jackson County GED graduates were recognized in a ceremony held at the Ravenswood High School auditorium on Saturday, June 3, 2006.

The ceremony began with a welcoming note from Ronald Ray, superintendent of schools. He had the audience stand while the participants filed into the auditorium to the traditional graduation march. Family, friends, and staff were there to celebrate this important accomplishment. A presentation of colors by the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 43 was held.

Sam Cogar sang the Star Spangled Banner and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Rev. Chris Skeens, pastor of the Ravenswood Freewill Baptist Church, delivered the invocation. His wife, Susan Skeens, followed by singing an inspirational song.

Blaine Hess, director of high schools and vocational education, greeted the graduates and guests, recognized the staff, and honored special guests who attended. Among these were Thelma Carr, adult education coordinator; Debbie Stalnaker, vocational and adult education secretary; Carla Mullins, ABE instructor; Bill Lutz, ABE instructor; Lisa Moles, ABE/computer literacy instructor; Audrey Miller, chief GED examiner; Janet Murray, director of federal programs/Even Start; and Debra Kimbler, state GED test administrator, WV Department of Education.

Mr. Ray then introduced Mick Price, educator and coach, as the guest speaker. Coach Price delighted the crowd with his words of motivation, challenge, inspiration, and triumph. He shared the delight of achieving the long-awaited state basketball championship this year and compared it with the graduates' accomplishments of obtaining

their high school diploma. He not only reflected on the qualities that it takes to obtain a goal, but also encouraged the graduates to continue and accomplish more.

This motivational speech was followed by some heartfelt words from Thelma Carr, adult education coordinator. Mrs. Carr had worked with most of the graduates present. She was

sincere in her words of reflection of the stories, struggles, and triumphs of the students during this year. The pride she felt was reflected in the faces of the graduates as she spoke.



The highlight of the evening of course was to see each graduate walk across the stage as Mr. Hess called their name. After the guests on the stage greeted them, Mr. Ray presented each graduate with a certificate of recognition. The audience of family and friends was full of applause. Mrs. Carr embraced the students as they left the stage, and then presented the GED graduates of 2006 to the audience as they celebrated with the tradition of the tossing of the caps and exiting to the commencement march.

A photo session was held outside for family and friends, and then the group moved on to the reception at Henry J. Kaiser Elementary School. ■

# Cooperative GED commencement ceremony held at Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College in Logan

By Tyann Douglas, adult basic education instructor/coordinator, Boone County

The Boone/Logan Counties' cooperative annual GED commencement was held on May 18, 2006 in the Savas-Kostas Theater located on the campus of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College (SWVCTC) in Logan. This graduation was a collaborative effort of the Boone County Board of Education, the Logan County Board of Education, PRIDE, Inc., and the Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College.

During the 2005-06 school year, 98 adults from these two rural counties earned a General Educational Development (GED) certificate. In Boone County, 25 students scored 2500 or more on the GED tests and received special recognition for graduating with honors. A total of 45 students in Boone County graduated; and in Logan County, 53 students earned their GED.

For the ceremony, each graduate was fitted with a cap and gown and was given a key chain commemorating the class of 2006. Each graduate was also presented with a new testament from the Gideons.

Immediately following the ceremony the graduates and their families were honored with a dinner buffet.

Master of Ceremonies was Randy Skeens. Music was provided by pianist, Robbie Hall, and special music was presented by the Chapmanville High School Choir. Guest speaker was Dennis Trader, secretary of SWVCTC board of governors. Logan County superintendent of schools, David Godby, received the candidates for graduation. The Pledge of Allegiance was lead by Charles Puckett, veteran's affairs officer. Certificates were presented by county GED test administrators for Boone County, Mr. James Booth and Logan County's Brenda Lusk.

The celebration ceremony was coordinated by Benjie Yates of the Four-to-Get-Ready literacy program at Southern West Virginia Community and



Boone County graduates.

Technical College. Committee members were Tyann Douglas, Mary Hager, Brenda Lusk, Paul Meade, Clarisa Pierce, Randy Skeens, and Denise White.

Attending the ceremony were Tyann Douglas, Lucille Jordan, Jim Rowe, Nicole Vint, Carolyn Sue White, and Denise White, adult basic education teachers from Boone County. Teachers who attended from Logan County were Kelly Bennett, Mary Hager, Paul Meade, and Benjie Yates. ■

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I am only one,  
But still I am one.  
I cannot do everything,  
But still I can do something;  
And because I cannot do everything,  
I will not refuse to do the something  
that I can do.

--Edward Everett Hale

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# Adult education program celebrates progress

*Reprinted and edited with permission from the Welch Daily News*

On Wednesday, April 12, 2006 the McDowell County Schools adult basic education (ABE) program hosted a celebration of the progress that has been made with adult education in McDowell County.

Guests were welcomed and introduced by Bonita Miano, coordinator of adult and student services. Speakers were Dr. Mark Manchin, superintendent of McDowell County Schools; Mr. Bill Sparks, ABE instructor; and Priscilla Hopkins, ABE student.

The keynote speaker was Debra Kimbler, GED administrator for the West Virginia Department of Education, who spoke of the importance of the work that is being done at the adult learning center.



McDowell County graduates.

Kimble also spoke of the importance of working together as a team and making education count.

Debrah Varner from the Department of Education spoke regarding the success of the program over the last three years and how the program has evolved since its inception.

Also in attendance from the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) were Katrina Hunt and Yvonne Walker; from Big Creek People in Action, Kem Short and Marsha Timpson; from the HOPE Coalition, Christy Lester; from the Department of Institutional Education, Rowena Harman; from RESA I Youth Program, Mike Cook; from Workforce WV, Teresa Montgomery; from SPOKES, Karen Pitrowske and Virginia Manchin; from Mustard Seeds, Angela Caskey; members of the board of education, Mike Callloway, Georgia West, Tony Larken, Peggy Freeman, and Jonathan Muncy; and ABE students, Priscilla Hopkins, Brett Gilbert, and Lucy Bell; and from the House of Delegates, Cliff Moore. ■

# RESA III teachers participate in teachers' exchange

By Nicole Vint, adult basic education instructor, Boone County, and *AdvantageGED* cyber-teacher

If you were unable to attend the spring teacher exchange, then you will definitely want to make sure you are in attendance the next go around. It was a day of great camaraderie and excellent ideas.

The teacher exchange was held at the Boone County Adult Learning Center on March 24, 2006. It was scheduled for three hours, although many of those in attendance stayed much longer than the three-hour meeting. There was a wonderful turnout for the meeting which included instructors from Mingo and Putnam to Jackson County. Everyone arrived bright and early, ready to share ideas.

Instructors described what they had learned that worked for them. Problem areas included student retention and follow-up testing. Fellow instructors gave suggestions and ideas that could be utilized. It was great to have the opportunity to share and listen as instructors described techniques that have worked for them and the systems that they have used to ensure that follow-up testing was obtained so students do not fall through the cracks. Cindy Winters and Kathryn Ellis of Putman County have been very

***Continued on page 10***

## Teacher exchange . . .

### *Continued from page 9*

successful over the last few years. They shared their successes and described how they use a team-work approach to reach all of their students.

Debrah Varner and Barry Kelly were in attendance. They were both very welcoming and supportive of the work that we are doing and the students we are servicing. Additionally they outlined the accomplishments that we have achieved. Barry also spoke of reaching out to the entire community. He described different groups in the community that adult basic education (ABE) should reach out to in order to provide services. He presented ideas such as working with the local fire stations, ambulance services, nursing homes, and coal companies to provide needed courses to assist their employees in obtaining their goals and preparing them to pass their necessary licensing

exams. Barry described populations that we as instructors need to look into and see how we can further assist our communities.

Kathy Hollingsworth was also in attendance. She shared marketing ideas and suggestions. Kathy explained a new marketing technique that lists ABE services on a “menu” that will be displayed on the table tops of fast-food restaurants. The display was both interesting and unique. It should have a positive community response.

The teacher exchange was a great learning experience. Many good ideas were exchanged, and a lot was learned from the meeting. It was definitely insightful and a great opportunity to meet and share with peers. If you were unable to attend, I hope to see you at the next one. ■

## St. Albans ABE student rewarded with perfect attendance

By Wanda Matt, adult basic education instructor, Kanawha County

The St. Albans adult basic education (ABE) class honored a student for her dedication and persistence to achieve her educational goals. Barbara Schaible was rewarded at an end of the year celebration at the St. Albans ABE class sponsored by Kanawha County ABE/RESA III. Barbara, a returning student, has never missed a day of class. Since the start of class in August of 2005, Barbara has attended 187 hours and has increased over two grade levels on her assessment. St. Albans ABE instructors, Wanda Matt and Shonda Newsome, presented Barbara with a perfect attendance ribbon, an embossed journal, and a pen and pencil set.

“Barbara has such a wonderful work ethic. She is always early for class and stays late,” instructor Shonda Newsome said. “It is so rewarding to have a student who works so hard and has such a wonderful attitude.”

The St. Albans ABE program offers individual instruction to adults age 16 and older. Emphasis is on preparation for the General Educational Development (GED) examination and increasing literacy skills. Attention is given to improving reading comprehension and math skills, developing writing skills, increasing



Shonda Newsome, Barbara Schaible, and Wanda Matt.

computer competencies, and preparing for secondary education and/or job entry exams.

The ABE classes are held two evenings a week and average 15 to 20 students each night, although it is not unusual to have 40 students on any given evening.

Approximately 79 students attended this ABE class in 2005-06, with 10 of those earning a GED and approximately 17 passing all but one section of the test.

I am looking forward to the 2006-07 year to see what successes it brings for Barbara and others. ■

# West Virginia participates in TESOL advocacy day 2006

By Shalom Tazewell, adult basic education instructor/coordinator, Summers County, and Literacy West Virginia regional technical assistant

On June 21<sup>st</sup>, I joined 21 other TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) members from 19 different states for TESOL Advocacy Day in Washington, DC. This event, the first of its kind for TESOL, featured a day of issue briefings and workshops followed by visits to Congressional offices on Capitol Hill.

The goals of Advocacy Day were not only to talk with Congressional representatives and staffers about key issues, but also to provide an interactive learning experience for affiliate representatives on elements of advocacy. By the end of the day, TESOL members had visited over 40 Representatives and Senators.

Prior to TESOL Advocacy Day, participants made appointments with their Congressional representatives and/or staff and read background briefings on the key issues they would be addressing. TESOL Advocacy Day began with a welcome by TESOL President Jun Liu. A morning workshop, led by John Segota, TESOL's Advocacy and Communications Manager, was comprised of panel briefings on No Child Left Behind, adult education and the Workforce Investment Act, and student visas. Representatives from the Alliance for Excellent Education, the National Coalition for Literacy, and NAFSA: Association for International Educators all provided updates on these issues.

As an adult educator, I focused on reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) which under Title II provides funds for adult education, including English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Specific points regarding WIA were: (1) reauthorize WIA, but with increased funds for adult education; (2) provide incentive grants for adult education programs; (3) support authorizing language for English Language Civics programs; (4) reinstate 15% funding for professional development; and (5) keep funding for adult education and literacy programs within the Department of Education which has already demonstrated expertise, quality, and accountability.

I met with staff from Congressman Rahall's and Senator Rockefeller's offices, provided them with written information about the issues as well as discussed the above specific points. To illustrate the



Shalom Tazewell, front row second from right, poses with other TESOL members at TESOL Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill.

importance of ESL programs in West Virginia, I also gave them a video CD featuring English as a Second Language learners talking about why they attend an English language program and what they have accomplished as a result. The staff expressed sympathy with TESOL's position and agreed that it was logical for adult education to continue under the Department of Education.

At the end of the day, all the participants shared their experiences. Most agreed that the event was a very positive experience for them and for TESOL. Many noted that Congressional staff were well informed about the issues and were very appreciative that TESOL representatives provided them with written briefs and took the time to meet with them in D.C.

If you are interested in learning more about your Congressional representatives and the legislative issues TESOL is tracking, go to the TESOL U.S. Advocacy Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/tesol>. If you would like to help with future advocacy efforts for WVTESOL or WVAEA, Inc. please contact me at [shalom.tazewell@citynet.net](mailto:shalom.tazewell@citynet.net). ■

# Marion County adult education student accepted for the national science foundation ExPEDITE summer intern program

By Donna Metz, dean of students, Marion County Adult and Community Education Center

The Marion County Adult and Community Education Center (MCACEC) is proud to announce that George Nicholson, an adult education test prep student, has been accepted to participate in the National Science Foundation ExPEDITE summer intern program. George's intern placement will be with Computer Connections.

The Expanding Pathways for Educational Development and Information Technology Experiences (ExPEDITE) project provides an opportunity for a smooth transition to an information technology career for students in North Central West Virginia. Representatives from the Institute for Scientific Research, Inc., Marion County Schools' Division of Technology, and Fairmont State University's Computer Science Department presented information and

applications to all students enrolled in the Marion County adult education program. Interested students completed applications and the candidates chosen throughout the county were those who expressed an interest in an information technology profession and had previous experience and interest in this field.

The Marion County Adult and Community Education Center staff and students are very proud of George, and we wish him an enjoyable and educational experience through this opportunity. ■

*Editor's Note: Student writing is the original work of the student and has not been edited.*

## The end of the tunnel

By Eugene Milam, 2006 GED graduate, Summers County LAMP (Literate Adults Mean Prosperity) program

I didn't come from a privileged background. My Mom and Dad worked hard to provide for us. Like most parents they wanted me to do better than they had done. They taught me to work hard for what you wanted and needed. They also taught me to be honest and to treat people the way you wanted to be treated.

When I was 11 years old I started working odd jobs. My Father had a hard time paying for our row house in Pennsylvania and the farm in West Virginia that we wanted to move back to some day. Eventually we were able to move and I did attend school for about 6 months. When I was 14 years old I was involved in a serious car wreck. I had a hard

time concentrating the way I had before and my grades suffered. I finally told my parents it wasn't worth continuing to go to school and I dropped out in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

At the time it was more important to me and to them to work to help the family. I worked various jobs and with some training got a job as a welder, which I did for the next 22 years.

After being laid off I realized how difficult it was going to be to find a decent job. My lack of education looked like it would really limit my employment choices.

I knew it was time to make a change in my life and with my wife's encouragement I made the scary

decision to get my GED. It was discouraging to think about going back to school because it had been so long since I had attended. I went to my first 'class' that was actually a picnic and although I wanted to turn around and run I stayed and knew it was the right place for me to be. The teachers and fellow students welcomed me in a way that touched me deeply that day. I knew I'd have a hard road ahead of me but after that day I vowed to finish it.

My GED teachers gave me back an interest in learning, the desire to study, and a willingness to see it through to the very end. I looked

forward to my classes and became lifelong friends with many of my classmates.

We all go through our own hard times and this was difficult but worth it. I am so thankful for this program because it has brought more to my life than I could have ever imagined. The GED teachers and volunteers and their devotion to this program is wonderful. We all need people who will believe in us and help us achieve our goals. My math teacher told me once to think of math and other subjects as being in a tunnel and strive to get to the other side. With GOD's help I made it. ■

*// am so thankful for this program because it has brought more to my life than I could have ever imagined //*

## What the ABE program means to me

By Christina Ann Amie  
adult basic education student, Ohio County

This is the school year of 2005/2006 at Madison Elementary School. As I write this, I reflect over the past year with a smile on my face. For the ABE program here isn't like a classroom; it is more like a family getting together. Let me explain what I mean.

Families help each other and encourage each other to achieve their goals, which is exactly what my instructors do for each and every one of their students. Also the students help each other to achieve those goals. For when one student is successful, we are all successful.

With the help and encouragement of my instructors, I have become a published author of two poetry books with more on the way. The ABE Program is extremely important to me; it brings meaning and purpose to my life. Below is a poem that I wrote. It may better explain. ■



ABE instructor, Marilyn Schnupp with Christina holding one of her poetry books.

### Achieving Your Goals

Written By Christina Ann Amie, May 5, 2006

To reach the stars is wonderful  
A magnificent feat indeed  
For achieving your goals  
Is an overwhelming feeling

So sit and take a moment  
To reflect on this past year  
And remember all the friends you've made  
As graduation time grows near

Think of those whom have taught you  
Things you did not know  
And remember to have confidence  
For your future can now grow

# How distance education helped me get my GED

By Kristin Harris, *Advantage GED* student, Jackson County

As technology increases, the methods of teaching and learning are continually changing. More and more students are choosing to become distant learners. Many choose to do this because of place and time flexibility and the opportunity for independent studying. Distant learning can be effective in many ways, and these are the ways it has helped me.

Becoming a distant learner was an important decision I had to make. I wasn't always able to attend ABE classes as much as I should have, and when I went to class, I didn't feel it was effective for me. Therefore, I was very close to quitting the program. But before I gave up, I remembered my ABE instructor mentioning a distant education course that was available to students who had trouble attending classes regularly. This applied to my situation, so I decided to give it a try. This was one of the best decisions I could've made.



While being a home schooled student, I got used to learning at my own pace. But when I attended ABE classes, I was no longer able to do this and I became bored with the program very quickly. The distance education program came as a relief. I could finally learn at my own pace again. Another

wonderful thing about the online class is the lessons were based on my weak points, and therefore I was able to master all my weaknesses before taking the GED test.

Another way the distance education program helped me was it provided me with flexibility of time and place of study. I could do my coursework when or where my schedule

permitted (as long as I reached the 40 hours a month time requirement) rather than being locked into the specific times designated for instruction in the ABE classroom. I could work on my lessons for as long as I needed to, instead of having to move on if I wasn't ready. Even if I completed a lesson, I was able to go back and refresh myself if needed.

// . . . even though I wasn't in the classroom, I still had the assistance I needed to be successful. //

Another great part of being an online learner is that I always had continued assistance. I had access to my cyber instructor Nicole Vint and to my ABE instructor Thelma Lang Carr. I could email, call, or instant message them with questions and get a response. So even though I wasn't in the classroom, I still had the assistance I needed to be successful.

The distance education program helped me a lot. The largest way it was effective was it allowed me to work at my own pace and on all my weak points. I believe this is the reason I was so successful in passing my GED test. I would recommend the distance education program to any student who learns well at their own pace, has trouble getting to ABE classes, or needs the flexibility of time and place of study.

The distance education program has been very effective for me, and I believe it will help many more students for years to come! ■

# The West Virginia Literacy Foundation awards 2006-07 GED scholarship recipients

By Debi Conrad, staff liaison, Governor's Council on Literacy scholarship committee

The Governor's Council on Literacy in collaboration with the West Virginia Literacy Foundation has awarded the continuing education scholarships for the 2006-07 scholastic year.

This scholarship program has gained financial support from fifteen colleges and universities, four technical centers, the West Virginia Adult Education Association, Inc. (WVAEA, Inc.), and one state legislator. The \$1,000 scholarships may be used at any participating state institution and the Truman C. Chafin Memorial Scholarship must be awarded to residents of the sixth senatorial district.

This year's winners are Aaron Long, Charles Woodmore, and Whitney Skaggs - Marshall University; Mary Becker, Kristian Wooten, and Sarah Foster - West Virginia University; David Berger - West Virginia State University; Nikki Vanfossen - West Virginia University at Parkersburg; Vicky Martin and Aaron Horner - WV Northern Community & Technical College; April White - Southern WV Community & Technical College; Jeanne Puckett - Bluefield State College; Beverly Sparks - Alderson Broaddus College; Holly

Burgess - Fairmont State Community and Technical College; Aleigh Auxier - New River Community & Technical College - Nicholas Campus; James Gill - New River Community & Technical College - Greenbrier Campus; Tyler Keyser - Cabell County Career Technical Center; and, Stacy Greathouse - Roane-Jackson Technical Center.

The awards are based upon several criteria. The candidate:

- must be a West Virginia resident;
- must be an EDP completer or a GED graduate with a score of at least 2500;
- must enroll for 12 or more semester hours;
- must maintain a 2.0 grade point average to be eligible for second semester payment; and
- must have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

For more information on these scholarships, call (800) 642-2670. ■

## NCSALL Research: Learners' Engagement in Adult Literacy Education

This research was conducted by the NCSALL research team at Rutgers University, New Jersey, in partnership with the New Brunswick Public Schools Adult Learning Center, NCSALL's partner in the National Labsite for Adult Literacy Education. The research team studied six classes: three basic level classes, a GED class, and two adult high school reading and writing classes.

Engagement is mental effort focused on learning and is a precondition to learning progress. This qualitative study looks at how learning context shapes engagement. Key findings include:

- Students participating in classes that use individualized group instruction (IGI) show a high level of engagement. The high level of engagement exists for three reasons: motivation, the encouragement given to students by teachers, and the voluntary nature of participation in adult literacy education.

*Continued on page 16*

# Program Administrators' Sourcebook: A Resource on NCSALL's Research for Adult Education Program Administrators

If you administer an adult education program, you face a wide variety of challenges:

- How can you help students make “level” gains?
- How can you help students gain the skills they need to reach their goals?
- How can you help students stay in programs long enough to meet their goals?
- How can you prepare and retain good teachers?
- How can you document the successes of your program?

The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) conducted research relevant to these questions. The *Program Administrators' Sourcebook* (December 2005) is designed to give you, as a program administrator, direct access to research that may help you address the challenges you face in your job.

For more information, go to: <http://www.ncsall.net/?id=1035>. ■

## Learners' Engagement . . .

*Continued from page 15*

- The engagement falls into three categories: learners engaging with materials, learners engaging with teachers, and learners engaging with other learners. Each engagement pattern has a shaping factor. For learners engaging with materials, the shaping factor is the routines and procedures of IGI. For learners engaging with teachers, the shaping factor is the teacher's interpretation of his or her role and related behavior; and for learners engaging with other learners, the shaping factor is the social norms of the classroom.

IGI is a commonly used method of instruction in adult basic education. This study has revealed factors that shape engagement. Engagement, a precondition to learning, can generally be assessed through simple observation. It follows that learners' level of engagement can function as a day-to-day marker of instructional success. If the results of assessment prove negative, malfunctions of the instructional system, teachers' role behaviors, and/or classroom norms may be places to search for solutions. For more information on the research on engagement, read *Learners' Engagement in Adult Literacy Education* (NCSALL Report #28) at <http://www.ncsall.net/?id=29#28>. ■

Deadline for fall issue:  
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