

## WVRx offers relief from high cost of prescription drugs

By Terry Pickett, Former Communications Coordinator



The high cost of prescription drugs is a burden for everyone. For West Virginians who have no prescription drug coverage and are not eligible for governmental assistance it's a nightmare!

Unfortunately, many ABE students probably fall into the latter category. They often have to choose between paying bills, buying groceries or buying the medicine they need.

But, no longer! Governor Joe Manchin's West Virginia Rx (WVRx) Program can help!

WVRx is a free prescription drug program for West Virginians without prescription drug coverage. Funded primarily through the Governor's Pharmaceutical Advocate Office, Heinz Family Philanthropies and the Benedum Foundation, WVRx is a charitable, central-fill pharmacy with selected brand name drugs for chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and asthma. WVRx mails the prescribed drugs to patients' homes.



WVRx is also a Patient Assistance Program that gives its patients access to an additional selection of chronic disease medications available through individual drug companies. And, it is a referral source that tries to help people find other health care resources they need...even those who don't qualify for the WVRx program.

"As someone who has been self-employed for my entire life and have not had the benefit of insurance or help with prescriptions, I can't recommend this program enough," said musician Michael Lipton.

Samantha Fraction, Physician's Assistant at Doctor's Urgent Care and Family Practice, said about WVRx that "this program and your staff are a true blessing in this great time of need".

You are eligible for WVRx if:

- You live in West Virginia.
- Your yearly income is 200% or less of the Federal Poverty Level (e.g., \$21,660 for one person; \$44,100 for a family of four).
- You don't have prescription drug coverage or receive governmental prescription drug assistance.
- You are not a patient at a free clinic or primary care center.

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From the editor

As hard as I try to “tune-out” all the negative talk these days about budget-cuts, unemployment, and turmoil in the world, it always seems to find its way back into my thoughts.

So I have decided to focus on the positive things that are taking place. Spring IS here and I have seen evidence of new life all around me as I walk through the garden in my back yard which serves as a respite for me.

As I was putting this issue of *Networks* together, I suddenly realized that there is also new “life” right here in these pages.

WVRx has come at a perfect time for many WV adults in need of this service. Vacated positions have been filled by staff who have new energy to bring to the table; and we have proof that people *are* finding employment and success throughout the state as a result of our programs. And, as you will read on pages 14 and 15, we will not “give-up” just because we are encountering a few obstacles. After all, isn’t that what we do as adult educators? We learn to overcome obstacles that get in the way of success.

Now take a few minutes, find your quiet place, and enjoy this issue. ■

*Kathy*

To the editor

Kathy, once again a tremendous display of talent, creativity, communication skills, and so many other wonderful skills that go into publishing a document of this caliber! On behalf of RESA 6, **KUDOS** to you for another excellent and outstanding production! Happy holidays to you and your family. Kathy, you are certainly a blessing to WVAEA and for this we are most thankful!

Nick Zervos, Executive Director,  
RESA VI, Wheeling, WV

**WVRx offers relief . . .**

*Continued from front page*

Here’s how to enroll:

- For enrollment forms you can
  - Call WVRx too-free (877) 388-WVRx (9879)
  - Send an e-mail request to [wvrinfo@wvr.org](mailto:wvrinfo@wvr.org)
  - Download an enrollment packet from the WVRx website at [www.wvr.org](http://www.wvr.org)
- Fill out the WVRx application.
- Send your application along with necessary documentation (e.g., proof of annual income) and \$30 annual processing fee (if you can’t afford the fee, you need to provide your reason in writing) to

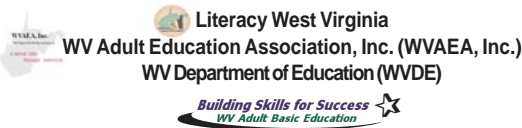
WVRx Patient Eligibility  
1520 Washington Street East  
Charleston, WV 25311

Once you are enrolled in WVRx, here’s how the program works:

- You mail or fax prescription(s) to WVRx.
- If medication is on WVRx drug list (includes more than 70 brand name meds in our centralized pharmacy), it will be mailed to you within 24 to 48 hours.
- If medication is not on WVRx list, WVRx staff will fill out the proper individual drug company Patient Assistance Form so you can still get your needed medication.

For more information people can call the WVRx toll free number at 1-877-388-WVRX (9879); they may also request an enrollment packet. Or they can e-mail WVRx staff at [wvrinfo@wvr.org](mailto:wvrinfo@wvr.org). Or, visit us online at [www.wvr.org](http://www.wvr.org). ■

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# College visit boosts morale for student *and* teacher

By Shannon Hoffman, Christian Appalachian Project Volunteer

From the first day Heather started adult basic education (ABE) classes with me at A.B.L.E. Families, a non-profit support and empowerment human services agency in Kermit, WV, she told me she had a lot to overcome. Heather told me she dropped out of high school because she became pregnant, but admitted that before dropping out she had not been the most attentive or productive student.

Heather is a young mom living with her grandmother in a house filled with many other family members. However, in Heather I saw a lot of self-determination and was encouraged by her honesty about her former study skills.

Heather crosses the bridge that connects West Virginia to Kentucky to come to class twice a week at A.B.L.E. Families. Each time she comes, she not only verbally expresses, but also shows me in her work and regular attendance, that these classes are a top priority in her life. She is determined to earn a General Educational Development (GED®) Diploma in order to gain higher education and a good-paying job. Heather also sees the GED as a way to gain independence and pride in self-sufficiency.

After attending regularly for at least a month (something that many students find troublesome as the problems of daily life can hinder attendance), I thought it would be a great morale booster to take Heather to a college where she could see what opportunities are available to her.

When we arrived at Big Sandy Community and Technical College (BSCYC) in Prestonsburg, KY, I think both Heather and I were a little nervous. We both had never been there and weren't quite sure where to go.

Needless to say, our day did not go as planned. Two of the professional staff members we were scheduled to meet were out of the office. However, I knew I had to exemplify to Heather that small obstacles like that didn't mean defeat. We decided to wait and see if there was anyone we could meet with after the lunch hour.

Heather looked nervously around the lunch and lounge area in the BSCTC Student Center. "I guess this will just kind of be like high school," Heather said.

"Kind of," I said. "You have much more independence here and responsibility. There isn't really a popularity contest among students in college - everyone is here to learn. And also, while your professors will care about you, you will have to be responsible about attending class and getting work done."

When Heather and I returned to the Advising Office we were able to meet with Billie J. Cole, the associate dean of Student Affairs. Billie is a very kind and welcoming woman who told Heather and me about the many career opportunities at BSCTC and afterward set us up on a tour of campus. Our tour guide was a first year student who was looking to apply to the Nursing program, as Heather hopes to do, and offered great insight about the school.

As we walked back to the car I looked at Heather and asked, "So, what did you think?"

Sighing deeply, Heather replied, "Everyone has a plan. After I get this GED, you're not just going to drop me right? I need you! I need your help in making a plan!"

I assured Heather that I would try my best to be there in person or through phone or e-mail to offer support and advice. This seemed to calm Heather's fears about pursuing a degree or certificate and I realized that the college visit was not only a morale booster for Heather, but for me, too. ■

*“We learn by example and by direct experience because there are real limits to the adequacy of verbal instruction.”*

Malcolm Gladwell

*Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*

2005

# Barry Kelly is named as new assistant director of adult education

By Kathy Hollingsworth, WVABE Public Outreach Coordinator

Barry Kelly became the new assistant director of adult education for the West Virginia Department of Education's Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development in January, 2009.

Barry has 27 years of experience as an administrator in the field of adult education as an employee of Regional Education Service Agency III (RESA III) which covers Boone, Clay, Kanawha, and Putnam Counties. In addition to the counties in RESA III, he also had adult education responsibilities for Cabell, Lincoln, Logan, Mason, Mingo, and Wayne Counties in the RESA II region.

He provided direct supervision for over 20 professional and service personnel in the adult basic education (ABE) and the public service training (PST) units at RESA II and III.

He was responsible for the ABE grant applications; on-site program evaluations, teacher training and staff development; and fiscal management of over two-million dollars annually. His duties included arranging technical assistance assistance in programmatic and administrative areas for all ten counties.

Other responsibilities included supervision of the SPOKES (Strategic Planning in



Occupational Knowledge for Employment Success) program in Kanawha County and coordination of the middle college programs on four community college campuses in these regions. Barry had experience in coordinating activities with volunteer literacy organizations, and served over 20 years as chief GED examiner for RESA III.

Barry holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science and History from West Virginia University and a master's degree in Adult and Technical Education from Marshall University.

Barry has already made an impact on the statewide ABE program and looks forward to implementing new initiatives and to working as a team with all personnel throughout West Virginia. ■

# Yoke and Gaertner join MCLV team

By Susie Huggins, Monongalia County Literacy Volunteers, Inc.

Monongalia County Literacy Volunteers, Inc. (MCLV) welcomes Justin Yoke as the new administrative assistant at the office. Yoke, a native of Morgantown and a graduate of WV Junior College, is in charge of volunteer intake, recruitment, and the usual assortment of office duties.

Erin Gaertner has joined the team to help with fund raising. Her 10-hour position opens the door to promote bequests, grant-writing,

and marketing of the traditional fund raising events. Gaertner will be entering the West Virginia University Graduate program in the fall.

Also on board for the semester is marketing graduate student intern, Erin Smith. Smith is updating the web pages for MCLV as well as PCLV (Preston County Literacy Volunteers, Inc.). Additional duties include updating personnel policy files and creating a bequest package. ■

# RESA III has new regional coordinator of adult education

By Kathy Hollingsworth, WVABE Public Outreach Coordinator

Marie H. Bias-Jones has been named as the new regional coordinator of adult education for RESA III which covers Boone, Clay, Kanawha, and Putnam Counties. She replaces Barry Kelly who is the new assistant director of adult education for West Virginia and located at the WV Department of Education's Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development in Charleston.



Marie is not new to RESA III as she has worked in the field of adult basic education (ABE) in Kanawha County for the past 15 years. She began in 1994 as the lead part-time instructor for Sissonville High School, Elkview Community Center, Midland Trail Elementary, and Garnet Career Center ABE evening programs.

In 2001, she became full-time lead instructor at West Virginia State Community & Technical College (WVSCTC) Adult Education Learning Center. In addition to her regular duties as an ABE instructor, Marie was instrumental in developing the CAMC (Charleston Area Medical Center)/WVSCTC Pathways to Nursing Special Project.

Marie became an adjunct professor at WVSCTC in 2005 for the Department of Developmental Mathematics and the Division of Workforce Development.

Marie served as the writer/editor of Kanawha County's grant-writing team. She assisted in the research, writing, submission, and follow-up for the following grants awarded to the county: Dollar General Grant for 21<sup>st</sup> Century

materials in 2008 for \$20,000; Pathways to Nursing Extended Opportunity Program, WVSCTC in 2007 for \$30,000; a WV Department of Education Technology Grant for the WVSCTC learning center in 2007 for \$32,500; and an Advantage Valley Middle College Expansion Grant in 2006 for \$10,000.

In addition to all these responsibilities, Marie was also the lead instructor for central intake and served as the marketing specialist for the county.

Since 1999 Marie has been a peer trainer for new instructors and has delivered a variety of continuing education in-service trainings to existing instructors.

Marie holds a West Virginia Teacher Certification in Special Education Multi-Categorical K-12 with a master's degree plus 45. She earned an adult teaching license in 1994; the ABE distance education certification in 2005; and ABE Work Scans certification in 1998.

Before entering the field of adult education, Marie held various positions in the business sector. This experience brought new ideas and initiatives to the county which made a lasting imprint on the ABE program.

As a newspaper reporter, Marie was responsible for covering local news in Clay, Roane, Jackson, Fayette, Boone, Putnam, and Kanawha Counties. She covered events in the Capitol, the Governor's office, and activities of the State Board of Education and the Higher Education Policy Commission. She served as editor, reporter and photographer for the Metro East Edition of Charleston Newspapers, and was responsible for page design/layout for the Metro West Kanawha and Metro North Editions.

As financial manager of Innovative Properties, a rental and property development company shared with her husband, Marie is responsible for negotiating loans and dealing with lawyers, real estate agents, buyers, and sellers.

Through all of her professional and personal life experiences, Marie has never lost sight of her goals and visions, or compromised her values and work ethic. She is a perfect example of a true leader and mentor.

We are looking forward to working together to help bring her ideas to life when she begins her new position on May 20, 2009. ■

# What you don't know could be fatal



By Edward Hicks, WVDE ABE/Public Service Training Coordinator

Whether you're a firefighter, an EMT, a teacher, or a member of the general public, you need to know what to look for, what to do, and what not to do in a haz-mat event. Proper training is essential. The lives and wellbeing of many people depend on it!

Our new Public Service Training class called **"Haz-Mat Orientation"** covers the potential dangers of some common hazardous materials, and how first responders and the public can be better prepared.

What constitutes a hazardous material?

Almost any material can be hazardous to humans, plants, and animals if it is misused or improperly combined with another substance. Most homes have potentially dangerous materials sitting on shelves in their kitchens, bathrooms, garages, and laundry areas.



First responders get called into service usually on the heels of a disastrous event— an overturned tanker, a derailed train carrying a flammable liquid, a fire in a house that's been doubling as a meth lab, or any number of situations in which a potentially volatile substance leaks into the environment.

We need to know how to avoid such an event.

Whether set intentionally or as result of an accident, a Haz-Mat explosion can set off a chain reaction that can rupture a steel container or even bring a building down.

For instance, in the Oklahoma City bombing, ammonium nitrate, which is commonly used as a fertilizer in the agriculture industry was combined with nitro methane. The resulting chemical reaction was a ferocious explosion which destroyed the Alfred Murrah federal building, claiming 168 lives in addition to numerous serious injuries.

Another example much closer to home was the 2007 Ghent, WV explosion, in which liquid propane was being stored in a 500-gallon tank directly adjacent to a convenience store, in violation of regulations requiring such tanks to be at least 10 feet from any building. An untrained junior technician was left alone to service the tank, which was found to have a faulty release valve.

To exacerbate matters, the local 9-1-1 operator had no information or "guide cards" on propane leaks and was therefore unable to provide any useful information to fire and EMS responders. Also, no evacuation order was given until seconds before the explosion, leading to four fatalities plus several other injuries.

The investigating agency, US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigating Board (CSB) found that a lack of training for all involved was a key factor in the tragedy, further exemplifying the need for training in the area of hazardous materials.

There are countless other events worldwide which involve the destructive power of hazardous materials when mishandled by accident or willfully misused.

Although it would be impossible to prevent all of these occurrences, we can be proactive with education and training for first responders, technicians, and the general public on how to respond to such an event. To avoid needlessly alarming the public and causing a potential panic situation, it is important to be knowledgeable on the subject, and to be able to explain what is going on in case of an incident involving any potentially toxic material.

The West Virginia Department of Education in collaboration with the Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) throughout the state, offer trainings on awareness and handling of hazardous materials.

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# What you don't know . . .

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A 2-hour entry-level class, *Haz-Mat Orientation* is currently in development. This is a direct response to the CSB report on Ghent, citing West Virginia for insufficient initial and refresher training in hazardous materials.

*Haz-Mat Orientation* is designed to fulfill both needs-basic training for the general public or the classroom, and a refresher for firefighters and other first responders.

*Haz-Mat Awareness* training consists of an overview of hazardous materials, their handling and disposal, as well as training in proper defensive tactics aimed at protecting the responder and the public from contamination. Students are also introduced to the Department of Transportation Emergency Response Guidebook, as well as various waybills and dangerous cargo manifests are explained. This 4-hour seminar is the minimum recommended training for technicians, firefighters, law enforcement, or anyone who, as part of their job may be called into a hazardous materials incident.

*Haz-Mat Operations* builds upon the *Haz-Mat Awareness* course by reviewing key topics of the identification and recognition of transportation and fixed-site hazards. After completing this 24-hour course, students will

have an understanding of respiratory protection, protective clothing, and self-contained breathing apparatus or SCBA. Field training includes a decontamination exercise in a mock disaster.

And, for advanced practitioners, the 40-hour *Haz-Mat Technician* level course is designed to assure the highest level of competence in all aspects of dealing with haz-mat incidents, including incident command, handling and disposal, triage, and mass evacuation techniques. This course builds upon the knowledge gained from the Awareness and Operations classes.



It is important that all of us are aware of the many forms of hazardous materials, and how to avoid injury. For further information or to schedule training, please contact your Regional Education Service Agency (RESA), WVU Fire Service Extension, or the State Fire Marshal's office. And please, be careful out there! ■

*“Almost any material can be hazardous to humans, plants, and animals if it is misused or improperly combined with another substance. Most homes have potentially dangerous materials sitting on shelves in their kitchens, bathrooms, garages, and laundry areas.”*

# SPOKES students are a success

By Joy Walker, SPOKES Career Development Consultant

The SPOKES (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) program was created in 2003 as a job preparation and academic program for clients of the WV Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) and the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) throughout the state. These programs are provided by the WV Department of Education's Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development through a contract from DHHR.

Participants who are referred from their DHHR case worker must have an identified need for enhancement of skills that prevents them from gaining employment or advancing in a job. Under the direction of a certified adult basic education (ABE) instructor, SPOKES provides intense daily activities that address academic and 'soft' skills necessary for adults to achieve their goals.

In addition, SPOKES provides access to a career development consultant (CDC) who is responsible for coordinating job development, placement, monitoring, and follow-up for every participant.

Currently there are 39 programs throughout West Virginia. Successful participants in the SPOKES work-readiness component receive one of three achievements.

The *Ready to Work Certificate* is earned by participants who attend a minimum of 90 percent of all scheduled sessions; achieve 80 percent mastery of the employability skills components; and score a level 4 on the WorkKeys test.

The *Certificate of Achievement* is given to those participants who attend class at least 90 percent of the time; achieve 80 percent mastery of the employability skills component; and score a level 3 on the WorkKeys test.

The *Certificate of Participation* is given to those participants who attend class at least 87 percents of the time and achieve 70 percent mastery of the employability skills component.

A *Governor's Career Readiness Certificate* can be earned while in SPOKES. A gold, silver, or bronze certificate is awarded based upon WorkKeys test levels.

In the vocational training component of SPOKES, participants take an internationally recognized certificate examination dealing with *Customer Service*. Participant must achieve a minimum score of 80 percent on each of the six tests in order to receive this certificate.

Joy Walker, career development consultant in Summers, Wyoming, and McDowell Counties, has seen many of the SPOKES students reach their goals.

Melissa Raines, Stephanie Wilcox, and Steven Johnson – students from Kim Lane's class; and Norma Simms and Quentin Allen from Liz Myer's class successfully completed the SPOKES program in Summers County.

In Kim Lane's Wyoming County class, Kristy Hash, Jeremy Tolliver, Kelly Green, and Bobby Barnett completed the program.

Also in Wyoming County, instructor Samuel Smith's student Jackie Sizemore, completed her goals; and Teresa Godwin, instructor, assisted Angela Gibson, Nicole Miller, and Melanie Rollins in successfully completing the SPOKES program.

Last, but by no means least, six students from Jarred Cantrell's class in McDowell County completed their goals. Amanda Mullins, Mari Thompson, Melanie Vanover, Harold Mitchell, Joey Butler, and Angel Lawson have all gained employment as a result of the SPOKES program.



Jeremy Tolliver - completed December 2007; Ready to Work, Customer Service, and Silver Level Career Readiness Certificates; earned GED®; 80-hour Mine Certification; employed at Magic Mart.

Kelly Green - completed December 2007; Customer Service and Bronze Level Career Readiness Certificates; earned GED®; employed Glen Rogers Manor one year.

Kristy Hash - completed February 2008; Bronze Level Career Readiness and, Customer Service Certificates; earned GED®; employed Glen Rogers Manor 11 months.

**Continued on page 9**

# SPOKES students . . .

Continued from page 8



Quentin Allen - completed July 2008; FDIC, FEMA, and Customer Service Certificates; employed Pipestem Resort 8 months.



Stephen Johnson - completed September 2008; Certificate of Participation and Customer Service Certificate; retains ongoing employment Pipestem Resort 5 months.



Norma Simms (R) - completed January 2008; employed Summers County Commission on Aging 14 months.



Joey Butler - completed July 2008; Customer Service Certificate; earned GED®; employed Save-A-Lot 5 months.



Melanie Vanover - completed March 2008; Certificate of Participation and Gold Level Career Readiness Certificate; employed McDowell Ambulance Authority 11 months.



Mari Thompson - completed February 2007; Certificate of Participation; employed Northfork Branch Library 1 year.



Amanda Mullins - completed May 2007; Certificate of Participation; obtained driver's license; employed Walmart 1 year 10 months.



Angel Lawson - completed July 2008; Customer Service Certificate, employed Dollar General Store 8 months.

# Free GED® Testing is a success!

By Debra Kimbler, WVDE GED Administrator

Beginning on July 1, 2009 General Educational Development (GED) candidates were able to take the GED Tests free in West Virginia due to the passage of House Bill 4477, approved by the State Legislature and Governor Joe Manchin during the 2008 legislative session.

To qualify for the free GED testing, the candidate had to pass the Official GED Practice Tests (OPT) with a minimum score of 410 on each subject area and a total of 2250 points as evidenced by written documentation from an adult basic education (ABE) instructor.

From July 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008 a total of 2,566 GED candidates seized this opportunity and completed the GED Tests battery. Of this number, 1,911 passed the tests resulting in a 74 percent passing rate in West Virginia.

Compared to the same time period in 2007 a total of 2,351 completed the battery and 1,465 passed resulting in a 62 percent passing rate statewide.

Granting free GED testing and requiring successful completion of the OPT increased our statistics dramatically. There was a 7 percent increase in total number tested; an 8 percent increase in total number who completed; and a 12 percent increase in passing rate in FY '08.

This bill passed by the WV Legislature has made a positive impact on the lives of many individuals within West Virginia and on the 'state' of our economy. ■

All data was provided by Oklahoma Scoring Service.

*“This bill passed by the WV Legislature has made a positive impact on the lives of many individuals within West Virginia and on the ‘state’ of our economy.”*

# ACE issues warning about fake GED® testing services

From Washington D.C. Press Release

The General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS)™, a program of the American Council on Education (ACE) and architect of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED® Tests), is advising people that the GED credential cannot be earned via the Internet or through correspondence programs.

West Virginia's State GED Administrator Debra Kimbler reports receiving numbers of complaints from individuals who paid steep fees to take what they thought were the official GED Tests and, upon passing, thought they had earned the highly recognized GED credential issued by their respective state GED testing agency.

Debra said, “GEDTS is deeply concerned with a recent increase in the number of web

sites purporting to offer GED testing online or through the mail. We would like everyone to know—and share with others—that the GED Tests are not currently offered online and can only be taken in person at an official GED Testing Center. Any services that purport to offer a GED credential through any other means are not affiliated with GEDTS or ACE, may be of dubious value, and may deliver a product that is not accepted by employers, colleges and universities, or the military.”

GEDTS is increasing its efforts to alert the public and education community to web sites that infringe on the GED trademark and brand and offer diplomas and certificates that may have dubious value.

GED testing is administered locally by each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, the Canadian

*Continued on page 11*

## warning about fake GED® . . .

*Continued from page 10*

provinces and territories, the U.S. insular areas, U.S. military, and federal correctional institutions.

Individuals who wish to locate their nearest testing center should use the GED center locator on the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) website, <http://wvde.state.wv.us/ged/>. Hiring personnel, college admissions officers, and military enlistment personnel who wish to verify the authenticity of an individual's GED credential should contact the West Virginia Department of Education GED Office, (304) 558-6315.

*The five tests in the GED test battery are Language Arts, Writing; Language Arts, Reading; Social Studies; Science; and Mathematics. The tests reflect high school curriculum standards developed at the national and jurisdictional levels while including content relevant to the workplace and community. The GED Tests passing standard is rigorous; only 60 percent of traditional graduating high school seniors are expected to pass the battery on their first attempt.*

*Founded in 1918, ACE is the major coordinating body for all the nation's higher education institutions, representing more than 1,600 college and university presidents, and more than 200 related associations, nationwide. It seeks to provide leadership and a unifying voice on key higher education issues and influence public policy through advocacy, research, and program initiatives. ■*

## Monongalia County's Santa letter is a success across America

By Susie Huggins, Monongalia County Literacy Volunteers, Inc.

Over 500 letters from Santa went out to good boys and good girls across America in December 2008 thanks to the efforts of Monongalia County Literacy Volunteers, Inc. (MCLV).

Special thanks go out to all of Santa's helpers who ordered letters to help make this annual fundraiser a success! You know who you are—mommy, daddy, granny, meme, Aunt Netty, short grandma, friends of RES-CARE, cuzz Jeff, GG, BoBo and ma & pa just to name a few of the many people who ordered a letter from Santa for that special little one.

Santa's helpers learned this year that some of his treasured children had lost an uncle to cancer, a dad had passed away, and another child had lost his mom. Yet there was still some loving person out there that

made sure Santa knew that these children had been good. There were also a few care-givers that gave Santa a heads up on some children who needed to listen a little better and work on that good behavior goal. Santa also received a few lists of toys that children were planning on getting for Christmas, but he made no promises about the presents!

Stacy Clovis-Woofter once again scribed for Santa and helped him prepare the annual letter for all the boys and girls. The United Way Corporate Volunteer Council elves met at Sundale Nursing Home for a lavish night of pizza, pop, and letter-stuffing to give the overworked elves at the North Pole a night off. Much licking, stuffing, and stamping went on and a good time was had by all.

MCLV raised just under \$3,000.00 at this annual event. ■

# Building a workforce for jobs at the Federal Correctional Institution in McDowell County

By Dr. Robin Asbury, Workforce Education Program Director

When the Federal Bureau of Corrections (BOP) began talking about building a Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) in McDowell County, the hope of an economic upswing was tempered by the sobering educational statistics in the region. Forty-one (41) percent of the adults between the ages of 18 and 34 don't have a high school diploma; and 37 percent of the adults in the county have trouble reading above the fourth grade level. The surrounding counties don't fare much better. The question became "How do we prepare adults in this region to apply for jobs with the Bureau of Prisons?"

The West Virginia Workplace Education Program presented a model for doing just that to the Region 1 WIB (Workforce Investment Board) and the McDowell County Economic Development Authority.

First on the agenda was to set up a series of meetings involving potential stakeholders in the process. The meetings, facilitated by Dr. Robin Asbury, were held in McDowell, Wyoming, and Mercer Counties and involved the WV Workplace Education Program, local education agencies, community colleges, economic development authorities, social agencies, and others.

The Bureau of Prisons Talent Team evolved from these meetings, and meets monthly via teleconference with the BOP's Site Activation Coordinator, Cathi Litcher, to share information and showcase best practices.

After a week's intensive training and overview in Grand Prairie, Texas in November of 2007 at

the Federal Bureau of Prisons Consolidated Staffing Unit, Robin Asbury and Tina White began the work of developing and setting up training crucial to helping adults prepare for the arduous application process with the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

The WV Workplace Education Program developed modules to walk participants through the on-line application process which spans from setting up a USA JOBS account through writing KSAs (Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes).

Tina White worked with sites in McDowell, Wyoming, Raleigh, and Mercer Counties to secure computer labs for the classes. Dreama Pauley, the information specialist at the Mercer County Workforce WV Career Center, worked tirelessly to promote the classes, and serves as the single point of contact for registration for classes in all the counties.

Robin and Tina trained potential trainers in April, and classes began April 28 in McDowell County. Classes are filling up rapidly in Mercer, Wyoming, and Raleigh Counties as well. The Bureau of Prisons hopes to fill 60 percent of the jobs at the McDowell FCI with employees from the region; and adults who take the classes will have successfully completed the application process as the first step toward employment.

For more information about the training, contact Robin Asbury at [resa7rb@alpha.wvnet.edu](mailto:resa7rb@alpha.wvnet.edu). For information on the projected jobs at the McDowell FCI, go to the Region 1 website at [www.region1workforcewestvirginia.org](http://www.region1workforcewestvirginia.org) to view a BOP video, see the calendar of BOP events, and gain other important information about jobs with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. ■

# SPOKES student's dream becomes a reality

By Charity Sypolt, SPOKES Career Development Consultant

A lot of people enter the SPOKES (Strategic Planning in Occupational Knowledge for Employment and Success) programs throughout the state. Many come into the program unsure of their goals or their paths in life. Others enter the program with some goals, and some enter the program with lifelong dreams. SPOKES is able to provide the students with guidance and skills that can help them on the path of accomplishing their goals, becoming self-sufficient, and even to making their dreams a reality.

One successful completer of SPOKES is Sonya Makil. Sonya relocated to West Virginia from a Native American Indian Reservation in the western part of the country. She faced many challenges as she began building a new life for herself and her family. Sonya had many goals she wanted to accomplish, but her main goal was to obtain an employment position where she would be able to grow with the company and support her family.

Sonya was referred to the Randolph County SPOKES program in the summer of 2007. She began seeking employment after completing the first four weeks of SPOKES. The job hunt was frustrating for a bit, but then things began to look up for her. Sonya contacted the Law Office of Scott Curnutte in Elkins to inquire about employment. She learned that an office assistant position was available and that she could apply. Sonya applied what she had learned in SPOKES

*“Sonya has been able to excel in her employment position. She is not only staying busy at work, but she is also pursuing a degree in Information Technology through Axia College/University of Phoenix.”*

class, to not only apply for the position and win over the interviewers, but to also retain the employment position.

Sonya has been employed as an office assistant at the Law Office of Scott Curnutte for nearly two years. She loves her job because it is both rewarding and challenging. She enjoys helping the clients, her co-workers, and employer. Krista Curnutte, the office manager, said that Sonya is a hard worker, is good with the clients, and has excelled in her computer skills. Krista feels that Sonya is relied on to do quite a bit for the staff and clients.

Sonya has been able to excel in her employment position. She is not only staying busy at work, but she is also pursuing a degree in Information Technology through Axia College/University of Phoenix. She is currently taking a break from college to focus on her family and career, but she is planning to resume her studies in the future.

Sonya keeps in contact with the SPOKES instructors and career development consultant from time to time. She feels that SPOKES helped refresh her employment seeking and retention skills. She is now back on track and hopes it will lead her to successfully accomplishing her goals. ■

## Save This Date!

October 27 - 30, 2009

*Solutions for Success!*

Fall professional development conference

Stonewall Resort

Sponsored by WVAEA, Inc.

# Country music star helps increase advocacy for adult education

Taken from Press Release April 29, 2009

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Columbia Nashville's Gretchen Wilson traveled to Capitol Hill to hand deliver nearly 10,000 letters from Tennesseans to both Tennessee congressmen and senators that urged them to increase funding for adult education programs.

For Gretchen Wilson, the issue of adult education is very personal. Until last year, she was one of the millions of Americans who hadn't finished their high school education.

A dedicated mother, it was important for Wilson to earn her diploma not only for herself, but to prove to her 8-year-old daughter, Grace, how important education is.

Gretchen Wilson, a bonafide country superstar, had the financial resources to return to where she left at the age of 15. Millions of other adults in the United States aren't so fortunate.

The majority are dependent on the federally funded public education programs. The current federal education appropriations provide services to a mere 2.5 percent of all in need.

Because adult education is so underfunded, 80,000 adults were waitlisted for federally funded programs last year.

Wilson will testify in a hearing before the Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness about her experiences in earning her GED<sup>®</sup> Diploma.

She will encourage Tennessee legislators to support adult education on the state and national level. The hearing will discuss the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Title II which establishes the structure, services, and size of federally funded adult education and literacy programs. Since its installment in 1998, the act has never been reauthorized, and is preventing states from adapting services to community needs.



Gretchen Wilson will testify alongside Dollar General president and adult literacy advocate David Bere, to help rally support and awareness for the cause.

"I truly believe that we can be better parents and better Americans if we make adult education more accessible," she says.

It is Wilson's hope that by sharing her success story, she will be able to help those parents in similar situations have the resources to gain the education they need to be their child's first and most important teacher.

*Multi-platinum recording artist Gretchen Wilson exploded onto the country music scene in 2004 with her smash hit "Redneck Woman" and has since scored three number one albums with "Here for the Party," "All Jacked Up," and "One of the Boys." The critically-acclaimed singer/songwriter has won virtually every award for which she's been nominated, including Female Vocalist of the Year from both the Country Music Association and the Academy of Country Music, and a Grammy award for Best Female Country Vocal Performance.*

*"Life is just a mirror,  
and what you see out there,  
you must first see inside of you."*  
Wally 'Famous' Amos

## NCL launches advocacy toolkit

From Washington, D.C. Press Release

The National Coalition for Literacy (NCL) has launched its new online Advocacy Clearinghouse and Toolkit ([www.ncladvocacy.org](http://www.ncladvocacy.org)). Developed with an aim to change the conversation about adult education in the U.S., the Toolkit provides adult education and literacy advocates with the tools and knowledge to raise awareness and speak for the needs of 30+ million Americans with limited literacy and the 11+ million who cannot communicate in English.

Containing dozens of resources, facts, and reports provided by member organizations of the NCL, the Advocacy Clearinghouse and Toolkit is a “one-stop shop” for all advocates interested in improving adult education. This project has been generously supported by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, which invests millions of dollars each year in literacy programs that help individuals reach their full potential.

The NCL is a national adult education leadership organization comprised of member organizations and adult education professionals, committed to promoting adult education and literacy, family literacy, and English language development in the US. For more information about the Toolkit, contact Jennifer Maloney, NCL Director, at [jennifer.maloney@ncldc.net](mailto:jennifer.maloney@ncldc.net) or Jackie Taylor, website developer at [jackie@jataylor.net](mailto:jackie@jataylor.net). ■

## Universal Design for SLN Instruction

*These pages on Universal Design were adapted from Scott, S., McGuire, J.M., & Emby, P. (2002). Universal design for instruction fact sheet. Storrs: University of Connecticut, Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability. Reprinted with permission from The WVATS Newsletter, Winter 2009.*

Universal design for Instruction (UDI) is an approach to teaching that designs and uses teaching strategies that benefit a broad range of learners including students with special learning needs (SLN).

UDI is based on the more familiar concept of architectural universal design that we see in products and environments on a daily basis. Examples of architectural universal design include curb cuts on sidewalks, electronic doors and closed captioned text on televisions. Universal design of instruction stresses teaching strategies that benefit all users.

UDI classrooms can help reduce the amount of “special” modifications and retrofitting that is common in inclusive classrooms. UDI is intended to help teachers provide instruction techniques to a diverse group of learners without changing academic standards. Depending on the teacher’s needs, UDI can be used to design a new class or can be used in a current class.

UDI does not mean a “one-size-fits-all” teaching method, but flexible teaching methods to meet the needs of a diverse classroom. Assistive technology can play a major role in UDI by making course content accessible to students, who might not be able to participate in conventional ways.

### Universal Design for Instruction Samples

- 1. Class climate**—Adopt practices that respect both diversity and inclusiveness. Example: Invite students to talk with you about their disability-related accommodations and other special learning needs.
- 2. Interaction**—Encourage regular and useful contacts between you and your students and make sure that communication methods are accessible to all participants. Example: Assign group work where learners must support each other and that encourages different skills and roles.
- 3. Physical environments and products**—Ensure that facilities, activities, materials and equipment are physically accessible and usable by all students, and that all potential student characteristics are addressed in safety considerations. Example: Develop safety procedures for all students, including those who are blind, deaf or wheelchair users.
- 4. Delivery methods**—Use multiple, accessible teaching methods that are accessible to all learners. Example: Use many methods to deliver content. When possible allow students to choose from multiple options for learning.

*Continued on page 16*

## Universal design . . .

*Continued from page 10*

Motivate and engage students—consider lectures, joint learning options, hands-on activities, Internet-based communications, educational software, field work, etc.

5. **Information resources and technology**—Ensure that classroom materials, notes and other information resources are engaging, flexible and accessible for all students. Example: Choose printed materials and allow enough time to put together alternate formats, such as books in audio format.
6. **Feedback**—Provide detailed feedback on a regular basis. Example: Allow students to turn in parts of large projects for feedback before the final project is due.

7. **Assessment**—Regularly review student progress using multiple accessible methods and tools, and adjust instruction accordingly. Example: Review group function as well as individual success.
8. **Accommodation**—Plan for accommodations for students whose needs are not met by the teaching design. Example: Know how to get materials in alternate formats, and how to arrange for other accommodations, such as assistive technology for students with disabilities.

WVATS Web site address: [www.cedwvu.org/programs/wvats](http://www.cedwvu.org/programs/wvats)

For more information regarding West Virginia Assistive Technology State Plan call 800-841-8436. ■

## GED® brochure ready for distribution

By Kathy Hollingsworth, WVABE Public Outreach Coordinator

There is a new informational GED brochure available.

It is divided by tabs into five sections.

The *Facts* section contains information regarding the GED credential and its validity. The section also answers questions about test-taking and classroom locations, as well as how to get a copy of transcripts.

*What Are the GED Tests?* explains the subject areas that are included on the tests, the time limits, and some of the content covered.

The *Guidelines* section describes specific requirements for West Virginia test-takers regarding age, preparation, and special accommodations.

The section, *Prepare for the GED Tests*, provides information needed for those who wish to study prior to taking the tests and information important for those who *do not* wish to study.

The last section explains the *WV GED Form* and the *GEDWizard* procedures.

Learn  
the facts  
about  
the GED  
Diploma



This brochure is targeted to “triage” personnel, counselors, and/or case workers at WorkForce WV Centers, DHHR offices, Rehab offices, and vocational centers; and to health care facilities i.e., hospitals, doctor offices, and urgent care centers.

It could also be used by trainers, instructors, aides, GED examiner peer trainers, and all who finds themselves *with* questions or having to *answer* questions about the GED Tests.

Community Based Organizations such as Job Corps, Family Resource Centers, etc. should also have access to this information.

These brochures will be delivered soon to your regional coordinator of adult education.

For more information, contact your regional coordinator or the public outreach office at (800) 642-2670. ■