

May 28, 2008



So, What's New

Adult Education and Family Literacy

Volume 1, Issue 2

New from CDE



We would like to introduce you to our newest staff member, Elizabeth Shupe. She is our ABE/ASE Specialist with a focus on TABE Assessment and coordinator of the PAIR process. Previously she worked at St. Vrain Valley Adult Education as an ESL teacher and in addition worked full time at Workforce Boulder County. She received her Masters in Adult Education from CSU. Elizabeth worked as a volunteer coordinator and ESL/ABE/GED Instructor at Right to Read in Weld County before joining St. Vrain. She also had the privilege of teaching ESL in the People's Republic of China for one year which tells us she is an avid traveler. In 2007 she obtained her LIA. Elizabeth can be reached at 303.866.6942 or shupe_e@cde.state.co.us. Welcome aboard, Elizabeth!



Inside this issue:

<i>TSJC-Valley</i>	2
<i>Harrison Adult & Family Education</i>	3
<i>Gunnison Literacy Action Program</i>	3
<i>Spring Institute</i>	4
<i>DIA Workplace</i>	5
<i>Calendar of Events</i>	6
<i>Colorado Mountain College</i>	7
<i>Margie Wagner</i>	7
<i>Doug Glynn</i>	7

Norma McBryde— Montrose School District RE-1J

The Montrose Adult Basic Education Program has expanded its ESL programming to include 5 instructional levels on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. We have collaborated with our school district to hold these classes in the new wing at Centennial Middle School. The school has been most cooperative and the custodians have been especially helpful. We held a mock job fair last month, and the students had fun inventing businesses, writing want ads, and participating in mock interviews. Recently, our students have been writing thoughtful letters to our elected representatives about what this program means to them.

We have been fortunate to hire two well-qualified teachers this year to round out the rest of our experienced staff.

The Altrusa Club selected our program for their "Make a Difference Day" project in October. They provided us with 25 literacy book bags and bought a number of other books and dictionaries for our adult students and their children. The local newspaper published a picture of the event. With their help, we are truly making a difference in the lives of many in our community. Thanks to AEFLA for making this program possible!

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Anna Mae Rael-Lindsay - Trinidad State Junior College, Valley Campus - Adult Education – Alamosa

One Determined Zach Abrams

Nineteen year-old Zach Abrams chose to pursue his GED at TSJC “because it just seemed like the right thing to do.”

Educationally Zach has had a very difficult time. Unfortunately he struggled through school until the age of 16 before he was finally diagnosed with dyslexia. It was disappointing to both Zach and his parents to learn about his learning disability so late in his schooling. For a long time Zach’s reading problems were blamed on his early ADHD diagnosis. Zach was taunted and teased, and held back in classes receiving inconsiderate treatment from both instructors and students while growing up with dyslexia. When he moved to the valley at age 10, the teachers “were more understanding of my reading problem,” Zach said.

In an effort to discover new ways to cope, at age 13 Zach chose to continue his schooling via the internet. He learned that mellow music, especially nature sounds, helped him focus and calmed his mind. Experience taught him that his focus improved if he worked alone rather than in a group setting as in public schools. And he found that reading in dimmer lighting was less stressful and that reading under fluorescent lighting could cause migraine headaches within minutes.

Zach figured that, at the rate he was going, he would be 23 before he would graduate from high school. Hoping to speed up the process, he decided to drop out of high school and try for his GED instead.

Reading for Zach has been challenging from the beginning, when he first learned to write, he wrote from right to left rather than left to right. Zach sees words backwards. They seem to jump off the page and literally appear to be three dimensional.

Several LRC instructors worked patiently with Zach as he struggled with his reading and worked toward his GED. Concerned, TSJC Learning Resource Director, Anna Mae Rael-

Lindsay, invited Nancy Seefeldt, a reading instructor at the center, to color test him. She wondered if Zach’s severe symptoms might be relieved by overlaying what he reads with certain colors. As Nancy and Zach experimented with colors, they discovered that with three layers of different colors combined to make a dark color, Zach was able to actually comprehend words. Words no longer jumped off the page, nor looked three dimensional. His ability to focus and understand was increased dramatically. For the first time in his life, he is now able to keep up with his academics. In the near future, Zach hopes to be able to afford the specially formulated filtered Irlen eyeglasses to wear at all times, thus doing away with the need to use overlays.

Zach sees a positive coming from the tough times. He has learned how to persevere.

The colored transparent sheets through which Zach now reads are called Irlen overlays. According to the Irlen literature, “Individuals who prefer reading with a colored overlay suffer from Irlen Syndrome, a perceptual problem affecting reading, writing, columnization of numbers, reading music, copying, and depth perception.” Now, anyone

who comes to the LRC at TSJC to work toward a GED is offered the opportunity for the testing.

Zach continues to learn about himself. Martial arts, specifically Taekwon-Do, have taught Zach how to focus on himself. “It taught me how to relax both my mind and my body at the same time,” Zach said.

Zach has completed his GED and is now enrolled in college at TSJC and is taking fourteen credit hours toward an AAS degree in Computer Technology.

Zach’s future looks brighter now than ever before.



Jean Koch—Harrison Adult & Family Education

New ESL Family Literacy Site at Pikes Peak Elementary School 2007-08

During the 2006-07 school, we had a large wait list for family literacy services from adults and families who wanted Early Head Start, Head Start, and Adult Education (ESL) classes. We were only able to provide programming at the Gorman Education Center. Many of the adults and families on the wait list lived in the Pikes Peak Park neighborhood of our school district (an area with 3 elementary schools). After careful planning, we were able to open an additional adult and family literacy program at Pikes Peak Elementary School in the Pikes Peak Park neighborhood for the 21007-08 school year. There is a modular on that school campus that houses the Early Head Start and Head Start classrooms. The elementary school staff met and invited us to use one of their computers labs every morning, Tuesday through Friday, to provide adult ESL instruction. On Tuesday and

Thursday mornings, the EHS and HS classrooms are filled with parents that attend the adult ESL classes in the building. On Wednesday and Friday mornings, the adult ESL classes are filled with parents of students in our district K-12. This model provides all components of family literacy. We provide the adult education ESL classes and Early Head Start and Head Start provides the early childhood education, PACT time (Parent and Child Time Together), Parent Time, and home visits. Pikes Peak Elementary School has seen an increase in parent involvement on all levels this year, including the school's parent nights, etc. This has been a very successful expansion of the Harrison Adult and Family Education Program.

Paul Duba—Gunnison Literacy Action Program

Literacy Action recently established 2 important collaborations in their community.

Family Literacy: The first is with the Gunnison School District. Adult ESL classes now meet in the Community School (combined Elementary and Middle School), with 5 classroom spaces and 2 computer labs at their disposal. The time would appear to have been ripe for Literacy Action to approach the schools. With over 12% of their K-8 population being LEP (low English) or NEP (no English) students, building principals were looking for a way to get greater parent involvement in the building. With a grant from Title One for Family Literacy partnerships, the school district was able to fund a preschool classroom and a "homework club" for school age children. So, not only are parents being drawn into the building to learn English but their children, depending on age, are either working on school readiness or receiving academic support to help them meet academic benchmarks. Weekly PACT Time and periodic Parent Time make this a four-part Family Literacy class.

Intercambio: The second collaboration is with Western State College (WSC)'s Extended Studies Program. Lead

instructor, Candy Sparks, had the idea of helping ESL students integrate into the community (and reap educational rewards) by mixing with Spanish continuing education students from WSC. With their move to the Community School, Literacy Action arranged for Spanish classes to meet in the same building. Adult Spanish students (mostly professionals from around the community) now join with ESL students for the last half hour of their respective classes for a coordinated "intercambio" curriculum. Spanish students report that the relevance of the class is brought home by intercambio activities. For ESL students, this has given encouragement to those students who are shy and otherwise unwilling to practice English outside the classroom. Intercambio classes have also resulted in great one-on-one relationship building between native English speakers and immigrants.

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Barbara Sample - Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning

Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning Expansion Grant FY 08/Family Literacy Pilot

Christine Deines

This year Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning received an expansion grant from the Colorado Department of Education that provided opportunities to expand current classes and implement two family literacy pilot projects. Partners in this growth include a library district and three school districts in the Denver metro area. As part of this highly collaborative effort the Arapahoe Library District provides support during registration and orientation and our classes are so well attended we have an ongoing monitored wait-list.

As of February 2008, Spring Institute's CESL program was given an additional expansion grant to develop and implement a family literacy pilot project in collaboration with the Arapahoe Library District as well as another pilot with the Sheridan Early Childhood Center. Both projects have been a fruitful and attendance has increased by more than 30%. The collaboration with the Arapahoe Library District is quite unique in that the library district provides the funding and support for the Children's Literacy Project at the library. Each week during PACT time, the children of the Family Literacy Project take home a book to keep based on the activities they were learning during their PACT time. Moreover, with the collaboration provided by Spring Institute's family literacy coordinator, and the coordination efforts of the ESL teachers and the Arapahoe Library District staff, we have had excellent attendance in the Children's Literacy Project as well as increased attendance in the ESL classes.

Family Literacy Program Strengths FY 08

Attendance in both ESL and the Children's program has been excellent since we started Family Literacy (FL). In the fall, they would have as little as 3 kids sometimes. After FL started, they had between 16 and 22 kids almost every night.

The children are excited about PACT. When they the Family Literacy Coordinator, Rita Puig, come upstairs, they ask with huge smiles on their faces, "Are we having PACT tonight?" Some of the little one's faces light up when they see me, and they run towards me and hug my legs.

Parents are enjoying the program as well. Some have told Ms. Puig in person that they think FL is a great program. I've also read in their journal entries that they appreciate being able to spend time with their children during PACT.

Parents are doing things now that they weren't doing before. In one journal entry a parent mentioned that although she used to

read to her child quite often, she is now reading to him daily. In another journal entry a parent mentioned learning that her child responds well to praise. So she's making a point to do that more often.

The teachers and library personnel have told Ms. Puig on numerous occasions that everyone leaves PACT laughing and smiling. So, it is obvious that it's a positive experience for them.

CESL Program Strengths FY 08

- Enrollment was up 29% on Fall I 2006; average class size was up 5 students, to 27, against the same period last year.
- We were able to add an additional class at Ellis Elementary
- Step Forward was installed as the main textbook; 11 teachers attended training on the new series



- The CESL program has 28 volunteers working across the sites
- The majority of students, 69% (404 students), who originally enrolled were re-enrolled onto the class for Fall II
- Teachers kept good attendance records and communicated them in a timely manner to aid in registration and program management
- Two program coordinators attended BEST Plus training and completed the practice tests to enable them to help test students and make program decisions
- The CESL management team started attending regular, dedicated meetings on

Wednesday afternoons

- The CESL teaching team had the opportunity to attend a program meeting prior to the start of classes, as well as two Instructional Staff Training (IST) sessions
- Enrollment was up 22% on Fall II 2006.
- An additional class was added at Smoky Hill but enrollment was strong enough to still have 16 people on the waiting list.
- Teachers and program administrators were invited to attend the annual COTESOL conference and many attended.
- The Challenge School sent student volunteers to work in 3 classes on 2 sites with good feedback from everyone who was involved.
- The percentage of students with both pre and post test scores increased from 51% to 61%.

(Continued on page 5)



2008 DIA WORKPLACE ESL

Success Stories from the DIA ESL Project

The DIA Workplace ESL Project is a 60-hour class that teaches key English communication skills, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary related to working at Denver International Airport. The class meets two times per week for two-and-a-half hours per class. Six programs are offered during the year at varying times to accommodate different work shifts. The program instructor remains in contact with the businesses that refer their employees to the class. This helps the program continue integrating classroom instruction with the unique business needs of DIA employers and ensure employee job readiness, preparation, and success. Through this collaboration, continuous needs assessments and feedback is incorporated into the class on a regular basis, allowing the instructor to readily meet the needs of the participants along with the expectations of employers. In addition, a self-study DIA Customer Service Course is available on CD-ROM for program participants (to be completed on their own time). The CASAS Workplace English Language Assessment is used at enrollment and completion to measure and track language improvement in specific workplace communication competencies.

People who complete this program are demonstrating marked language improvement (almost 80% of participants increased one level as measured by the CASAS Workplace English Assessment) as well as increased confidence communicating in English. Both participants and businesses are helping market the program through word-of-mouth because of success stories such as the following.

- The woman from Nepal enrolled in the class after having been in the country for a little over a year. Her husband works in aerospace engineering and both her children are attending elementary school. Having been a housewife and mom her adult life, she came to DIA to study English and find employment. Not only did she find her first (paying) job of her life, she also increased 2 levels of language proficiency on the post test. How-

ever, the most profound change in her is the visible change in the way she carries herself and how she speaks English with more confidence.

- A cook from a DIA restaurant said he feels more comfortable and confident speaking to his customers in English now. He's no longer afraid of people laughing at him.
- One gentleman was referred to the program because his manager wanted to promote him. After attending the DIA ESL classes he started training for shift lead.
- Another was the model of a success story: he came to the class with a plan in mind to improve his English so he could get out of his job cleaning airplanes. Then, he would find a better job to practice his English so that he could take the GED. After completing the class, he started working as a customer service rep for a car rental company and recently reported that he plans to take the GED in early 2008.
- At the time another lady enrolled in the class, she was working as kitchen help in one restaurant and a busser in another. She was busy working these two jobs and desperately wanted to spend time with her two daughters. She quickly improved her English and, more importantly, her confidence level. At the close of the program, she was still working as a busser (which she preferred since she would be practicing English with her customers and even getting tips). Later she reported that she received a raise and promotion and became a cashier, making more money, and freeing up more time to be at home with her daughters.
- There was a middle-aged El Salvadoran couple who spoke almost no English (the wife didn't even register a minimum score on the pre-test). They understood very little, but attended regularly. The instructor made sure to utilize effective ESL methodology for multi-level classrooms. While their English at completion was still limited, they both improved one full level over the course of this class which speaks volumes to their perseverance. They worked hard and their language skills are better for having come to this program.

(Continued from page 4)

- Our approach to student goals was clarified and data from the end-of-term goals survey information has been added to the database.
- 77% of the students who attended the class completed at least 12 hours, an increase of 8% over the previous session.
- The CESL program supported volunteer Marlin Burke with his Minori Yasui award and met him for lunch to discuss his citizenship class and issues that had come up.
- Sheridan ECC implemented a weekly story-time session for the children led by a Sheridan librarian which was well received.

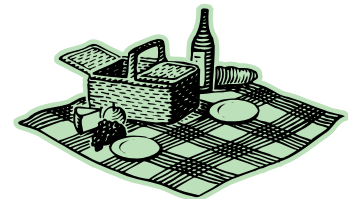


June 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Schedule of Events

- *June 6—LIA Portfolio Committee Meeting*
- *June 11—AEFLA and EL/Civics FY09 Continuation and e-Budgets due*
- *June 24—4:00 ET: Asperger's Syndrome And The Adult Education Class Webinar (Find out more by going to www.naasln.org)*
- *Fiscal Year End*
- *August 11-12 —Regional Assessment Training—Trinidad*
- *August 14-15 — Program Managers Meeting— Colorado Springs*
- *August 18-19 —Regional Assessment Training—Ft. Morgan*
- *August 22-23—Regional assessment Training—Glenwood Springs*
- *September 12-13—Regional Assessment Training—Denver*



Kristen Georgine - Colorado Mountain College

CMC's AEFLA-sponsored student population remains stable and shows an increase, with about 2,200 students enrolled last fiscal year. This is about 15% of the total enrollment for AEFLA programs in the state of Colorado. Over 1,700 are ESL students, making CMC's ESL population the largest in the state. We predict increases in ESL classes for at least the next fiscal year because of the availability of jobs in our service area. CMC met or exceeded FY 07 targets for level completion and post-testing in 10 out of the 12 EFLs. An expansion award for this current fiscal year has allowed CMC to hire additional adjunct faculty to support the continued enrollment increases and provide professional development for our AEFLA-sponsored staff and faculty. This year, CMC sent 27 people to Rendezvous 2008. The college's focus this year is on transitioning AEFLA-sponsored students and GED completers into Developmental Education and college-level courses. Several initiatives have been implemented at various sites and an in-service to update the entire college on these efforts is scheduled for April 18.

Margie Wagner Receives Outstanding Administrator of the Year for the Larimer Campus in Fort Collins

Margie, the coordinator of the Center for Adult Learning, "is the type of administrator who leads by example," one nomination read. "Her inviting, gentle spirit brings diverse individuals together to become a powerful force, positively impacting not only each other, but most importantly the students they serve. Margie sets the tone for this magic to happen."

"Her service has shaped the way that the community perceives this institution; she has built and maintained partnerships with agencies and professionals in the community who have no other ties to FRCC but who, because of her, endorse our institution and tout it's excellence."

"This year Margie also served as Conference Chair for her state professional organization (CAEPA) and worked tirelessly to help provide a wonderful conference for adult educators across the state. I am in awe of her willingness to work hard, her wonderful disposition and professional demeanor. People compliment us because of HER!" (quotes from Margie's nomination letters)

Thanks Margie for all you do!!!

Farewell from Doug Glynn

DEAR FRIENDS IN LITERACY:

As of Monday, May 19, 2008, I have terminated my position at the Colorado Department of Education. I plan to go to a different direction in life. Do I know what that area is...? OR Do I have another position lined-up? NO.

I'm taking advantage of an early retirement option from my years in Alaska. I believe life is too short NOT to experiment with different aspects of life.

I can not express my gratitude to all of you in field for fighting this worthy battle. I know many educators could not do what all of you have done. I do hope that one day adult education will be seen as absolutely indispensable within the education continuum. Until then, we scratch for funds...

I would enjoy hearing what's happening with you and your lives. My home e-mail: djrbm@comcast.net

Be gentle to the new state AEFLA crew and we will meet again at Rendezvous 2009!!

With admiration for all that you do,

Doug Glynn

