

Volume 16

Number 2

FIELD NOTES

by and for the Massachusetts
Adult Education Community

funded by the Massachusetts
Department of Education

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System for Adult Basic Education Support

Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education

MassAAL Benefits All

By ERNEST BEST

The Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Literacy (MassAAL) is a statewide organization created by former and current ABE students. MassAAL assists in the development of leadership skills for adult learners that will last long after they've graduated from their programs. The skills they develop benefit not only themselves, but also their families and their communities.

MassAAL started in 1998 as a handful of students and graduates of adult literacy programs with no money, only an idea. We have come a long way since then, and we welcome the opportunity in this article to update the field about the effectiveness and achievements of MassAAL and student leadership. Here are just a few examples of the achievements that helped adult learners develop useful leadership skills and also helped to have a powerful impact on the field of adult literacy.

Student Leadership Mini-Grants

In collaboration with the System for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES), MassAAL has supported Student Leadership Mini-Grant Projects. The projects are designed to develop leadership skills in the adult learner while simultaneously helping the community where the adult learner's program is located. Many projects have been a huge success. One of the outstanding ones was led by students from the ACCESS program, located at Cape Cod Community College in Hyannis. In this project students obtained a van supplied with medical equipment to serve the low-income adults and children of Hyannis. The learners themselves got training to become intake workers on the van. They also informed the community of the service by hosting a talk show on their local radio station and on their local cable television station. The media outreach helped them develop their public speaking skills. As a result of the project, many residents in the community were enrolled in the health care system for the first time. For some children, it was the first time they had received immunizations. Others were diagnosed and treated for health conditions including diabetes, HIV

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F O R E W O R D

Around the state, ABE students are becoming more actively involved in the way their programs are run, and they are receiving support and training for their leadership efforts.

Within some programs, like WAITT House in Roxbury, students are given encouragement and support to become teachers or teaching assistants when they complete their studies. Around the state, students are running special projects, participating in advocacy for adult learners, and taking leadership skills into their communities. An increasing number of ABE programs see the value of student councils as a mechanism for adult learners to have a voice and often a vote in the policies and procedures that affect them.

Programs with successful student leadership components seem to have one thing in common: they make a high priority of supporting students in leadership roles, and they keep this priority in the foreground, even when it is challenging and complicated, even when things might take a little longer to get done.

This issue of Field Notes gives you a few snapshots of the way programs look at student involvement and leadership and how they support and implement it. I am pleased that so many ABE and ESOL students wrote about their own involvement and leadership experiences and grateful to the teachers who encouraged them.

How involved are students in your own ABE program? If you'd like to take a look at the way your program promotes and sustains student leadership, you may want to take a look at the assessment tool on page 15 developed by Mina Reddy.

In addition to work within programs, state and national efforts to support ABE student leadership efforts are growing. Our cover article by Ernest Best, a former adult learner, highlights the successes of the Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Literacy (MassAAL). Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education, MassAAL has been successful in organizing students from around the state to help galvanize and promote student leadership in ABE programs.

By promoting students as leaders within our ABE programs—especially when we share our decision-making with them—we are taking a step toward promoting the values of equality and empowerment that underpin our pedagogy.

—Lenore Balliro
Field Notes editor

Field Notes Mission Statement and Editorial Policy

Mission

Field Notes is an adult basic education (ABE) quarterly, theme-based newsletter. It is designed to share innovative and reliable practices, resources, and information relating to ABE. We attempt to publish a range of voices about important educational issues, and we are especially interested in publishing new writers, writers of color, and writers who represent the full range of diversity of learners and practitioners in the field.

Field Notes is also a place to provide support and encouragement to new and experienced practitioners (ABE, ESOL, GED, ADP, Family Literacy, Correction, Workplace Education, and others) in the process of writing about their ideas and practice. Editorial support is always provided to any writer who requests it. Teachers, administrators, counselors, volunteers, and support staff are welcome to write for *Field Notes*.

Our Funder

Field Notes is published by the System for Adult Basic Educational Support (SABES) and funded by Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS), Massachusetts Department of Education. The Central Resource Center (CRC) of SABES is located at 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210.

Our Editorial Policy

Unsolicited manuscripts to *Field Notes* are welcome. If you have an idea for an article or wish to submit a letter to the editor, contact Lenore Balliro, editor, by phone at 617-482-9485, by email at <lballiro@worlded.org>, or by mail at 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. Submission deadlines for upcoming issues are published in each issue of *Field Notes*.

Opinions expressed in *Field Notes* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editor, SABES, or its funders. We do reserve the right to decline publication. We will not publish material that is sexist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory.

Our Reprint Policy

Articles published in *Field Notes* may be reprinted in any publication as long as they are credited to the author and *Field Notes*.

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Patricia Donovan, Barbara Goodridge,
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Editor: Lenore Balliro
Proofreading: Deb Liehs
Production Assistant: Leah Peterson

MassAAL Benefits All

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and other illnesses. In addition to building leadership skills for adult learners, that mini-grant project literally saved lives. The community thought the van was such a great idea that it still exists today.

Local, State and National Advocacy and Educational Outreach

MassAAL provides training for adult learners to educate the public and elected officials of the power of adult literacy to have positive life-changing affects on the people that it serves.

Adult learners that were provided training by MassAAL have made an impact by speaking up for themselves and the field at the local level, such as at Boston City Hall. In 2004, adult learners filled the Boston City Council chambers to capacity at 11 o'clock on a Thursday morning. At the state level adult learners from various regions gathered at the Massachusetts State House in May 2006 to witness support from the major organizations in the field that included the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education (MCAE), the Massachusetts Workforce Alliance (MWA), the Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA), and the Boston Adult Literacy Fund (BALF), to hear them speak in support of adult learners' activism and MassAAL's successful efforts in training adult learners. State Senator Dianne Wilkerson and State Representative Daniel Bosley both stated that the field of adult literacy cannot expect a significant budget increase without the support of an organized effort by adult learners. To hear that kind of support from nonprofit organizations and elected officials was one of the high points for MassAAL and student leadership in the state.

At the national level adult learners from Massachusetts gathered in Washington DC in spring

2005 with other adult learners from 25 states as members of the national adult learner organization, the Voice for Adult Literacy United for Education (VALUE). They told their stories to members of the House of Representatives and the Senate about the positive impact adult literacy has had on their lives.

why that involvement contributes greatly to their success as an ABE program.

In addition, at the most recent ABE directors' meeting in Massachusetts, MassAAL facilitated a panel discussion on student leadership that featured a range of ABE directors. Panel members spoke on

In this project students obtained a van supplied with medical equipment to serve the low-income adults and children of Hyannis. The learners themselves got training to become intake workers on the van.

When MassAAL began, there were barely a handful of statewide student leadership organizations in the entire county. Along with VALUE, MassAAL has inspired the proliferation of these kinds of organizations nationwide that allowed for the kind of representation present in the nation's capital in spring 2005.

Professional Development for Program Improvement

MassAAL organizes and participates in professional development activities such as workshops and panel discussions that demonstrate how the practice of student leadership within programs has a positive effect on learner persistence and academic outcomes. For example, MassAAL's executive director joined SABES director, Mina Reddy, and Carole Sousa of the Community Learning Center in Cambridge to present a workshop at the MCAE Network conference in the fall of 2006. Carole Sousa described how 89 students from her program were involved in student leadership and

the power of student leadership within their programs. Many of these program efforts are reflected — in the articles in this issue of *Field Notes*.

Media Participation

MassAAL continues to take the lead in the media, with television and radio appearances creating awareness of adult literacy. MassAAL made a primetime television appearances in 2006 with Roberta Soolman, Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts (LVM); Deborah Mutschler, Massachusetts Workforce Alliance (MWA), and Joanne Arnaud, the Boston Adult Literacy Fund (BALF). MassAAL feels that if enough people could hear of the good work of adult literacy programs, great strides would be made in improving the field's capacity to serve more adults and to improve working conditions for practitioners.

Mass AAL has had several more successes. These include the development of the following:

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MassAAL Benefits All

Continued from page 3

- Additional Student Leadership grants issued by the Massachusetts DOE in 2006
- Additional Student Leadership Regional Teams in various parts of the state
- A MassAAL speakers bureau
- Student leadership trainings at ABE programs, and at Mass AAL regional team meetings
- Assistance with student council development

MassAAL has also provided inspiration for the development of student leadership projects at various ABE programs.

Credit for our success does not rest only with the organization itself. MassAAL is grateful to Massachusetts DOE Associate Commissioner, Bob Bickerton, for being a strong local and national supporter of student leadership. We are also grateful to Anne Serino, director of Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) for carrying on the tradition of student leadership in the state. Because of the support it receives, MassAAL is prepared to accomplish even more effective work on the part of adult learners.

Ernest Best is a former adult learner and the executive director of Mass AAL. He can be reached at (617) 482-9485, or by email at <ebest@worlded.org>.

Join MassAAL Today: Make Your Voice Heard

MassAAL is the voice for the adult learner in Adult Basic Education (ABE), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and GED programs in Massachusetts. MassAAL assists the adult learner in developing lifelong leadership skills, creates public awareness about the need for adult literacy, and strengthens the adult learner's voice in shaping public policy for adult literacy services in Massachusetts. MassAAL empowers adult learners by helping them to have a collective voice in how their ABE programs are run.

How to Join MassAAL

- Fill out the form below and mail it to the address provided.
- Pay \$1.00 dues if you are a current or former adult learner
- Pay \$5.00 dues if you are a teacher or other ABE supporter.

.....

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone () _____

Date _____

Email Address _____

Event where recruited _____

Recruited by _____

.....
Mail the above form to:

Ernest Best, Executive Director
Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Literacy
World Education
44 Farnsworth Street
Boston, MA 02210

Student Writing

Our Student Council at Jamaica Plain Community Center Adult Learning Program

BY JPCC ALP MEMBERS: GREGORY ALMEIDA, ABE STUDENT; IBRAHIMA BARRY, RECENT ESOL GRADUATE; PIERRE-LINE JANVIER, ESOL LEVEL 5; OTONIEL JUNIOR DE SOUZA, ESOL LEVEL 3

On March 8, 2006, a group of Jamaica Plain Community Center (JPCC) Adult Learning Program (ALP) students came together for the first time. Our idea was to create a student group that would encourage student participation in school programs and decisions. In addition we hoped to involve students in all of the steps of their education in order to help students more successfully reach their goals.

Our group consisted of students from our GED and ESOL classes from varied levels, different experiences, and multiple nationalities. We met every two weeks during the first half of class for four months to discuss how to start a student council.

After four months of discussing, disagreeing, debating, planning, and learning how to analyze situations and make decisions, we held a schoolwide meeting to introduce ourselves and our newly formed group and to get feedback and ideas from our fellow students. First we asked the staff to okay the meeting. Then we passed out fliers and visited each class to announce the schoolwide meeting. We felt successful, happy, and excited. We had learned a lot from each other and were excited to learn from the rest of our school.

After the schoolwide meeting we made a lot of progress. We came back with the feedback of the students. Since then we have written a student contract and presented it to all of the classes. We made a suggestion box to get ideas from the students, and then, after vacation, we wrote a welcome letter to make new students feel welcome in our school. (See copy of the letter on this page.) In the

future we will create a job binder of where students work to offer incentives to get a better job. We want to be able to organize study groups. Also, we will give new students a tour of our school to make new students feel more comfortable. We hope to start movie night to hold student activities and learn more English through movies. Our idea is to keep students in school.

Starting to work as a student council group was a big challenge for us. We did not have a model to refer to or a concrete task, so we had to build everything. We started to analyze and make decisions. Here was the second challenge—how to make decisions in group and apply the

results to all students for any level. After these steps we had to find how to measure the success of our work.

During the time we've participated in the council we have enjoyed trying to help students. In helping each other we help ourselves and learn a lot. We feel strong, proud and confident because we come together collectively to listen to each other, connect to each other, and get experience from each other. We believe part of learning is helping each other.

The writers are all students or past students at the JPCC/ALP. They can be reached through AddieRose Mayer at <a.mayer@jpccalp.org>.

Welcome to our school! We are happy to have you here.

This school cares about every student. The teachers and staff are here to help you learn. They are available for questions. Students, staff, teachers, and student council will listen to you and your concerns and ideas.

The Adult Learning Program is a good place to learn. In our school students are friendly and everyone is respectful.

In this handbook you will find school programs, school policies, what to expect from school and helpful community phone numbers.

If you have any questions about any topic in this handbook or anything else please ask the student council, the staff, the counselor or your teacher.

We hope you have a good year!

Sincerely,
The ALP Student Council

Jamaica Plain Community Center's Adult Learning Program Student Contract

I _____ agree to do the following:
(Please print your first and last name)

- Take responsibility for my learning
- Come to school almost every night and to not miss more than 2 classes each month
- Come to school on time and stay until the end of class
- Call if I must miss class and give a reason
- Be respectful
- Listen to the teacher and other students
- Participate in class
- Help each other
- Try and do my homework
- Be patient with myself
- If I have any problems or questions I will ask the coordinator, counselor, my teacher, the director or the student council
- Ask for a tutor if I need one
- Maintain a clean classroom
- Take all required tests

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Students on Student Leadership

As an ELOA outreach worker I had a chance to go to some Haitian churches in Cambridge from which I made inquiry about what issues Haitian families need assistance for. I found out that they want information about how to educate their children in age ranges of 0-5 years old. They don't wish their children to be delinquents or prisoners in the future.

—Wesnel Rene, Cambridge Community Learning Center

As a literacy ambassador I have gone to training in the Agenda for Children Talk project, and reading party. I learned a lot about children's literacy. The program helped me to think about how children learn and I had fun meeting with other parents at the Community Learning Center. The Talk project helped me to talk with my kids like when I bring them shopping I tell them about what is the name of things. In the street when we walk I help my daughter to read and tell me what it says. She is now a kindergarten student. At reading parties I learned that it is useful to read books to children. Talking expands their vocabulary and reading is good for their future learning.

—Zahara Mohammed, Cambridge Community Learning

Civics 101 at the Harriet Tubman House

By LISA BEATMAN

I felt happy and proud to vote. I was worried but my teacher said not to. I never thought in my life I would be allowed to vote. I came here 16 years ago, but this year I decided to start school, and also to vote, so I feel almost like I really came to America this year. —K.M., GED student

K.M., a single mother of six, and naturalized citizen from Ethiopia, did something she once thought was unthinkable on November 7, 2006. She voted. It was a spine-tingling event—for her, and for the rest of us at United South End Settlements (USES) adult basic education program, located at the Harriet Tubman House in downtown Boston. The ABE students at USES are primarily African American, laced with a handful of Afro-Caribbeans and African immigrants.

Crossing Classroom Borders

During summer planning sessions, USES ABE staff had decided to implement a project called Themes across the Curriculum to promote community and dialogue among all our students, from literacy level to those finishing up their GED exams. In the fall of 2006, it only seemed natural to focus on civics to coincide with the midterm elections and the agencywide voter registration drive. We were committed to providing our adult learners with not only the skills for obtaining a high school diploma, but other tools as well, such as voter education, for maximizing their gains from and contributions to their local communities and to society at large. Our basic equation was this:

Student leadership development (civics education + student council elections) = active citizenry

We set the stage by inviting State Senator Dianne Wilkerson to be keynote speaker at our late July GED and Adult Diploma graduation. She spoke of her experiences as a struggling African American single mother, something many of our inner-city students could relate to, like

K.M. who told us: "I put children on three different school buses in the morning, so I am sorry to be late to class, but I come as soon as I can."

Then, in October, Kyle Robidoux, USES's civic engagement manager, conducted a "Civics 101" workshop for our student body that included information on city council, state government, and the importance of voting. Beforehand, Kyle invited himself to a teachers' meeting to get a handle on the needs of our ABE students. In the work-

shop, he spoke about the different branches of government, law making, local elected officials, and the importance of voting. He started off with a "What's important to you?" shout-out that had students calling out "affordable housing," "good schools," "safety," and many other concerns from even the usually dead-quiet back row seats.

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V.C., a literacy student who happens to be 81 yrs. old, not only asked questions, but also stood and addressed her classmates for the first time. She said she was tired of people who came to school with attitudes and behavior that had nothing to do with learning. "Shape up," she said. Student leadership takes all forms.

From Gangbanger to GED Student

The highlight of the agenda was a rousing guest speaker, C.F., a

nearby public housing development Villa Victoria resident and Boston City Councilor aide. Calvin's history about turning his life around and getting his GED resonated for many students. He said he'd lived on the streets and came to realize that "the streets aren't as cool as you think." The upshot of the workshop had 10 students registering to vote on the very last day they were eligible.

Throughout the semester, teachers used a variety of resources to incorporate civics into the classroom, including the Massachusetts Coalition of Adult Education's civics curriculum, *Your Government, Your Taxes, Your Choices* (<http://mcae.net/curriculum>). Language Arts teacher Linda Johnson taught a lesson aligned with Massachusetts curriculum frameworks called "Character Matters." Students were given a handout on the Massachusetts gubernatorial candidates, and they had to give examples showing the meaning of vocabulary, such as politeness, achievement, courage, honesty, and reliability. In Word Analysis class, teacher Nancy Poteet distributed copies of a sample ballot to better prepare her literacy students on what to expect when they got to the polls. Math teacher David Lowe went over primary and election returns as a means of practicing and interpreting percentages.

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Civics 101 ...

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Election Day

We capped our focus on civics by holding student council elections on National Election Day, November 7.



Harriet Tubman

The week before, each class had nominated the students they thought would best represent them. On November 7th they voted for one class representative and one alternate for each class. The Word Analysis class even had to have a runoff election to break a tie vote. The runoff winner won by a clear majority. This brought the often abstract concept of democracy home in a very concrete way to adults who had felt disenfranchised in the past.

For P.B., a young man from the Dominican Republic, November 7 was a very big day. Not only was he elected class representative of the Comprehension class, but he also voted in state and local elections for the first time. He said:

Voting was good, it was nice and quick. I just marked the ballot, and the machine took it. It was my first time voting I just got my citizenship and thought it was going to be harder. I voted 'no' on the question about selling wine in grocery stores. Working in my uncle's store is hard enough. If we had to compete with other stores selling wine, we'd have to work earlier and later. And more people would hang out drink-

ing outside the store. We'd gain from sales, but we'd lose in other ways.

Many students also expressed pleasure at having had the opportunity to vote in a historic election that resulted in the second African-American governor in history. "It's like JFK all over again," was overheard in the hall between classes. And down in the lobby, it seemed like the somber face on the life-sized statue of Harriet Tubman was doing some kind of a Mona Lisa thing.

Lisa Beatman is manager of ABE programs for United South End Settlements in Boston. Her graduate work at the Kennedy School of Government, combined with a career teaching and managing programs for underserved adults, has made her a passionate advocate for civic education. She can be reached at <lbeatman@uses.org>.

Famous People With GEDs (Can you add names to this list?)

- Dave Thomas, Founder of Wendy's
- Michael J. Fox, Actor
- James J. Florio, Former Governor of New Jersey
- John Michael Montgomery, Country Singer
- Tommy Nunez, NBA Referee
- Kelly McGillis, Actress
- Waylon Jennings, Country Singer
- Ruth Ann Minner, Governor, Delaware
- Mary Lou Retton, Olympic Gold Medalist
- Wally Amos, Famous Amos Cookie Creator
- Ben Nighthorse Campbell, U.S. Senator
- Bill Cosby, Comedian
- Walter Anderson, Editor, *Parade* Magazine
- Former Mayors of Cambridge Walter Sullivan and Al Vellucci were ADP recipients!

Student Writing

Student Experiences on a Health Team

By FATIMA CHIBANE AND ERIKO CUMMINGS

In 2006, we received a \$1,500 mini-grant from northeast SABES to get a health team started here at the Immigrant Learning Center (ILC). There were six members, including us, in the health team from various classes at the ILC. Working with a facilitator, we decided that our purpose was to bring accurate and easy-to-understand health information to ILC students on health topics of their choice. We already had some student leadership experience in helping to develop a resource room for students.

So in February of 2006, we went to each classroom and gave ILC students a choice among four health topics. These topics included stress, cancer, health care in America, and depression.

After discussing these health topics in small groups, cancer was the top choice of ILC students. Then we started learning about cancer from the Internet, books, magazines and health organizations. We also learned how to find safe and good health information on the internet from the Health and Literacy LINCS Web site at

<http://healthliteracy.worlded.org/>

When we felt we had enough information, we created a cancer vocabulary list for students and an easy-to-read brochure about cancer that included information on types of cancer, causes of cancer, preventing cancer, finding and treating cancer.

A medical advisory group approved all the information in the brochure. Then we invited representatives from the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) to teach breast self-exams, and about 100 female students attended. CHA also did free blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar screening checks and 144 students and teachers attended.

We wish we could have a guest speaker who could teach us about cancer or prevention of cancer. Then ILC students could ask many questions that we could not answer!

During this year, we are continuing the health team and expanding our cancer education program. The Mount Auburn Hospital Bridge Program will provide medical professionals to offer more cancer information, discussion and answer questions for ILC students. They will also do preventive health services here at the ILC and make sure that students get health services they need.

These experiences provided us with important leadership

and learning opportunities. Here are some examples of what these experiences meant to us and other members of the health team:

■ When we first came to this country, we were often lonely and we didn't know what to do and how to do it. Being on the group leadership team, we could discuss and share many things ... "

■ I was a little hesitant to talk in the other classes or at the meeting in English before, but now I have more confidence.

■ I learned about fairness and freedom from our facilitator, as she always asks us our opinion even though our poor English isn't enough to explain well. She listens to us and picks up our ideas and opinions well.

■ I learned many things from the health team, such as the ILC Health Team's purpose, how to make a work plan, and how to make it true step-by-step, discussing our plans, sharing our ideas, and so on. I worked for the health team and at the same time, it helps me to improve myself.



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The Power of Student Voices at SCALE

By SHERYL LOVIT AND JANINE LOTTI

The Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experience (SCALE) has a long history of supporting and fostering student-centered learning. Through funding provided by the Massachusetts Department of Education as well as the SABES Greater Boston Regional Support Center/ ALRI, we were able to launch a dynamic student leadership team in January 2006. The program's immediate goals were two-fold: to form a team that represented the diversity of SCALE's student body and to design, administer, and tabulate a survey to all students. Results of the survey would be used in planning workshops and seminars in FY'07 that would address students' needs beyond core class offerings.

The funding we received enabled SCALE to hire Janine Lotti, an ESOL instructor, to facilitate the team in coordination with Sheryl Lovit, the Adult Secondary Education program administrator. "I was excited to be a part of an effort devoted to inspiring students in a different way," says Lotti. "Once I was hired, Sheryl and I got right to work and broke the process down into small steps."

Those steps included recruitment, meeting preparation, survey design, survey administration, data collection/reporting, and results presentation.

Recruiting

Lovit distributed news of the leadership program to SCALE staff. Teachers encouraged students to fill out a one-page application.

Twelve students from a variety of SCALE classes applied to become student leaders. Lovit, Lotti, and SCALE supervisor Susan Barnard scheduled individual interviews with each student to learn more about their goals and interests in the leadership program.

Ultimately, eight SCALE students embarked on what Lotti describes as "a down and dirty" course in what makes a good leader. They represented each department at SCALE in a proportional way.

Setting Meeting Dates and Agendas

This group of eight students met on alternate Wednesday evenings for two hours. Each meeting included a mini-session that focused on a leadership skill, including team build-

Designing the Survey

There was little time to waste. The facilitators placed students into small teams to begin discussing the project. One team was composed entirely of individuals who had strong, defined ideas and an eagerness to share those ideas. How would they get anything down on paper? Another team had a mix of abilities and strengths. How could they showcase each person's ideas equally? Yet another team of three had individuals with very little

Each meeting included a mini-session that focused on a leadership skill, including team building, active listening, and public speaking.

ing, active listening, and public speaking. Although the student leaders came to the program with very different goals, educational levels, and backgrounds, each member recognized the need to work together on a group project that is important to everyone in the SCALE community.

From February through May, the team worked to develop and conduct a survey that would provide data for program planning purposes. Our goal was to determine the supplemental activities SCALE should offer in FY'07. During that time, guest speakers included the superintendent of schools, a community organizer and local activist, a SCALE administrator, and a city official whose focus was multicultural affairs. The team also relied on the expertise of a Brandeis University staffer for help with formulating a professional and presentable survey.

knowledge of group process. How could they even begin to make this happen?

How could a short survey possibly represent the voices of an entire student body at SCALE? How could eight student leaders make sure that the questions on the survey reflected what students really wanted?

They did—using active listening, cooperation, and collaboration.

In their small groups, they realized that being a leader isn't easy! They had to listen much more often than they got to speak. Early on, the facilitators introduced the idea of active listening. This was easier for some than for others. However, with coaxing and encouragement, each student began to appreciate how leaders are most effective when they listen to and understand the needs and wants of others.

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Building Student Leadership through Voter Education

BY MARGARET ANDERSON

We've had some extremely successful student leadership programs at The Literacy Project in western Massachusetts. For several years we ran a Health Team, which integrated health education with leadership skills. Our six-month Community Leaders Institute, which combined community service learning with leadership training, had so many applicants that we had to turn people away. Through these experiences we had begun to develop a model for presenting leadership skills in a hands-on way, combining real experience with reflection on the nature of community leadership. It seemed to be working well. So when I set out to combine student leadership with voter education, I was confident that it would be just as successful. But it wasn't. Great failures can be just as interesting as great successes, though, so I'd like to share with you what really didn't work about this program.

Before I started this project, I thought voter education would be simple. I assumed that the content would be pretty straightforward. We planned to get the most important information out to people in an accessible way: who the candidates are, how to register, where to vote, what kind of voting machine they'll use. Then we'd do some practice with sample ballots, and there you go - voter education for a low-literacy audience. Done.

Motivation Is Key

I was wrong, on many counts. As it turns out, effective voter education is a lot more than a matter of plain language and large font. The information is fairly complicated, although we were able to simplify it to a reasonable degree. The real

issue was that clear information and sample ballots aren't helpful if voters don't want to vote. And that is what we found: most of the students in our classes felt strongly about voting - they wanted nothing to do with it.

Overcoming Resistance to Voting

The problem of hostility toward the political process showed up early in our project. We started by inviting



participants from the community and from within our program to spend six weeks learning about leadership skills and voting. At the end of six weeks, the participants would become the trainers, and they'd run a series of voter education workshops in our ABE and GED classes. They would earn a stipend while building skills in designing and running a workshop, speaking in public, collaborating, and working as a team. They'd learn a lot about voting, of course, and contribute to the overall welfare of the community. Our plan addressed stu-

dent leadership at two levels. First, we were building the leadership skills of the core group of workshop facilitators, and second, we were educating our students in general about one method of civic participation—voting.

We thought it was a great program design, but the response was lukewarm, at best. We didn't need to turn anyone away, as we had in the past. Instead, we were calling up past participants to see if we could convince them to come. One person who loved our Community Leaders Institute enthusiastically said, "Sign me up, whatever the topic!" Then he heard that it was voter education. "No," he said, "that's one thing I just can't do. I never vote. It only encourages them."

We forged ahead with only five participants—a few politicians and some loyal past participants—and we dove into the complex world of voting. We waded through the details and practiced leadership skills. Our six weeks were great. But then it was time to go out to the classes.

Successes

I'd be misrepresenting the truth a bit if I said the whole thing was a flop. We did have some notable successes. The students who were workshop leaders learned a lot of leadership skills, and they did a great job presenting the information and leading the workshops. Some of our audiences were excited to learn about the history of voting rights and where our federal dollars go. We registered over two dozen new voters, and some of the students we presented to left our workshop with

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Building Student Leadership ...

a renewed commitment to getting involved, and they saw how voting could be a tool for change. We incorporated a variety of hands-on activities and presented all of our written material in large font and an easy-to-read format, and we shared those materials statewide.

So, some of the workshops were successful—but the workshops that weren't successful were very interesting! In one class we visited, things took a bad turn before we even started talking about voting.

"Tell us your name and where you are from," we asked them, as usual. The answers we got were loaded with meaning. One person couldn't decide how to answer the question. "I don't really know where I'm from," she said. "I'm not really from anywhere." Another declared, "I'm from the city, but I'm living here." The answers grew more heated as we went around the circle, till one participant really laid it out for us: "I'm really from Worcester, but I'm stuck in this damn boring town till I get my GED." It went downhill from there!

Looking Back

In retrospect, I understood why this common workshop opener—and the whole workshop—was such a disaster. This particular group of students was largely comprised of DSS and DYS-involved youth who had been relocated from urban environments to our more rural towns. They didn't feel connected to a place. In fact, they were "placed" there by others, often against their own will. They certainly didn't pay attention to the local issues and campaigns, nor did they feel that the government was looking out for them. Instead, they saw "community" and "government" as a series of forces that were lined up against them. Voting—and any type of community involvement—seemed to them like meaningless gestures against such

an array of power.

I might have thought that this lack of connection to place was an isolated issue, one that arose out of the specific circumstances of these young people. But I heard about the importance of "connection to place" again, this time in a workshop we ran for our own staff. We asked them whether they voted, and what made the difference for them when they chose to vote or not to vote. What we heard was that the staff, who were on the whole extremely committed to

our communities—it's no wonder that "getting involved in the community" is not a compelling option.

This line of thought reminded me of why so many of our leadership programs have been successful. We start each session with a community building activity, using the range of participatory games well known to workshop leaders. As we introduce new concepts and skills, we continue to integrate them with structured, community-building activities. Our success depends so much on build-

It seems to me that this is the most important work of leadership building—creating a safe place that so the desire to "belong" can emerge.

the political process, almost always voted in national elections. But they didn't vote in local and state elections unless they felt personally connected there. They needed to have a sense of belonging before they would take the time to educate themselves about the issues and participate in elections. When they lived in a place that didn't feel like "home," they didn't vote.

As this theme of "place" emerged, I started to realize that it was an important lesson, not just for voter education, but for encouraging community leadership and civic participation in general. So many of our students—and so many of us all—have had negative experiences with groups, whether it's in our families, in our schools, or in the community at large. Many students are survivors of physical or emotional abuse. Others speak of feeling left out, harassed, or embarrassed in school settings. Some have lived with the violence of war. Many live in poverty. Add to those experiences an understandable anger at injustice and the inequalities of power within

ing a positive connection to a group and creating opportunities for participants to interact with one another in nonthreatening and meaningful ways.

It seems to me that this is the most important work of leadership building—creating a safe place so the desire to "belong" can emerge. Somehow, just feeling a sense of belonging seems to rekindle the hope that it's possible to build a more just world. Once we have those intangibles—a sense of belonging and faith that change is possible—teaching the actual skills of leadership comes fairly easily. But without those core "issues of the heart," all of our skillbuilding—whether it's about voting or any other topic—is irrelevant.

Margaret Anderson is the volunteer coordinator at the Literacy Project in western Massachusetts. She can be reached at <margaret@literacyproject.org>

Student Experiences ...

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■ We also attended student leadership meetings at Northeast SABES, where we could get many ideas and were inspired by other schools' students and instructors.

■ I am paying more attention to my own health and to health information. I started cutting out some good information about health from newspapers and magazines for the ILC students' bulletin boards.

■ We feel good about providing important health information and health opportunities to ILC students.

■ Earning money feels good, too! For some of us, this was our first experience to earn money in the U.S.

■ The best thing for me about being on the health team was I could meet very good friends, and through our facilitator I also could see many nice people.

■ It was fun to work with our team! We are grateful for such a great opportunity!

Fatima Chibane, a former student at the ILC, is from Algeria. She assists in the ILC theater group and literacy class, and teaches two conversation classes. She can be reached at <chibane6@msn.com>.

Eriko Cummings, a former student at the ILC, is from Japan. She volunteers as an assistant and manages informational bulletin boards. She can be reached at <momo3green@comcast.net >

Student Writing

Reflections on Student Leadership

BY SANDRA MARTINEAU, GED STUDENT

Student leadership has done a lot for me. It has opened a door for me to teach others in helping them understand things they don't know. To me, student leadership is the best thing for adult learners, especially if you are an immigrant trying to learn about the ways of this country. Imagine coming here not knowing how to speak the English language and not knowing about U.S. culture or being afraid to speak up for yourself no matter what class you're in.

Now, with student leadership, adults can come to know and learn things with a helping hand to guide them. My student leadership group meets approximately twice a week. We put our minds together and that's where it all starts.

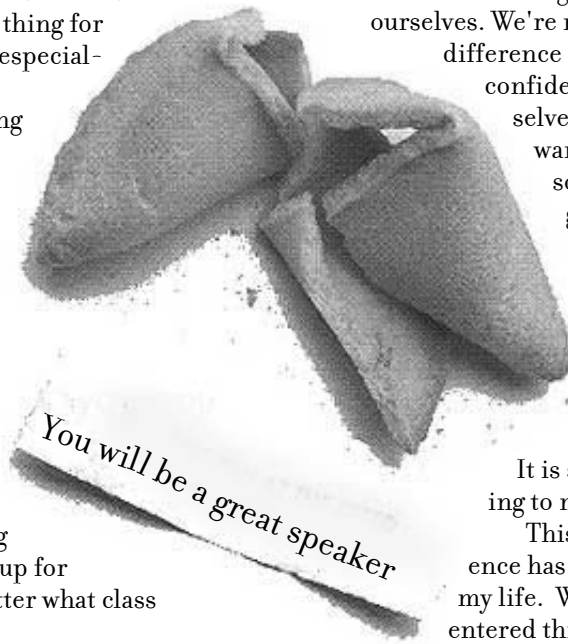
Focus Groups

This year, we conducted a focus group in all the ESOL and GED classes to see what the students wanted to learn about. It is helpful to have the student leaders so if some-

one doesn't understand a concept, the leaders can help explain or translate. That's what this program helps us to do. It helps us help others and it makes us feel good about ourselves. We're making a difference and gaining confidence in ourselves. So if you want to do something good and feel good about it, go and join a student leadership group. It is so rewarding to me.

This experience has changed my life. When I entered this program, I was so frightened to speak up. Now I am speaking in front of large groups in other classrooms and at SABES workshops. I've recently spoken at the podium at a local school committee meeting. It's amazing! I feel like a new person inside!

Sandra Martineau is a GED student at Methuen Adult Learning Center.



NEW Resource

Cómo Dirigir Reuniones Eficaces y Facilitar Grupos

Or: *Running Effective Meetings and Facilitating Groups*. Originally produced by staff at SABES Northeast and now translated into Spanish, this 28-page PDF provides a clear overview of some basic skills related to organizational life. The English language version (in PDF) also is available. Find it on the Web at <www.sabes.org>.

Student Involvement to Student Leadership: A Continuum

BY LENORE BALLIRO

What's the difference between student involvement and student leadership? How can you promote both in your ABE program? Many ABE programs do have some degree of student involvement in their operations. Students participate in activities and celebrations that involve the whole program; they engage in projects and develop products that benefit students across classes. Other programs promote and support strong student leadership by including students in the decision-making process of classes and programs. In these cases, students may have representative, binding votes in the hiring of new staff; they may represent student input in all the various committees established by the program. Further, programs who promote strong student leadership often offer mentoring, guidance, and other support for students to take active roles in their communities.

Perhaps the first step in evaluating where your program rests in the involvement - leadership continuum is to reflect on your current practices. The questionnaire on the next page is a tool to help you with this reflection. Once you get a clear picture of how students are involved in your program, you can make informed choices that suit your program best.

The Power of Student Voices

Continued from page 10

By the end of the second session each team had brainstormed a list of items they considered important for student enrichment. Over the next several sessions, the students continued to collaborate in teams and as a group to work these ideas into survey questions.

Administering the Survey

During the survey administration stage, students were able to apply the listening skills they had been practicing. They also worked on public speaking. They administered the survey in every SCALE classroom. They acted as interpreters and/or facilitators, honing their public speaking skills with each presentation.

"In this program, I had the opportunity to practice the abilities I have and learn from others," said Rosimeire Lima, an ESOL student. "I have more confidence and I am making new friendships. This is important because I like to be active in the community where I live."

Lotti and Lovit helped students organize the data they collected by

breaking the surveys into smaller groups: ESOL, ABE, and ASE classes. Although the surveys were the same for all the classes, each group received the survey on different-colored paper. A student intern from Tufts University tabulated the results and input them into an Excel worksheet. This made it easy for Lovit and Lotti to produce graphics depicting the survey results.

Presenting the Results

As the date for the statewide student leadership conference approached, the group "switched gears" and focused on how to present their project and work to conference attendees.

Team members came together on a Saturday to work on their visual presentation. They collaborated to ensure that all ideas were presented and that the display showcased all that they had learned. The result was a visually pleasing, three-way display board loaded with information.

At the conference, SCALE's student leaders presented "The Power of Student Voices" during a morning workshop. Students took turns explaining the program, the goals, and the process that brought them to

the conference. They worked from note cards, but they also added their own feelings, approach, and humor. The student leaders also presented the survey results to SCALE's community planning partners.

"This program changed my life," said Ikram Botan, an ABE student. "I learned how to talk in front of people and to feel less nervous."

SCALE is continuing the Student Leadership Team during FY'07 and plans are being developed for the team's activities. Several student leaders will return and we will be recruiting new students. We are excited about the difference that we can make at SCALE.

Sheryl Lovit is the Adult Secondary Education program administrator at SCALE where she also co-facilitates student leadership efforts. She can be reached at <slovit@k12.somerville.ma.us>.

Janine Lotti is a beginner level ESOL teacher and a student leadership facilitator at SCALE. She can be reached at: <jandjoe@rcn.com>.

How Involved Are Your Students?

By MINA REDDY

Check whether students are involved in any of the following activities. If so, check the degree of decision-making power students have. You can add additional activities to the list. There are no right or wrong answers. This is a way to help you think more consciously about ways students are involved.

Student Leadership and Student Involvement Self-Assessment by Program Staff or Students

Degrees of student decision-making power:

Low	Give input to staff
Medium	Part of a group decision with staff
High	Full decision-making power

Student Leadership and Involvement	Yes/No	Low	Medium	High
Student council				
ABE Advisory Board				
Planning and evaluation team for workplace education				
Program curriculum development				
Fundraising for the program				
Outreach for the program				
Program evaluation				
Health team				
Student newspaper				
Student support or mentoring activities				
Civic education project				
Advocacy for ABE or community issues				
Community education/public presentations				

Mina Reddy is the director of the SABES Central Resource Center at World Education. She can be reached at <mreddy@worlded.org>.

Adding VALUE

BY MARTY FINSTERBUSCH AND DAVID ROSEN

Voice of Adult Literacy United for Education (VALUE) is a national organization of the alumni of adult literacy education programs. It is a group of individuals who are learning—or have learned—to read, write, or speak English as adults. It is the only national adult literacy organization created and totally run by adult learners. It is a resource for adult learners, teachers, and other practitioners, and also for programs and state level adult literacy education groups, to increase student involvement and improve adult literacy education programs.

Background and History

VALUE began in the late 1980's as adult learners and graduates met at state and national conferences and as they began to get positions working in adult literacy education. As they learned more about how adult literacy education was delivered across the country, they saw that the field was fragmented, and they wanted to help bring it together. The first attempt at a national adult learner organization was in 1995-1996, an effort in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, called "Gather." Although this effort did not succeed, the idea of having a national adult learner organization caught on. In 1998, adult learner leaders called for a national meeting to create a new adult learner organization, and they chose the Highlander Center in Tennessee for the location. This was the beginning of VALUE.

There were 45 adult learners and a few practitioners at that meeting, from all over the country, including New England. The first president of VALUE, elected at that meeting, was Archie Willard from Iowa. The second president is Calvin Miles from New York. The executive director, and coauthor of this article, is Marty Finsterbusch from

Pennsylvania. In 2001, VALUE became an independent not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization and, since then, it has been able to accept tax-deductible donations. Also in that year, VALUE opened a national office, in Chester, Pennsylvania.

In addition to a full-time executive director, VALUE employs work-study students from Pennsylvania universities or community colleges, and VALUE has an elected board of directors. As of December 2006, ten adult learners from across the country (Vermont, New York, Delaware, Washington DC., Illinois, Kentucky, Florida, Oklahoma, California, and Washington) comprise the board membership. .

Leadership Training Institutes

VALUE's activities have included adult learner-organized biannual, national learner leadership institutes in Indiana, Ohio, Florida, and Washington, DC. In July, 2007, there will be one in Connecticut. VALUE has also designed and implemented regional adult learner core leadership training institutes. These institutes were piloted in Massachusetts in collaboration with the Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Literacy (MassAAL), as well as in Delaware, Washington, DC. and California. They have been offered in a dozen states across the country. The leadership institutes are designed as a program improvement tool, enabling adult learners and practitioners to learn to communicate and work together to evaluate their program and to take actions to improve it.

Upcoming VALUE Events

Although VALUE has been active all over the country, the fifth national leadership institute will be the first one in New England. (Please

see page 27 for more specifics about the conference.) This institute will include dialogue about adult literacy and the upcoming presidential election. Adult learners from across the country will attend; adult learners in New England who may not have attended a VALUE leadership institute before are especially welcome. Value expects from 150-200 people to attend. Practitioners may attend too, if accompanied by an adult learner. State adult literacy groups, such as MassAAL or the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education (MCAE), could sponsor an event at the institute, thus supporting adult learner national leadership. VALUE does not issue a call for presenters for leadership training institutes. Instead, it determines what leadership workshops are needed, and then solicits adult learners to do them. Sometimes adult learners team up with a practitioner to do a workshop.

Register for the Conference

Those who want to attend the leadership institute should go to the VALUE Web site at <www.valueusa.org>. They can register, book a hotel room, pay online, or print the registration form and mail in a check. The registration fee is \$250 for an adult learner member of VALUE and includes several meals and entertainment events. Hotel rooms are \$105/night for two people. Often, attendees share rooms. Those who join VALUE as a member (\$20 for two years for adult learners, \$29 for other learner leadership supporters, \$50 for a program membership) get the leadership institute registration discount price of \$250. In many cases, adult literacy programs pick up some or all of the costs for representatives to attend.

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Strengthening Student-Centered Education through Student Leadership

By ADDIE ROSE MAYER

In the adult education field we pride ourselves on having "student-centered education." Usually we're referring to our teaching and our classrooms. We ask classes what topics students want to learn. We survey students about what context and content they'd like their teachers to use while teaching them English. Truly student-centered education, however, includes more than classroom surveys. It also includes students' opinions and leadership in all aspects of the program, outside of the classroom as much as inside the classroom. As a full-time student support coordinator/student counselor, my focus is making student-centered education saturate our whole program. The

on multiple levels that responds to the barriers and issues students face, which include immigration status, race, poverty, and other identity politics. We accept responsibility to nurture confidence and teach advocacy skills, better preparing them to overcome their barriers. What better way to do that than by building our programs looking through a student leadership lens?

This lens means including students in as many facets of our program as we can. We grab any chance for student input, student initiation, and student opinion. At each off-site visit I make to assess another community program, I invite students to join me to share their opinion. For school wide events, I ask for

Fostering student leadership through a focus on student-centered learning offers skills building, personal and community empowerment, better self-esteem, stronger student support, better retention, deepened community, and much more. ALP students' own words, in this article and others they have written themselves, profoundly illustrate this.

Students learn many valuable skills through participating in leadership initiatives that one might not learn in a classroom. For example, during a student holiday planning party one interested student learned about fundraising for a student raffle. "You just walk in there and say, 'Give me something for our school's raffle?' And then they give you gifts, just like that?" The student was surprised that such a bold request could pay off!

Student leadership offers personal and community empowerment. Many adult students have been silenced by past experiences. Leadership initiatives can help people regain lost voices and strengthen wavering ones. When I was invited to participate in a focus group at the Private Industry Council to discuss Boston's one-stop career centers, I invited a group of students to accompany me to one of Boston's career center's orientations. After our visit we sat in South Station with coffee and discussed the usefulness, strengths, and weaknesses of the one-stop career centers based on their experience that night. One student said "I have a lot of things to say, I'm not afraid to say them here."

Unpacking the various issues that adult students face can be challenging. The process frequently leads to the same conclusion: stu-

Truly student-centered education, however, includes more than classroom surveys. It also includes students' opinion and leadership in all aspects of the program, outside of the classroom as much as inside the classroom.

most successful way to do so is to constantly look for, and create, student leadership opportunities.

Student-centered education is a philosophy about respecting our students as accomplished adults with vast life experience and personal knowledge of what will best serve them. Our responsibility as educators is to provide instruction

student participation in planning. Last year we started a student council that meets every two weeks. The council is comprised of various level ESOL students, an ABE student, and a student who graduated from our program. Most recently, a team has helped bring a dream to fruition by creating a mentorship program for our GED and ADP programs.

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Strengthening Student-Centered ...

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dents need trust and support. Individual support outlets are never enough; thus, continual support coming from students supporting one another is key to student success. The ALP student council wrote a welcome letter to new students entering our program and started bringing new students on tours their first day of school to "make them feel more welcome." In the letter the council wrote, "This school cares about every student. The teachers and staff are here to help you learn. They are available for questions. Students, staff, teachers, and student council will listen to your concerns and ideas."

Administrators can make as many attendance rules and processes as possible, but no strategy encourages better retention than students holding each other responsible. Allowing for student leadership to grow in class and then reinforcing it outside of the class leaves monthly attendance sheets looking pretty good. Last spring, during a

graduation celebration for 21 GED/ADP graduates, we opened up the microphone for students who wanted to speak about their experiences. One student stood up and recited the most memorable parts of his incredible experience. "No one was left out. When someone missed school Amanda always kicked his butt until he agreed to be there every night."

Student commitment is the foundation of adult education. The ALP student council recently created a student contract to outline students' commitment to the program. The council suggested the first agreement on the contract be, "To take responsibility for my learning." During a planning meeting to start up our new Mentorship Program, where recent graduates partner with current students to offer support and commitment, a participant said, "our community helped our personal determination."

The message in ALP students' words is clear: we must continue to see student leadership as a program-wide lens, through which we should look to assess our own performance as educational providers.

We must remember that student leadership does not come only in the form of a student council, or participating in immigrant day at the state house, but is born into many visions through holding a student-centered philosophy at the core of our program planning.

"I loved going around to each class to tell other students about the holiday party, to help them get excited. When I first arrived I sat in the back of the literacy class. I knew all the answers to the questions and I couldn't believe how much English I knew. I didn't realize it because I'm challenged in my class now, but seeing the level before mine made me realize this." (Translated from ESOL Level 1 student's response to her experience visiting other program ESOL classes to announce the holiday party as part of our holiday party student planning group.)

AddieRose Mayer is the counselor at the Jamaica Plain Community Center Adult Learning Program. She can be reached at <a.mayer@jppcalp.org>.

Adding VALUE

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VALUE is also working with the nonpartisan Literacy President Group providing leadership training. The training supports adult learners to participate in caucuses, house parties, and other events in the early presidential primary states. It also supports adult learners' participation in other activities leading up to the election of the next president of the United States. The training is specifically intended to help adult learners talk with presidential candidates about issues that concern them.

VALUE will be presenting at the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) national conference in Philadelphia in March, 2007 and is helping to develop an adult learner track for the 2008 COABE conference in St. Louis, Missouri. VALUE will also be presenting an adult learner leadership track at the South Central Regional Literacy Conference in June 2007. This conference focuses on southern states such as Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Texas.

VALUE has recently been approved to raise money online, on EBAE. State adult learner organizations can partner with VALUE and

jointly raise funds for their state organization and for national adult learner leadership. For more information about VALUE, please look at the VALUE Web site at <www.valueusa.org>.

Marty Finsterbusch is the executive director of VALUE. He can be reached at (610) 876-7625 or by email at <office@valueusa.org>.

David Rosen is the former director of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute and is now a consultant for adult basic education programs in the US and abroad. He can be reached at <Drosen@comcast.com> .

www.valueusa.org www.valueusa.org www.valueusa.org

Standing T.A.L.L. (Taunton Adult Literacy Learners)

By BARBARA J. ROSE

During my second year of teaching adult learners I began to hear the term "student leadership" at staff meetings and professional development opportunities. I approached our director, Bernadette Driscoll, with the idea of starting a leadership group at our program, Taunton Public Schools, Bristol Community College Adult Education Partnership (TPS./BCC.) She gave positive support, so I proceeded.

My initial approach to getting a student leadership group started wasn't the best one. I had forgotten that a large percentage of our population felt unempowered, and the student leadership idea might have been just a little threatening. At first I had tried a casual approach, where I would say something like "Stop by on Wednesday and we'll talk about your ideas." Even though several individual students had shown some interest, they didn't come that Wednesday! After two weeks of this casual approach I drew on some educational theory from my past. Many years ago I had attended a Normalization Workshop at Syracuse University in New York. It was here that I learned a game called "If I Were King." The theory works on the premise that you have to give people a comfortable environment to overcome their barriers. My GED. class was the perfect place to provide that environment and to open the door to a student leadership group.

I asked my students if they had ever read a fairy tale. They had, so I explained that for 30 minutes we were going to become kings, as if we were in a fairy tale. If there were anything about school they would change, they could safely say what it

was, but they would be required later to come up with a way to make that change. During the week we played the game twice. I brought up leadership again and explained that it was a way to play if "If I Were King." When another student from another class came and talked to me about leadership, I knew I had broken the ice. The unofficial leaders began to take action. I made flyers and posted three meetings. Everyone came to the first, where I gave an overview of leadership and what it would mean to our school. The students listened



Job Shadowing in Taunton

intently. We discussed the theory behind brainstorming and set a second meeting. All participants agreed to try and bring someone new to the next meeting. I explained to them that all meetings would be held after school hours, as I had to teach class and I did not want to disrupt their learning. They all agreed!

Thirteen students attended the second meeting, where the students decided, after brainstorming, to survey all staff and students to find out what they would want printed in a student handbook. The survey was created by another brainstorming session. We decided to have each person at our school list three ideas

they would like to see in a student handbook. The survey was published and distributed by the students. The students collected the survey and tallied the results. Now we not only had student representation, but we had the opinion of all our school participants. During this time we collected handbooks from various places to review their contents. We discussed the fact that policy making such as attendance, smoking, cell phones, etc., was not our job; these policies were set by the administration. We decided to set up a meeting

with our administrative staff so they could help us. Bernie attended our meeting and drew up an outline of policies for us to use. At the end of the project we made a 34-page model of our handbook.

At our open house, the students presented the model and a log-book that documented our journey. They also presented our handbook project at the

2005 MassAAL conference. Ernest Best, director of MassAAL, and Sally Cabb, then-director of Southeast SABES, awarded Bernadette the Director of the Year award. Bernie was willing to take a chance on us. She showed us trust and confidence in what we were doing. The staff of the program also was supportive and helpful. The students fed off this positive support and they went on a journey.

Bernadette asked us to put the handbook on a CD so it could go to the print shop. During the summer Brenda, the leadership president, and I did just that.

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Standing T.A.L.L. ...

Continued from page 19

In September of 2005 all returning and new students were given a copy of the handbook, which contains calendar pages for homework assignments. The pages also contain pictures of students, teachers, and student-authored words of wisdom. All school policies are written clearly. Important contact telephone numbers and information about free health care are easily found. The response from everyone was so positive that in 2006 the book was updated and reprinted.

While working on the handbook the students also held a teacher appreciation luncheon, started a coffee club, and began a mentor program for students who wanted extra academic help. Leadership skills were showing up all over the place!

During the fall of 2005 the student leadership group held another brainstorm session. One of the leadership members brought up concerns in the area of employment. Once she brought it up we could not put it down. To the survey we went! We learned that 72 percent of our

population wanted help with employment skills. Again we had Bernadette's support. We arranged for six students to go on job shadow/mentor trips. They met with someone in their employment field of interest, went on job tours, and acquired first-hand knowledge about the job. Two workshops were held for resume writing. Students began talking to teachers about work situations and asking for help with job applications. Our school once again became "family," everyone was helping. Our community planner, Donald Cleary, worked with some of our partners to obtain other employment information.

Five students and I attended a career center job fair. The students had been hesitant to attend job fairs before, explaining: "All those people, people in suits, asking a lot of questions." We walked around and practiced handshakes, confidence, and smiles. As the hours went by the students began to get the idea of what this was all about. They started to ask questions and obtained information they knew other students could use. As the year went by, six of our shyest leadership members put the project boards together and

attended the 2006 MassAAL conference. Four of these students presented at the conference.

Student leadership has been a boost for all of us at TPS/BCC. Aside from two small stipends from MassAAL, our leadership coordination has been on a volunteer basis. At present we stand T.A.L.L while we make the coffee each day. Seasoned students mentor new students for their first few weeks of school. New students feel welcomed and a part of the group very quickly. Some of the leadership members attended an employment interest assessment group. Students attend community partnership meetings. Students attend Taunton Literacy Council meetings. These are all significant changes that promote and maintain student leadership within our community of learners. We are looking forward to our open house in 2007. At TPS/BCC students have a voice and we are listening.

Barbara Rose is a student leadership facilitator and teacher at the Taunton Public Schools/ Bristol Community College Adult Education Partnership. She can be reached at <jbwe50@verizon.net>.

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Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education

Student Leadership to the Max

By CAREY REID

Let's start with an admission: Much as I would love to claim that I am the most egalitarian of practitioners, it might very well be that I have been slow to notice some remarkable achievements among adult literacy students I have known. I'd like to take you through the journey that led me to reach this embarrassing conclusion--so you can avoid making the mistakes that I did!

For the last few years, I've been exploring with teachers just how far we can push the concept of using authentic materials in teaching. Our first attempts involved using the newspaper, research reports, public service documents, and Internet articles for reading and writing tasks, even with mid-level readers.

After gratifying success with that approach, we began using students' own work as "authentic" materials--e.g. using their draft sentences and paragraphs as the bases for instruction rather than commercially produced materials. When this approach proved to be successful as well, we pushed even further by asking students to design their own learning projects (e.g., re-search on financial aid); create the handouts for a class (e.g., the steps for process-writing an essay); and develop the assessments (e.g., a rubric for scoring the quality of a formal letter).

Every push on a new door for student leadership in the world of the classroom revealed to my partners and me that we were underestimating just how much knowledge and how many skills students already possess. It became apparent to us that we needed to develop the ability to recognize knowledge and skills students possess when they are

not expressing them in traditionally academic ways. For example, we had to learn to recognize grammar and mechanics knowledge when it is expressed in non-academic terms ("You have to put in one of those things before the 's'" as opposed to "An apostrophe is required to indicate the possessive case of this noun.")

As you can see, this constant pushing on to the next plateau in the quest for the Totally Authentic Classroom has led me to consider the concept of student leadership more deeply. Recently, I recalled a story a former student told me several years ago. "Roy," an African-American male in his early thirties, could just not pass the GED math test, despite lots of effort and many attempts. This problem kept him from pursuing his dream of becoming a Boston police officer.

So Roy decided to go in another direction. He researched the laws and regulations on gun ownership, small arms training, and bonding, and discovered that a GED is not required for any of these. So, he started his own security business, which is thriving. His company guards homes and businesses, picks up people at the airport, and keeps the peace at parties. One of his biggest clients is--are you ready?--the Boston Police Department.

More Hidden Leadership Stories

Here's another story from a former student. "Rachel" started a childcare center in her home, which I visited one time. Rachel proudly showed me about and introduced me to her charges, aged eight months to ten years. She had converted the living room into a science

center, complete with growing plants, small animals, and lots of pasted-up charts and photos. In the basement was the arts center, where projects were propped and pasted-up everywhere and several were in process on a big worktable. I didn't see a TV anywhere. I had arrived at lunchtime and discovered the kids busily preparing the meal, which they had planned in advance themselves! Older kids took care of younger kids and...well, you get the picture. Rachel also needed her GED to get her center permanently licensed, but the state regulators were so impressed by her model that they kept granting her extensions for completing her GED. They also featured her center in presentations and publications. They became de facto advocates for her, alerting her to grant opportunities and helping to write the applications. By the time she got her GED, she was practically on their staff.

I'd like to share one more example of hidden student leadership. I used to bring clothes that needed mending or altering to a local dry cleaner, but now I bring them to "Stael," a Brazilian immigrant who is seamstress to scores of fellow immigrants. I wonder how many immigrants like Stael are providing daycare, laundry, cooking, landscaping, haircutting, and other paid services within their communities? Aren't these self-initiating individuals demonstrating genuine leadership skills?

Trends in Immigrant Initiative

Last year, the Immigrant Learning Center in Malden part-

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nered with Lowell University researchers to study trends in immigrant business and home ownership in several North Shore towns. The researchers sought out "key informants"—that is, individuals likely to be highly knowledgeable on the topics. They found immigrant owners of construction companies, restaurants, and other businesses and a great many homeowners. Among the findings of these studies were that scores of immigrants start their own businesses without ever going to a bank or using a social service agency (e.g. the Small Business Administration), and scores of immigrants buy their own homes without ever visiting a realtor or bank or mortgage office. These trends illustrate levels of self sufficiency and leadership within our students' communities that largely go unnoticed.

The informants stated that very often those offices or agencies whose purported purpose is to help them did not include a single individual who spoke the informants' native languages. Also, the red tape and the many requirements often blocked progress. So, the immigrants have set up their own processes and mechanisms among themselves. They don't need the banks or official agencies. They've learned to save, borrow, and lend large amounts of money among themselves. Certain individuals have developed the skills for floating required documents and thus become the go-to people for these hurdles within their immigrant group.

The fact is that our learners are starting businesses, hiring each other, buying homes, borrowing and lending money, and developing careers in forms and ways that many of us are not equipped to notice, by dint of our more traditional upbringings and experiences. Many if not most of us think "bank" and "mortgage" and "employment" and

attach limited conceptualizations to those terms. Meanwhile, many of our learners are succeeding in a parallel universe that does not use the paths, processes, or institutions that we feel they have no choice but to use.

Underexplored Possibilities

To my mind, these stories and studies point to areas of student leadership that require an extra effort on our parts to detect. I believe that our systems for validating student ability—e.g. Equipped for the Future or MassDOE's countable outcomes initiative—cast a broad net to capture the full range of our students' "leaderly" achievements, but unless teachers in the classroom are equipped to notice these achievements, they will go unnoticed. In those cases, we both run the risk of underestimating our students' abilities and miss opportunities to build on the knowledge, skills, and experience they could bring to the classroom.

These days, I'm wondering whether the next step toward the Totally Authentic Classroom is to periodically pose questions designed to discover students' hidden leadership achievements and to do so right out loud. Here are a few I've come up with:

- Do you provide a special service to family, friends, or members of your community?
- Have you helped another to resolve a serious problem?
- Have you advocated for someone who was not able to advocate for her/himself?
- Have you helped someone else to buy a home, get a job, or move ahead in his/her life in some way?
- Do you have special knowledge or skills that you have shared or taught to another?
- Have you done something recently that required leadership skills, and of which you are proud?

I would guess that many practitioners in our field assume that it is part of their job to develop supposedly rare or even absent leadership skills among our students. However, if instead we were to assume that many of our students already possess and apply leadership ability in their lives, we will move in much richer directions. For example, we could encourage students to apply and showcase discovered knowledge and skills within the classroom. Perhaps some of the unsung leaders would be willing to report on their successes, or write them up for sharing, or run a how-to workshop on their particular off-the-radar abilities.

A year or so ago, I was glad that I was able to point out to "Thad," who grew up on a tobacco farm in North Carolina, that his starting a small landscaping business in Hyde Park was a wonderful achievement. A fourth grade level reader, Thad was convinced he was "dumb." But it's sobering to me that I learned about Thad's achievement by accident.

Notes

Watanabe, P., Liu, M & Borges-Mendez, R. (2005). *Immigrant Entrepreneurs and neighborhood revitalization: Studies of three Boston neighborhoods*. Malden, MA: The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.

The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. & Santiago, J., Jennings, J., & Carrion, L. (2005). *Immigrant homebuyers in Lawrence and Lowell, Massachusetts: Keys to the revitalization of the cities*. Malden, MA: The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.

Carey Reid is a staff developer for SABES, concentrating on curriculum and assessment development. He can be reached at <creid@worlded.org>

Student Writing

The Voice of Hope

BY ERICA MIEKLE, RUBY MALDONADO, AND ORLANDO VARGAS

Introduction by Erica Mielke

In January, 2006, the South Berkshire Educational Collaborative received a Student Leadership Mini-Grant from SABES West. The project consisted of 5 student leaders from our ESOL classes getting involved in the local community radio station (97.7 fm, WBCR-1p in Great Barrington). They received training on operating the board and other studio equipment, as well as attending sessions on FCC and station regulations. After becoming official programmers, they developed an original weekly radio program—La Voz de la Esperanza, or "The Voice of Hope." This bilingual radio program is a huge success and continues broadcasting every Thursday night from 7:30 to 9 p.m. (You can listen online at <www.berkshireradio.org>). Following are two of the participants of this leadership project sharing some of their thoughts.



Reflection by Ruby Maldonado

I reflect about the Student Leadership Project; it's an excellent opportunity for all the students who are learning English. With this project everyone in the school can know that we are important and the people who created this project believe in us as students and as people who are here fighting for our lives so far from our homes.

About my experience in this project I can say I've been feeling great and I've been learning more English because I need to plan the program "The Voice of Hope" every other week for the radio station. This program is bilingual and my partner and I need to talk in English and Spanish. Besides I think that the program, "The Voice of Hope," can encourage more people to learn English here in the Berkshires and be part of this great project.

Idea for the Future by Orlando Vargas

It was surprising to me when I went to the annual meeting of "Student Leadership Project" in Worcester last spring. A lot of projects and different ideas were going on and a very large spectrum of

dreams were displayed there, all of them as a collective expression, born from the English classes, of course. It was really great for me to meet them!!!

But there was a project that really captured my attention. It was a sort of performance that showed a common situation of a person who doesn't speak English, and he was trying to buy something in a store. It was very funny because it reflected a real situation that happens every day to immigrants, especially if they don't speak fluent English.

It was exciting to see students from different ethnic groups interacting like a brilliant team, in a perfect connection between them.

Another interesting aspect of the meeting was the extensive variety of student leaders coming from many different places around all of Massachusetts, women and men with a lot of uneasiness.

At that time it came to my mind an idea that probably could help the immigrant community to resolve typical problems that they are suffering as Immigrants, who are looking for better conditions, living and working in USA, joining efforts, experiences, and resources like a great community which truly we are into American society.

But I think all serious organizations need structure, regulation, plans, and goals in order to be an effective form to help the community that they represent. A student leadership group could be the perfect environment where they could build a sort of guild, which represents, in a democratic way, the immigrant community.

I think it would take another Student Leadership Project to build this group, joining ideas from leaders coming as representatives from all programs in Massachusetts.

I am presenting this idea hoping to make an echo into the minds of student leaders.

Erica Mielke is a community planner, counselor, and student advocate at the South Berkshire Educational Collaborative. She can be reached at <erica_mielke@hotmail.com>.

Ruby Maldonado and Orlando Vargas can be reached through Erica Mielke at <erica_mielke@hotmail.com>.

At WAITT House, Students Become Staff

By CHARLOTTE STEWART DE-BARROS

WAITT House, which stands for "We're All In This Together," is an adult literacy program located on Mount Pleasant Street in Dorchester Massachusetts. It has many educational programs and resources, not to mention great people. When I was given the pleasure to interview former students at WAITT House and ask them why they now choose to work there, I received very interesting stories of inspiration and encouragement. A high number of WAITT House staff are former students.

Luis de Pina

When I first met this motivated teacher I was impressed by his computer skills. He was my computer literacy instructor at WAITT House's College Connections program. His drive to help those wanting to learn computer knowledge is exceptional. I asked Mr. de Pina what made him want to teach at WAITT House after he attended as a student. He answered me by saying, "I felt it was a good place and the students like me." This teacher from Cape Verde is not new to educating others; he was also an educator in his country. Mr. de Pina graduated from WAITT House in 2000 and began to work there in 2001. I could see in his eyes and his smile as he helps his fellow students in the workings of the computer that it really pleases him. I could also see in his heart the love for his career field. I asked Mr. de Pina about his plans for the future. He said, "I want to finish my associates degree and attend UMass Boston to obtain a BA." I am sure that when Mr. de Pina goes on to pursue his BA he will continue to support so many others like myself at WAITT House

Larry Nelson

Mr. Larry Nelson seemed to be a "jack of all trades" in education. When I first saw this man, he was assisting two or three students simultaneously in the computer lab at WAITT House. Before that, Mr. Nelson was just a strong voice from a short distance: he taught in a classroom next to mine. I asked Mr. Nelson what brought him to WAITT House. He seemed to have a history

a mile long that he carried around with him. He told me, "Faith brought me to WAITT House." He told me how he was once a student at Brandeis University and had to leave because of lack of funds. He worked as a welder and then in human services field for a while. He was doing well when he decided to help a family member by donating a kidney. Everything seemed to go wrong after the great service he provided. His



health began to fail, and he could not do the same type of work. Larry said later he found his way to WAITT House, attended classes, received an award, and decided to work there. Mr. Nelson said, "I saw a need that needed to be filled," and he felt he was the person to fill it. Larry also helps run a men's group called AMEN and provides many other services to the community. Mr. Nelson seems to be comfortable in the learning environment at WAITT House and likes being there.

Ailene Scott

Meeting Ms. Ailene Scott was a pleasure. As I began to interview Ms. Scott, I heard the gratitude she has towards WAITT House. I asked Ms. Scott how she became affiliated with WAITT House, and she said she was a student there from September 1993 through 1995. Soon after, Ms. Scott was encouraged to interview for a position at WAITT House, which she got. Ms. Scott teaches, tutors, leads a women's group, and serves on the Student Council. Ms. Scott said that "the model of 'We're All In This Together' really stands firm at WAITT House." She shared how the model was shown. She told me when her brother died, staff members and students alike were given permission to be dismissed to attend the funeral and burial services. Ms. Scott said she really likes the atmosphere at WAITT House and all those who helped her and still do.

Ana Cardoso

If you were to meet Ms. Ana Cardoso, you may assume that this Patti-sized-all-about-business-looking-woman was one who knows how to roll with the changelings. Ms. Cardoso is all of those things and more; she is also kind, gentle, and caring. When Ms. Cardoso and I sat down and began to speak she answered my questions with clarity and conviction. Ms. Cardoso came to the United States seven years ago from Cape Verde where she was a manager in a post office for years. When she came to Boston she

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Students As Teachers

By JOANNE MASON

Sylvia was frustrated with me. "Why are you helping him? He has a dictionary." She tilted her head toward another student who was quietly struggling to write directions to her church. "You should be helping her."

This was Sylvia's way of helping her team, her fellow students at the Read/Write/Now Adult Learning Center in Springfield. "Team" is Sylvia's word, one she used with pride when her class composed group poems in the style of Langston Hughes, poems revealing their feelings on being adults learning to read and write.

I was a volunteer with Read/Write/Now for only a short time, but I'm positive that the lessons I learned from the students were more valuable than anything they learned from me.

I took literacy for granted. When I was 4, my 9-year-old brother built me a desk out of cardboard boxes and taught me to raise my hand and ask questions. He cut vivid letters

out of construction paper and hung them from the ceiling with some of Mom's sewing thread. Once, he snuck into my room with a Magic Marker and wrote the names of all my toys on the actual toys. Literacy-wise, I was off and running and never stopped.

As I got older, it was amazing to me that these experiences weren't universal.

"A beginning reader is not a beginning thinker," is the motto on Read/Write/Now's promotional brochure.

Take Theodore. For weeks, I watched him grapple with text, trying to make meaning out of alphabet soup. I quietly cheered him on as he wrote two sentences about his vacation. He stalled out over spelling, wanting every word to be absolutely perfect, hesitant to take a chance on just getting the words out and letting the context carry the meaning.

But when his class reached the Langston Hughes unit, he transformed. The teacher read a poem

and the students practiced reading it together. And then, touchingly, beautifully, Theodore explained what the poem meant to him. Seeing Langston Hughes through his eyes made me want to read more poetry. And I'm sure I wasn't the only one who felt that way.

The students were excited to create their own poems. One group compared learning to read and write with climbing a mountain, noting that there could be dangers and mishaps along the way. You need to have the right equipment, one commented. There might be bears lurking in the forest, or mudslides that would make you lose ground. The key was to keep moving forward.

I had to stop volunteering at Read/Write/Now when I got a new job. I'd like to go back though. I miss those poetry lessons.

Joanne Mason is a former volunteer at Read/Right/Now. She can be reached <jmason88@msn.com>.

WAITT House ...

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enrolled in WAITT House and obtained her high school diploma. In 2001, she was invited to work at WAITT House as an administrative assistant, and this is the job she holds today. Ms. Cardoso attended Roxbury Community College where she gained her associates in Business Administration; she now attends the University of Massachusetts working on her bachelors in business. I asked Ms. Cardoso what she likes about working at WAITT House. She said it is a comfortable environment and she likes working

and supporting those in her community. I also asked her who she looks up to the most at work. She said "I see everyone equally." I can see how Ms. Cardoso's skills as a former manager have helped her in the way she sees life and treats people. I asked Ms. Cardoso to name one of her greatest lessons in life. She said "to be together and help others get a better life." She said she learned this from her mother.

For more information about Aileen's transition from student to staff, check out her article from *The Change Agent* at <www.litwomen.org/tca/tcaSupp_16Scot&Blck.pdf>

Mrs. Charlotte E. Stewart de Barros (aka Ms. Stewart) is a parent, student, community activist, and a budding writer and speaker. Ms. Stewart has been a mental health counselor with Bay Cove Human Services for over 16 years. She has taken classes at the ABCD Urban College and has attended many trainings and programs where she earned many certificates. She also went on to own and operate her own daycare center. Ms. Stewart recently completed a college course given by the WAITT house and Roxbury Community College. Ms. Stewart is continuing to pursue her degree in English and hopes to teach one day. She can be reached at <charlotterominda@msn.com>.

Resources for ABE Student Leadership in the SABES Library

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY SANDRA DARLING AND MICHELE SEDOR

These materials and other literacy resources are available for loan to Massachusetts ABE teachers. It is now easier than ever to borrow them. You can request them by emailing <sandra.darling@umb.edu>. Materials will be mailed to you, and you may return them to your local Massachusetts library.

Learner Involvement in Community-based Literacy Programs: A Discussion Paper.

Author: Fretz, Barbara
Publisher: Core Literacy (Ontario)
Date: 1992

Building Communities of Learners: A Collaboration Among Teachers, Students, Families, and Community

Author: McCaleb, Sudia Paloma
Publisher: Mahwah, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
Date: 1997
Call Number: LC226.6.M33

Growing Together: Improving Your Literacy Program through Student Participation.

Author: Riecke, Craig
Publisher: LVA.
Date: 1995
Call number: LC 5219 R7 1994

Understanding Leadership Competencies: Creating Tomorrow's Leaders Today.

Author: Guggenheimer, Patricia & Szulc, Mary Diana
Publisher: Crisp Publications
Menlo Park, CA
Date: 1998
Call Number: HD57.7 .G84 1998

Leadership Jazz

Author: De Pree, Max.
Publisher: Dell
Date: 1992
Call Number: HD57.7.D47

SABES Student Leadership Mini-Grants 1995: "How to" Guides from Ten Massachusetts Projects.

Compiler: Michele Verni
(MassAAL Box)

Students Meeting Students: Putting a Student Conference Together.

Publisher: Voices Rising/Learning at the Centre Press, Edmonton, AB
Date: 2000
Call Number: LC 154.3 .S78 2000

Psychosocial Development of Women: Linkages to Teaching and Leadership in Adult Education

Author: Caffarella, Rosemary S.
Publisher: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, 1, Columbus, OH
Date: 1992
Call Number: BF697.5.S65 C3

The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development

Authors: . McCauley, Cynthia D & Ellen Van Velsor,
Publisher: Jossey-Bass, San Francisco
Date: 2004
Call Number: HD57.C38

Discovering the Leader in You : A Guide to Realizing Your Personal Leadership Potential

Author: Lee, Robert J.
Publisher: Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA
Date: 2001
Call Number: HD57.7.L439

Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership: A Guide for Organizations in Changing Times.

Author: Lakey, Berit M.
Publisher: New Society Publishers, New Haven, CT
Date: 1995
Call Number: HD62.6.G72

SABES Project Reports

Massachusetts ABE students have participated in several leadership projects. Copies of some of these projects are in the SABES Literacy Library. Recent projects have included studies on health topics and the publication of Web pages and pamphlets, community child-care options, a speaker's bureau, and a program newsletter. Call Sandra Darling, SABES librarian, for more details for accessing these useful materials. She can be reached at 617-287-4074 or by email at <sandra.darling@umb.edu>.

EASY Library Use

It's easier than ever to use the SABES literacy library!

Check the online library holdings at <www.sabes.org>.

Request materials to be mailed right to your door.

Return materials at your local library—no need to return to UMass Boston.

Mark Your Calendar

Check the SABES Web site <www.sabes.org> for local and regional activities. This list was prepared by Lou Wollrab.

March 25–28, 2007

Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE)
2007 Annual Conference: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Learning
Location: Philadelphia, PA
Contact: COABE, (717) 248-4942 ext. 148
Web site: <www.coabe2007.org/joomla/>

April 9–13, 2007

American Educational Research Association (AERA)
2007 Annual Convention and Exhibition: The World of Educational Quality
Location: Chicago, IL
Contact: AERA, 202-223-9485
Web site: <www.aera.net/annualmeeting/?id=282>

April 27–29, 2007

El Puente Academy / Long Island University, Conference on Math Education & Social Justice
Creating Balance in an Unjust World
Location: Brooklyn, NY
Contact: Jonathan Osler, 917-288-7364
Web site: <www.radicalmath.org/conference>

May 17, 2007

Rhode Island Dept. of Education (RIDE), 5th Annual State Adult Education Conference
Location: Warwick, RI
Contact: Janet Isserlis, 401-863-2839
Email: <janet_isserlis@brown.edu>

June 5–9, 2007

Adult Education Research Conference (AERC) / Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE), Joint Annual Conference
Location: Halifax, Nova Scotia
Contact: <info@adulterc.com>
Web site: <www.adulterc.org/Conference.htm>

June 24–27, 2007

National Education Computing Conference (NECC), NECC 2007
Learning and Leading with Technology
Location: Atlanta, GA
Contact: NECC, 800-280-6218,
Web site: <<http://center.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2007/>>

July 5–7, 2007

VALUE National Adult Learner Leadership Institute:
Literacy & Leadership=Independence
Location: Hartford, CT
Contact: <office@valueusa.org>
Web site: <www.valueusa.org/>

NEW Curriculum and Instruction Support Online

<www.sabes.org/curriculum/index.htm>

The SABES Web site has a brand new feature: a curriculum and instruction support page. Go to the site above and you will find lots of helpful material:

- key elements of curriculum and instruction in a clearly presented table
- an interactive feature that allows you to click on to a lesson plan, download sections of curriculum frameworks, connect to someone who can help you with curriculum and assessment, and register for SABES trainings

Do You Have Materials to Share?

Carey Reid of SABES is looking for materials from you to expand the site. Especially needed are class level curricula and lesson plans that show how you accommodate students at different knowledge or skill levels. Please contact Carey at <creid@worlded.org>.

Upcoming Issues of *Field Notes*

Summer 2007

Cardio Workout: Teaching from the Heart

Write a story about what has moved you most in your teaching—tell a heartening tale, share a heart-shift, a heartbreak, a heart-healthy lesson plan, a class on heart-idioms. Have a heart. Be a brave heart! Remind us why we got in to this kind of work and why we stay. Here's a chance to leave the words *outcome*, *accountability*, and *standards-based* on the clothesline for a little bit and jump into the ocean without them....

Email questions or ideas to <lballiro@worlded.org



Fall 2007

Counseling in ABE

Counselors assume a variety of roles in an ABE program, often helping to broker between students' personal and academic lives. Share your concerns, recommendations, and resources relating to ABE counseling. Create a forum among ABE counselors.

Please email lenore for ideas and submissions at <lballiro@worlded.org>.



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