

LITERACY NEWS

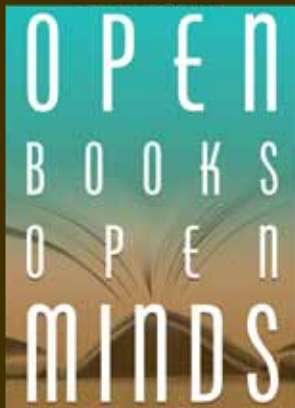


FLORIDA'S NEWSLETTER FOR LITERACY TUTORS,
TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPPORTERS

Number 125

WINTER 2010

REGISTER NOW!



2010

Florida Literacy Conference

May 5-7, 2010

Captiva Island

2010 Florida Literacy Conference
(see page 5)



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Florida**

Health Literacy Grant Announcement
(See page 2)

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Training Study Committee Formed to Investigate Online Tutor Training

Adult Literacy Programs across the nation are struggling with the issue of training new tutors as well as providing professional development opportunities to their existing tutor teams. Common challenges include time constraints for volunteers; limited access to trainers; reduced budgets and staffing issues for the literacy programs; increasing adult learner waiting lists; and an ongoing dialogue regarding training content and hours necessary to sufficiently prepare volunteer tutors to work with adult learners.

As a result of these national and local discussions, in August 2009, FLC surveyed Florida community based literacy organizations regarding their knowledge, interest, and current use of online tutor training. The results indicated that 91 percent of respondents were interested in utilizing online tutor training if it was offered through FLC. In addition, 70 percent felt that it was important to develop a blended approach of local face-to-face training and online instruction. Only 11 percent of

Continued on page 6

Public Library Provides Second Chance for Learn to Read Jacksonville

After 40 years of providing literacy services, Learn to Read Jacksonville shut its doors November 6 when the organization was unable to raise the necessary funds to support their adult education programs. The community response to this loss was significant and thanks to the Jacksonville Public Library's Center for Adult Learning and the Library Board, Learn to Read (LTR) is going to have a second chance. The Library Board of Trustees passed a resolution to offer LTR office space at their main branch for one year so they can rebuild their programs and secure adequate funding. The matter then went to the City Council where it received final approval on January 26.

Learn to Read started training volunteers to tutor adults with little or no literacy skills in 1969, annually helping about 500 people a year in a city where statistics show 22 percent of adults have below basic literacy skills.

"All of this comes at a time when Florida State College at Jacksonville (formerly FCCJ) has scaled back programs for ABE/GED/Vocational students and no longer directly serves learners reading below the sixth grade level," said Sharon Jaskula, Literacy Program Manager of the Center for Adult Learning. "We've never had so many ABE inquiries, so we're desperate to get Learn to Read back in the picture!"

It is hoped that by mid-February the agreement will be finalized and LTR will begin to rebuild. "We're very appreciative of the efforts made by Jacksonville Public Library," said Greg Smith, Executive Director of the Florida Literacy Coalition, "Learn to Read is too important to lose and we stand ready to help in any way we can." As a promising first step, LTR has appointed Joan Giles to serve in a volunteer capacity as the interim director.

Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center

Health Literacy Grant Announcement



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Florida**
An Independent Licensee of the
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

**An Initiative of the Florida Literacy Coalition, sponsored by
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida and the Florida Literacy Coalition are pleased to announce the availability of mini-grants of up to \$5,000 to support health literacy.

Low health literacy costs an estimated \$73 billion a year in the form of longer hospital stays, emergency room visits, increased doctor visits and increased medication. Adults with low literacy levels often fail to engage in early detection and preventative health care. They also have significant difficulties in navigating the health care system and following their doctor's treatment plans.

The purpose of this grant is to provide training, resources and funding to Florida adult ESOL and family literacy programs, and enabling them to help students gain the information and skills needed to make informed choices

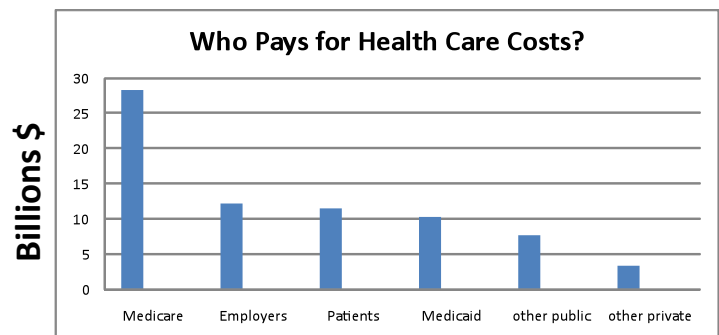
regarding their health and nutrition. Applicants must be nonprofit or government-based agencies providing adult ESOL and/or family literacy instruction in Florida. Services may be delivered via classes, small groups and one-to-one tutoring. Recipients will receive up to \$5,000 and may be eligible to renew grants based on program outcomes and achievements.

The application and guidelines may be accessed through the Florida Literacy Coalition's website at www.floridaliteracy.org. Proposals must be received by no later than March 11, 2010. For questions, please contact Naomi Soto (407) 246-7110 ext. 209 or via e-mail at soton@floridaliteracy.org.

The Cost of Low Health Literacy

There has been much discussion lately about how best to reform health care to better control costs and maintain quality while insuring more Americans. Yet relatively little attention has been paid to the costs associated with low health literacy. According to the Center on an Aging Society at Georgetown University, \$73 billion is spent annually because of low healthy literacy. People who lack health literacy skills are much more likely to take medications incorrectly, be hospitalized and spend more time in the hospital than people with higher health literacy. The potential for savings is significant and adult education and literacy programs can play an important role in helping people to acquire these skills.

See adjacent chart from the Center for Aging Society, showing who actually pays for the health care of American citizens.



Florida's Community-Based Literacy Programs: Making a Difference

FY 2009 marked another successful year for Florida's community, library and faith-based literacy organizations. Special thanks to all the staff and volunteers whose dedicated efforts have made such a difference to so many Floridians.

Total student provided instruction:	9,971
Active tutors:	4,505
Other volunteers:	1,591
Documented volunteer hours:	265,343
Value of volunteer hours:	\$5,373,195

This data reflects survey results from 45 literacy organizations provided to ProLiteracy and the Florida Literacy Coalition.

Literacy in Florida

Train the Trainer Course

Does your program need tutor trainers?

This three session course, aligned with ProLiteracy's national trainer certification standards, will focus on competencies needed to be a good tutor trainer, providing curriculum and resources to offer a tutor training workshop.

Course content will include:

- A) Tutor training competencies
- B) Tutor training content knowledge in both adult basic literacy and ESOL
- C) Curriculum modules
- D) Presentations by participants reviewed by instructor and peers
- E) Discussion of ProLiteracy Trainer Certification system

The format will include classroom and small group work, practice presentations and distance learning instruction.

This course will benefit the following participants:

- New Trainers
- Trainers working on updating their tutor training workshops
- Trainers seeking ProLiteracy Trainer Certification
- Trainers interested in improving their skills, but not pursuing certification
- Program Managers

Course Dates and Locations (participants must commit to attend all 3 sessions)

- **May 4, 2010**, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., South Seas Island Resort in Captiva
Pre-conference event at the Florida Literacy Conference
- **May 13, 2010** 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m. via conference call
- **May 21, 2010** 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. & May 22, 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. in Orlando



Application Deadline: Friday, March 19, 2010. Space is limited, so apply today. Additional information and applications are available at www.floridaliteracy.org. Travel assistance is available.

Sponsored by Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center, a program of the Florida Literacy Coalition. This initiative is made possible through the generous support of the Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education.

FLC Updates



FLC welcomes **Raychel George**, our new VISTA volunteer coordinating FLC's marketing initiatives. Prior to joining the FLC team, Raychel worked for a marketing agency and other nonprofit organizations. Raychel has a bachelor's degree in Integrative Public Relations from Central Michigan University.

Florida Literacy Coalition also welcomes **Naomi Soto** as our new Health Literacy Coordinator. Naomi has a BA from George Washington University and a strong interest and background in health education. Her experience includes working for the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America and interning at the US Dept.

of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health in Washington D.C. She has also been a regular volunteer at the Hispanic Health Initiative since she relocated back to Central Florida.

David Wagner was recently recognized as the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) member of the week. PCMA is an international group of meeting planners that focuses on industry trends and educational content. David was the first college student to receive this recognition. He was also a recipient of the Outstanding Service to a Chapter award from the Southeast Chapter of PCMA at the 2009 President's Ball in Atlanta, Georgia.



FLC bids farewell and good luck to **Jordana Frost** our Health Literacy Coordinator who did a great job helping us to launch the first year of our health literacy program with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida. In addition to being a full-time mom, Jordana is pursuing two graduate degrees at the University of South Florida. Farewell and thanks also to **Kari Doro** who has done a wonderful job as our Americorps VISTA member coordinating our outreach, marketing and social networking efforts. Kari is moving back to Wisconsin where she hopes to attend graduate school.



26th Annual Florida Literacy Conference

May 5-7, 2010 at the South Seas Island Resort in Captiva, FL

Join hundreds of adult and family literacy practitioners, volunteers and adult learners this May to network, develop new skills and share promising practices during the 2010 Florida Literacy Conference. This premier literacy event offers a wide range of sessions presented by local, state and national educators.

Sessions are designed to share new ideas and hands-on strategies that you can put to work for your program and students.

For more information, call the Florida Literacy Coalition at (407) 246-7110 or visit our website, www.floridaliteracy.org, for updates, registration information and a complete list of concurrent sessions times and descriptions

Full Conference Registration Includes

- Admission to general sessions
- Your choice of sessions within 12 tracks
- Opening reception
- Continental breakfast on Thursday
- Closing luncheon Friday and daily refreshments
- Social and networking events
- Admission to literacy product exhibition
- Conference tote bag, program and resource materials

Don't Miss the Florida Literacy Awards Banquet, Thursday, May 6



Sharon Robinson is the author of many works of fiction and nonfiction. She has written several widely praised books about her father, baseball legend Jackie Robinson, including *Jackie's Nine: Jackie Robinson's Values to Live By*, *Promises to Keep: How Jackie Robinson Changed America*, and her new picture book, *Testing the Ice*, illustrated by Kadir Nelson.

This promises to be an enjoyable and inspiring evening as we recognize the outstanding achievements of an adult learner, volunteer, literacy practitioner, program, business and media partner.

Conference Tracks

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Adult Learners | • Library Literacy |
| • Corrections Literacy | • Program Management |
| • ESOL | • Reading |
| • Family Literacy | • Technology |
| • Health Literacy | • Volunteers in Literacy |
| • Learning Disabilities | • Workforce Education |

Keynote Speakers



Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier
Opening General Session

Dr. Dann-Messier is the Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education for the U.S. Department of Education. A veteran of adult and family-literacy issues, she oversees the Department's programs and initiatives related to adult education and literacy, career and technical education and community colleges.

Prior to her confirmation last October, Dr. Dann-Messier served for 10 years as President of Dorcas Place, a community-based adult education and literacy organization in Providence R.I. A tireless advocate for the adult learners, she holds a doctorate in educational leadership and has served on the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education.



An Arts Train™
Program of the Power of Performance
Closing General Session and Luncheon

Enjoy an artful presentation of excerpts from "Voices of the Golden Thread" by ESOL students from Fort Lauderdale, Fla. You will come to appreciate how arts-integrated learning can impact learning and empower the student to achieve new heights of academic and personal development. Mask making and creative writing, coupled with expressive movement and Playback Theatre blend together in this unique interdisciplinary display of story theatre.

Pre-Conference Events, Tuesday, May 4:

Train the Trainer Course

10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

\$25.00 (lunch included)

Facilitators: Ellen Lauricella & Roberta Reiss

For full description, see page 3 of this newsletter.

Improving Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities Using Research-Based Resources

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Facilitators: Aaron Kohring

Participants will identify instructional and program planning needs for serving adults with learning disabilities. They will use research-based resources to help address these concerns and to improve practice. Sponsored by LINCS Region II Resource Center, a program of The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL).

Facilitating the Adult Learner

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Facilitator: Claire Valier

To be an effective adult educator, it's critically important that our focus begins with adult learners. This workshop will address the following topics: understanding adult learners and adult learning, recognizing different ways in which learning occurs, facilitating more meaningful learning and adult-friendly learning environments. The instructor will have hands-on activities and share interactive activities that engage and foster adult learning. Sponsored by the Regional Training Council IV. This initiative is made possible through the generous support of the Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education.

STAYING HEALTHY: Health Literacy Curriculum and Resources for ESOL

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Come learn about how to successfully integrate health literacy into high beginning and low intermediate level Adult ESOL instruction. Increase health literacy awareness among your students and encourage them to make healthy choices in relation to nutrition, preventative health care, accessing health services and other related issues.

This 3-hour session includes an overview of the freely available Staying Healthy curriculum, lots of hands-on activities/resources and time for discussion and idea sharing. Each participant will receive copies of the Staying Healthy student and teacher's resource guides. Sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida.

Adult Learner Day, Wednesday, May 5

Adult education, literacy and ESOL students are encouraged to attend the Conference as our guests for a full day of activities. This year's offerings were coordinated by a committee of adult learners. Session topics will address areas such as learner leadership, involvement and skills development. For registration information go to www.floridaliteracy.org.

Conference Scholarships Available:

Are you having a difficult time finding resources to attend the Florida Literacy Conference? A limited number of registration and travel scholarships are available to practitioners and volunteers working in adult and family literacy programs. Visit www.floridaliteracy.org for application information.



Hotel Information:

Wednesday, April 14 is the last day to reserve a room for overnight accommodations for May 1 thru May 10 at the group rate of \$110 or \$116 plus tax. To reserve a room, call the South Seas Island Resort at (727) 373-3000. Ample free parking is available onsite.



Special Thanks to our Conference Sponsors



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DOLLAR GENERAL
LITERACY FOUNDATION

Training Study Committee Formed to Investigate Online Tutor Training

(continued from cover)

respondents indicated that they currently offer all or part of their initial tutor training or volunteer orientation online. From these results, the committee has begun the process of researching, reviewing and planning an online tutor training program.

With the support of the Florida Department of Education, this committee has been tasked with researching existing online training programs and identifying potential challenges and disadvantages as well as the advantages and opportunities associated with utilizing a distance learning approach for tutor training in Florida. Fortunately, there are several programs around the country that have already implemented or are in the process of implementing online learning for volunteers. Learning from their successes and challenges, we'll adjust to the specific needs and goals of our community-based literacy programs. The content will be aligned to ProLiteracy's Trainer Certification Standards and draw on a range of existing materials including those used in the Florida Literacy Coalition's Train the Tutor Trainer Course.

It is an exciting process that we look forward to discussing with our literacy partners. This committee will need your feedback, ideas, concerns, experience and guidance as we move forward in developing the best platform for delivery; most appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of literacy programs; and most user-friendly training tool. Please join us at the upcoming FLC Conference On-Line Training Committee Roundtable to learn more and share your ideas!

Tutor Tips

IMAGERY

Purpose: To improve understanding and retention for struggling readers.

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Materials: A story with high imagery passages

Procedure:

Do a think-aloud as you read a high imagery passage and describe how you form an image and how forming the image helps you to get a deeper understanding of the passage. Stress the fact that images vary because our background and experiences vary. Guide the class as students create images after reading such passages. Encourage students to explain how visualizing helps them understand the passage.

Source: Greenberg, 1/5/2010, Read/Write NIFL Discussion List



JACKSONVILLE GED MATH SERIES IV - ALGEBRA AND PROBLEM AREAS

When: February 26, 2010
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Registrations with travel requests must be submitted by Friday, Feb. 12th. Registrations with no travel requests will be accepted until Tuesday, Feb. 23rd. Register at www.surveymonkey.com/s/772QXBD

Where: 401 W State Street,
Jacksonville, FL 32202



WEB-CONFERENCING 101 (VIRTUAL)

When: March 2, 2010
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Would you like to attend meetings and collaborate in real-time with colleagues without having to leave your home or office? Web conferencing allows you to do just that with just a few clicks of your mouse. Save time and money by using the software to your advantage and see just how easy web conferencing is to do!

Trainer: Kimberly Gates, Consultant.
Register at www.surveymonkey.com/s/KFF86BW

Where: Virtual – On your computer

LEVY GED MATH SERIES I - CALCULATION AND COMPUTATION

When: March 5, 2010
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Where: 114 Rodgers Blvd,
Chiefland, FL 32626

Registrations with travel requests must be submitted by Friday, Feb 19th. Registrations with no travel requests will be accepted until Tuesday, March 2nd. Register at www.surveymonkey.com/s/78P962S

GED MATH TIPS, TRICKS, AND SHORTCUTS FOR MATH-PHOBIC STUDENTS (VIRTUAL)

When: March 9, 2010
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Does the word “math” strike fear into the hearts and minds of your students (or even you)? Don’t be intimidated! With a few tips, tricks and shortcuts, your students (and you) will be enjoying math and looking at it in a new way! Come learn some “out of the box” methods to teach various skills! Trainer: Kimberly Gates, Consultant. Register at www.surveymonkey.com/s/KFXXN36
Where: Virtual – On your computer

LEVY GED MATH SERIES II - TABLES AND GRAPHS

When: March 26, 2010
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Registrations with travel requests must be submitted by Friday, March 12th. Registrations with no travel requests will be accepted until Tuesday, March 23rd. Register at www.surveymonkey.com/s/773PSMP

Where: 114 Rodgers Blvd,
Chiefland, FL 32626

To submit events for the upcoming issues of the Literacy News as well as the calendar at www.floridaliteracy.org, please forward information about your event to Erin Balleine at balleine@floridaliteracy.org.

New Family Literacy and Postsecondary Transition Discussion Lists

The Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy and the National Center for Family Literacy are sponsoring a new family literacy discussion list. This list will provide a forum for discussing family literacy program operational and instructional practices, research and evaluation, and policies and advocacy.

To subscribe, send a message to: NationalFamilyLiteracy-L-subscribe-request@lists.psu.edu (no subject or message is required)

The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) launched a new discussion list on postsecondary transition on November 23. It is designed to provide and promote sharing among adult education practitioners, administrators, researchers, and policymakers to help bridge the gap between standard adult education offerings and what most adult learners need to succeed in postsecondary education. Ellen Hewett, director of the National College Transition Network at World Education, Inc. moderates the list.

Visit <http://www.nifl.gov/mailman/listinfo/transitions/#sub> to subscribe.

Seeking Promising Practices

Do you have a promising program practice that you would be willing to share?

Florida's Adult Literacy Resource Center is seeking five programs or projects to be highlighted statewide and featured in the Promising Practices section of the Resource Center's website. Please check out the 2009 featured programs at www.floridaliteracy.org/pp.html

The following criteria will be considered in the selection:

- Evidence of effectiveness
- Unique and/or innovative qualities
- Ability to be replicated by other adult education, literacy, or family literacy providers

Selected programs will:

1. Receive a plaque in recognition of your program as a promising practice.
2. Be recognized on Promising Practices in the Literacy Education section of the Florida's Literacy Coalition's (FLC) website.
3. Be featured in the Literacy News, FLC's state newsletter.

If selected, you will be asked to:

1. Provide additional information about your program and the featured "promising practice" such as, services provided, description of practice, challenges overcome, and the impact and effectiveness of the initiative.
2. Be available to answer questions about your project from others in the field.

To submit your nomination, go to www.floridaliteracy.org/pp.html

Please submit by April 6, 2010.

It is fine to nominate your own program, in fact we encourage it!
If you have questions e-mail Greg Smith at smithg@floridaliteracy.org

We know you are doing great things and we would love to hear about them. Thank you for sharing!



2009 Adult Learner Essay Book

Essays Wanted for the 6th annual Florida Adult Learner Essay Book

Submission deadline is March 1, 2010

Please visit the following link to view submission details:
www.floridaliteracy.org/EssayBookhome.htm

Submit Your News!

Has your organization received funding or planned a major public event? Do you know something that would benefit other adult and family literacy practitioners?

FLC invites you to submit short articles and other news items related to funding, events, staff, hot topics, research and more. Contact Yari Payne at payney@floridaliteracy.org.

Available Grants

Bank of America Charitable Foundation

Phone: 800-218-9946

Application Deadline – Accepting applications January 1, 2010 through June 1, 2010

Url: <http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation/>

Areas of Interest:

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation focuses resources on creating neighborhood excellence in the communities in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom where the bank does business.

Specific areas of interest include K-12 education, community education, after-school programs, literacy, higher education, early childhood development, financial literacy, community college/workforce development programs and youth mentoring programs.

Dollar General Literacy Foundation

Dollar General Literacy Foundation Adult Literacy Grants award funding up to \$20,000 to nonprofit organizations that provide direct service to adults in need of literacy assistance. Organizations must provide help in one of the following instructional areas:

- Adult basic education
- General education diploma preparation
- English as a second language

Deadline to apply is February 25, 2010

For more information, go to <http://www.dgliteracy.com/grant-program/>

Florida Marlins Community Foundation

Email: grants@marlins.com

Url: <http://florida.marlins.mlb.com/fla/community/index.jsp>

Application Deadline: April 30, 2010

Primary Contact:

Ms. Nancy J. Olson

Executive Director

Email: nolson@marlins.com

Geographic Focus:

South Florida

Areas of Interest:

The Florida Marlins Community Foundation seeks to promote educational, athletic, health, social, and community service programs with a particular focus on South Florida's youth.

Education, including elementary, junior, and senior high school programs as well as higher education programs that promote self-esteem and encourage academic achievement. Literacy and training programs are also supported.

Health Literacy Grant

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida and the Florida Literacy Coalition (See page 2).

Please contact Erin Balleine, at Balleine@floridaliteracy.org or 407-246-7110 Ext. 202 if your adult education/literacy program is interested in a customized search of available grants. FLC will work with you to generate a prospect list based on your preferred search criteria.

Spelling Circus Comes to Town



This past Fall the Lake Wales Literacy Council held its 9th annual Spelling Circus. It's an old fashioned spelling bee with a circus theme which included a ring master, clowns, balloons, popcorn and peanuts. Outside the big top, participants could find a caged tiger and a monkey (not real of course, but the effects were incredible.)

As a small community based organization, major fundraising had been difficult until nine years ago, when they came up with the idea of a circus. The initial process was slow and the outlay of funds to set it up was expensive. Each year it became more and more successful within their community. This past circus was their most fruitful yet, with the largest number of participants and sponsors ever. For more information, call the Lake Wales Literacy Council at (863) 676-5767.

Diversity in the Classroom for Educators

The classroom is a wonderful place to encourage and celebrate diversity. Education is about cross-pollination and sharing ideas, which various ethnicities and students from different backgrounds provide.

As educators, it is our duty to facilitate meaningful and engaging classroom discussions so our students can be heard and learn from one another. Teachers who ask meaningful and probing questions help students discover themselves and joyfully learn as they elicit answers from the collective body of knowledge present in each classroom. More importantly, when a teacher allows students' voices to be heard, it builds a bond of trust and emotional connection between the educator and students.

The world in which we live is becoming increasingly interconnected technologically, economically, environmentally and socially. It therefore is paramount that we as educators find ways to bring students and society together.

Diversity of thought, experience and perception is the cornerstone of education. There can be no personal growth in life apart from diverse experiences, interactions and conversations. Therefore, educators have a duty to not only facilitate diversity in the classroom, but also to embrace diversity in their own lives to further their own ongoing educational and personal enrichment.

Asking powerful questions and challenging stereotypes is one of the best thing teachers can do to further welcome and enable students to warm up to diversity in the classroom. Having traveled to 55 countries and six continents, I have had the good fortune and privilege of meeting many intelligent and accomplished people from every race, ethnicity and cultural background. Certainly I have experienced interactions with people that broke the mold and the status quo when it comes to racial stereotypes and ethnic generalizations.

Sometimes in the classroom when teaching my international students English, I would share a story or two to identify with my minority students and encourage them when I knew they were feeling beaten down and discriminated against by the educational process in America. This not only showed them I understood their plight and current struggles, but

further endeared them to me and caused them to trust me as a person beyond merely being an educator.

When you empathize and show your students that you care about them beyond the classroom, they will be more apt to positively respond to you and more fully embrace the learning process as a daily component of their lives.

Educators can achieve diversity in the classroom by:

1. Acknowledging, honoring and celebrating every race and ethnicity.
2. Facilitating meaningful, engaging and inclusive conversations.
3. Identifying limiting beliefs that thwart students' full potential socially, academically and professionally.
4. Challenging racial and ethnic stereotypes by asking probing and more powerful questions to make us reconsider and look deeper at issues facing us all.
5. Facilitating interactions and role-plays that cause students to see life from another's perspective and viewpoint.
6. Using technology and the Internet to interact with students in other regions and places throughout the world.
7. Allowing students to speak and ask questions important to them.

Subconsciously, our life experiences are significantly influenced by our parents, our community as well as other environmental factors which can color our perceptions and sometimes lead to prejudice. Therefore as educators we should design interactions and conversations to bring ugly stereotypes to the surface, so we can elegantly identify, address and transcend these limiting beliefs that thwart the full potential of our students.

By doing so, true social enlightenment and personal growth will occur for our students, while simultaneously bringing students together. Once mutual respect is achieved between teachers and students, as well as among students — education occurs more naturally and spontaneously throughout every lesson and classroom interaction.

Paul Davis is the author of 17 books and has presented his message of empowerment in 55 countries throughout the world. For more information go to www.PaulFDavis.com or e-mail him at info@PaulFDavis.com

FREE TAX FILING ASSISTANCE

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program offers free tax help to low- to moderate-income (generally, \$49,000 and below) people who aren't able to prepare their own tax returns.

These tax preparation sites, often located at local libraries, recreation and senior centers, are generally open Feb. 1 - Apr. 15 with no appointment necessary except when noted. Help your students avoid scams and tax preparation fees by sharing this free IRS sponsored resource. Remember many students may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit which can provide money back on their returns.

To locate the nearest VITA site, call 1-800-829-1040.

Go to www.floridaliteracy.org/taxsmart for a free Talking about Taxes lesson plan.

Congress Approves FY 2010 Increases for Adult Education

Congress has approved increases for adult education in the 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations legislation. The bill appropriates \$628 million for adult basic literacy education state grants, matching the president's request for \$74 million above FY 2009 levels. This amount includes funding adjustments for states and outlying areas underpaid due to an earlier administrative error. The legislation also:

- Increases the English literacy and civics education set-aside within the appropriation for adult education state grants to \$75 million—about \$7 million more than the FY 2009 level.
- Funds the Career Pathways Innovation Fund at the Department of Labor at \$125 million, matching FY 2009.
- Appropriates \$2 million for a new research and development center for adult learning and literacy within the Institute of Education Sciences.

House Passes New Authorization to Fund Education Jobs

The US House of Representatives passed the Jobs for Main Street Act on Dec. 16 to redirect \$75 billion from the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) to create or save jobs in key sectors such as education that drive economic growth.

The bill establishes a \$23 billion Education Jobs Fund to help states support an estimated 250,000 education jobs over the next two years. The bill allocates 95 percent of this fund to states for school districts and public institutions of higher education to retain or create jobs that provide educational services and to modernize, renovate, and repair public education facilities. The remaining 5 percent is reserved for state education-related jobs and administration of the Education Jobs Fund. Senate action is pending.

LINCS Launches Resource Collections Newsletter

Literacy Information and Communications Systems (LINCS), a division of the National Institute for Literacy, has developed a monthly electronic newsletter, LINCS Resource Collections News. Each newsletter will feature one of three different Resource Collections: Basic Skills, Program Management and Workforce Competitiveness. The monthly editions will also include updates on what has been added to the Resource Collections and introduce research-based resources that you can use in your adult and family literacy programs and classrooms.

For further information on the Newsletter, contact the National Institute for Literacy at info@nifl.gov

Resources

Wiki Literacy Tent

Learn about adult literacy education, including English language learning, numeracy, and adult basic and secondary education. Add knowledge from your experience teaching or tutoring adult learners, from research or professional wisdom, or from your experience as an adult learner. The ALE Wiki is a community of practices with links to research for practitioners, researchers, learners and others.

<http://wiki.literacytent.org>

ABC Fast Phonics

This free tutorial uses cartoons and sounds with audio narration and clickable words to teach phonics. This method teaches just basic phonics concepts without struggle or frustration and includes rules for vowels, consonants, and blends along with practice pages. The web pages were created to make it easy and fun for new readers ~ children or adults ~ to navigate through the lessons, and be able to click and hear words while enjoying the pictures.

<http://www.abcfastphonics.com>

Most Missed Questions on the GED Math Test

According to an analysis of GED Testing Service (GEDTS) data, four areas of the GED test cause students the most difficulty. The materials on this site include sample questions from each area and an analysis of common student errors that lead to missing the question. The materials were provided to KYAE at a GED Mathematics Training Institute sponsored by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. The institute, designed to help improve math instruction and scores on the GED mathematics test, presented new techniques and strategies for teaching critical mathematics skills. It was also an opportunity for states to benefit from new knowledge as they develop a plan to train others on these techniques and strategies.

<http://kyae.ky.gov/educators/misshedgedquestions.htm>



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