

Adult Learning Network

The Adult Learning Network is a quarterly publication of the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center.

Adult Education Legislation Update

By Dr. Sharon Ellis, Chair of the AACAE Legislative Committee

Four legislative breakfasts were scheduled in January with 68 legislators in attendance. Mr. French presented information about adult education's mission and programs to each group of legislators. The preceding of four breakfasts allowed us to visit with our local legislators. Thanks to the legislative committee and to Mr. French for making the Legislative Breakfasts a success!



Mr. French presents in front of legislators and adult educators. Photo provided by: Dubs Byers

Sponsors for the breakfasts included:

- Southwestern Bell
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield
- Arkansas Electric Cooperative
- AEP-SWEPCO

Pending legislation of interest to you:

- HB1555, our appropriation bill AND amendment passed. Funding the bill with the amendment is our next priority. **Contact members of the Joint Budget Committee in support of funding the \$1.400.000 amendment.** These additional funds would provide for a cost of living increase and provide funds to cover the raises to adult education teachers working in public schools. Senator Broadway sponsored a bill the past legislative session to cover the cost for the raise for adult education instructors with public schools; however, no funding was provided to cover the raises. We have not received an increase in state adult education funds since 1992.
- The Kennedy Amendment was approved by the U.S. Senate by a vote of 51-49. Senator Kennedy specifically mentioned adult education in his opening remarks. A special thanks to all adult education staff and partners who sent letters of support to your United States Congress persons.
- SB 1150, An Act to Limit Professional Development Requirements for Certified Personnel Working Solely in Adult Education, was passed by the Senate and sent to the House. The bill is still in committee and should be addressed in committee Tuesday, March 29th.

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Professional Development News

Tuition Reimbursement Program

Contact your Program Advisor at the Adult Education Section or Marsha Taylor at the AALRC for more information on this program. Reimbursement is applicable to courses taken for Adult Education Licensure ONLY! This form is available on the AALRC website (www.aalrc.org).



Remember: (1) The application form must be submitted to the AALRC **10 working days before class begins.**

(2) Your class grade and receipt of payment must be received **within 30 days of class ending.**

There is a new requirement: Applicants must provide documentation that the class will count for adult education licensure.

For a list of courses available in adult education, please contact:

Arkansas State University
Jonesboro
Dr. David Agnew
(870) 972-3943

University of Arkansas
at Little Rock
Dr. Charlotte Robertson
(501) 569-8933

University of Arkansas
at Fayetteville
Dr. Barbara Hinton
(479) 575-5119 or
(479) 575-4578

University of Central Arkansas
Conway
Dr. Sherry Roberts
(501) 450-5431



NOTICE:

If you are unable to attend a workshop you have registered for, please contact the AALRC as soon as possible. Participants are often placed on waiting lists because workshops fill up. If you find that you cannot attend a workshop and you call ahead, this gives us time to notify wait-listed participants that they can attend.

When a workshop has a waiting list, participants may not send substitutes from their center to attend in their place. Registrations are held for participants and not for centers.

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TRAVEL Reimbursement



It is important to remember the guidelines when making travel plans to attend meetings/workshops at the AALRC. Programs must follow state travel guidelines and the policy written below. We have had to disallow many travel requests because the guidelines are not being followed. The AALRC would appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Local programs funded with state or federal adult education funds must adhere to Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration guidelines when requesting travel reimbursement.

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In an effort to conserve funds during these tough economic times, it was necessary last year to formalize what had long been an informal part of our travel policy dealing with reimbursement of mileage for participants attending training workshops and meetings. Local programs are to be reimbursed mileage for only ONE vehicle per program when attending training workshops, conferences, or meetings. Any program requesting another option must have prior written permission from the deputy director of adult education.

Your cooperation in helping conserve funds so we may continue providing instructional services to our students is requested and appreciated.

Upcoming Training Events

All are to be conducted at AALRC unless so noted.

Workshops

April 13 - LD Policy Make up
 April 14-15 - ESL Basics (Session 3)
 April 19 - AALRC Numeracy Project (Session 3)
 April 20 - Beginning Excel
 April 25-27 - Payne-Jordan LD Training

May 3 - Beginning Excel (Repeat of Earlier Session)
 May 4 - Beginning Excel (Repeat of Earlier Session)
 May 5-6 - Literacy Strategies (Session 4)
 May 11 - Beginning Excel (Repeat of Earlier Session)
 May 18 - Teaching the Three Rs. (Session 2)
 May 20 - Parental Involvement (2 Sessions-a.m., p.m.)
 May 24-25 - Payne-Jordan LD Training
 May 24 - Web Page Design
 May 25 - Web Page Design (Repeat of Session)

Meetings

April 22 - WAGE 9:30 a.m.
 April 27 - ESL Taskforce
 April 27-29 - Administrators' Meeting

May 10 - Technology Committee
 May 12 - LD Committee
 May 17 - AALRC Advisory Committee
 May 26-27 - Adult Ed. Advisory Council,
 Pine Bluff – SEARK

June 3 - WAGE 9:30a.m.

Professional Development Update

With the increased number of Professional Development (PD) hours required by the state, many teachers are searching for a variety of ways to meet those requirements. The Resource Center offers a wide range of Professional Development each year that includes Basic Skills, Learning Disabilities (LD), English as a Second Language (ESL), GED and Technology. Some teachers are not able to attend the necessary hours needed to fulfill the 60 hour requirement.

There are other ways to acquire the needed hours. One way that is very easy and effective for many teachers is to use the internet. Many sites offer free professional development. Some sites charge a minimal fee and others a more significant fee. Listed below are a number of websites that fit into those categories. One thing to remember is that most other licensed professionals are required to meet their Professional Development or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) on their own time, using their own money.

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Disability News

WhisperPhone

The WhisperPhone from Harebrain, Inc. is a reversible mouthpiece (right or left) that snaps into an ear headset to create auditory reinforcement opportunities in classroom situations. The acoustical headset enhances a student's voice by projecting the words back to their own ear, so students hear the words and individual phonemes more clearly as they read, even when they whisper.

Although the WhisperPhone was initially designed for children, the company responded amazingly fast to a request from Janie Carter in Crossett regarding modifications for adult students. They now have a large version available for adults who process written information best with auditory input and/or reinforcement. The WhisperPhone allows the student to softly subvocalize and yet hear themselves loudly and clearly without disturbing other students in the classroom. All parts are durable plastic and dishwasher-safe.



The AALRC has one WhisperPhone available in the Media Center for programs that would like to try it with students who would benefit from enhancing their auditory processing strengths. Contact Klaus Neu at the AALRC to borrow this item.

For more information or to place an order, please visit www.whisperphone.com \$7.95 for one or \$79.95 for a ClassPak of 12.

Announcing the Arkansas Disability Issues Web Portal <http://www.ArkansasDisabilities.com>

The Arkansas Disability Web Portal is a free, interactive, online community of Arkansans seeking to improve the quality of life for persons coping with disabilities by sharing information, resources, opinions, and other features. Resources include information about assistive technology, disability studies, children, education, employment, independent living, organizations, news and media, support groups, and statistics. There are links to government agencies, funding opportunities, events and activities. Directories include services, training, employment, and consultants. This site is extremely useful for people with disabilities as well as those who work or live with people with disabilities. Please visit this online site to see how it can help you improve your services for adult students with disabilities, or—even better—explore the site with one of your students who has one or more disabilities.

LDO nLine Article Series

LDO nLine (www.ldonline.org) has posted a series of articles by Regina G. Richards about reading comprehension, writing skills, and memory. These articles include excellent suggestions for teaching all ages of students with learning disabilities.

The reading comprehension article (<http://www.ldonline.org/article.php?id=1111&loc=89>), for example, describes instructional strategies such as chunking information, visual organization, vocabulary development, and mnemonics. There's even a strategy for using Post-It™ Notes for a color-coded, manipulative visual organizer.

The instructional strategies described are multisensory, systematic, and well-structured, an approach supported by research regarding students with learning disabilities and appropriate monitoring and modeling of techniques.

Tech*Talk*

Note: To link to any web address (URL) in this newsletter, go the AALRC's home page at <http://aalrc.org>, look up this newsletter, and then just click on the appropriate link.

Spyware

Microsoft has added a new free spyware cleaner program that can be downloaded from their website at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.mspx>

There is also a Spyware Video clip on the right side of the page under About Spyware that helps explain what spyware is and how it got on your computer.

My other two favorite spyware cleaning programs are Spybot Search & Destroy and Adaware. Both programs can be downloaded from <http://www.download.com>. Enter the name of the program, as seen above, in the Search box of the download.com home page to download these programs.

Phishing

Internet scammers casting about for people's financial information have a new way to lure unsuspecting victims: they go "phishing." Phishing is a high-tech scam that uses spam to deceive consumers into disclosing their credit card numbers, bank account information, Social Security numbers, passwords, and other sensitive personal information.

According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the latest phishing scam involves emails that claim to be from *regulations.gov*, a Web site where consumers can participate in government rulemaking by submitting comments. The emails' subject lines typically read "Official information" or "Urgent information to all credit card holders!" The message's text claims, "Due to recent changes in Rules and Regulations, it is required by Law for all Internet users to identify themselves in compliance with CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) to create a secure and safer Internet community." The email includes a link to a Web site that mimics *regulations.gov* and asks readers to provide their personal and financial information.

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/phishingalrt.htm> How not to get "Hooked" by a phishing scam.

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/phishregalrt.htm> This link has good information about phishing and what you can do about it.

<http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/> What to do if someone steals your identity.

<http://www.antiphishing.org/> Good anti-phishing resources.

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Tech*Talk*

Adult Literacy Education (ALE) Wiki

"Wiki-wiki," a Hawaiian word meaning very, very quickly, refers in the online world to a web site where you can immediately and easily add to or change text. The best-known application is the Wikipedia, a multilingual encyclopedia, created and modified daily by thousands of people across the world.

The creators of the ALE Wiki have developed a wiki for adult literacy education providers that can be a useful, participatory online environment for adult literacy practitioners, adult learner leaders, and researchers to have ongoing discussions in areas of mutual interest.

The Adult Literacy Education (ALE) Wiki is a complement of, not a replacement for, electronic lists. Because a wiki is an easily edited document environment, current or past electronic list discussions can be selectively copied to the wiki, continued at any time, and referenced (and linked) in future e-list discussions. For each wiki discussion topic a summary, glossary, and list of research and other references can be created. The ALE Wiki will become a handy electronic reference shelf of definitions and resources for discussions which take place on adult literacy e-lists, and where one could easily find research citations, full-text studies, threaded discussions which have taken place on listservs, and other materials which are all organized around specific research topic areas and questions. It could also be an environment where researchers describe their completed and ongoing work, see how practitioners are reacting to or using their research, and see what questions and issues practitioners and adult learner leaders think are important to study.

To visit the Adult Literacy Education Wiki, go to:

http://wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Main_Page

To set up a log-in account so you can add to the ALE Wiki, go to:

<http://wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Special:Userlogin>

Disable Error Reporting

Tired of all those Microsoft Windows error reporting messages? Follow these instructions to disable error reporting. Be aware that *sometimes* the error report can give you valuable information about your problem.

- 1.) Open Control Panel. 2.) Click on Performance and Maintenance.
- 3.) Click on System. 4.) Then click on the Advanced tab.
- 5.) Click on the error-reporting button on the bottom of the windows.
- 6.) Select Disable error reporting. 7.) Click OK. 8.) Click OK.

Adult Education Advisory Council

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AALRC Technology Committee

The AALRC Technology Committee has been revived! We met in November of 2004 to review and refresh previously planned activities, and to recruit a few more hard-working people. Thanks to those committee members who could attend and add their valuable input.

Members of the Technology Committee are: Billy R. Upson, chair; Lynda Bradford, Marie Bruno, Amy Butts, Janie Carter, Gayla Feist, Jacob Humphrey, Dr. Philip Less, Klaus Neu, Wes Pillow, Rob Pollan, Diane Shores, Nancy Sparks, and Marsha Taylor.



The first activity was to update the *Five-Year Technology Plan*. Many thanks to Marsha Taylor for documenting the revisions.

The committee plans to establish a process that will allow us to continually provide up-to-date knowledge about software, technology, and technological issues to adult education and literacy programs. We will also offer recommendations for state purchases of software upgrades and packages in the event there are state monies available for statewide purchases.

Each program recently received a new Technology Needs Survey. In the event a statewide purchase can be made, we must know what is needed in order to make good recommendations. Responses on the survey will also let us know what technology training might be needed.

The committee plans to review the state-approved computer literacy curriculum. Any revision of the curriculum would be reviewed by the state office for approval.

If you have any questions about the committee, please contact Billy Upson at bru549@juno.com or Rob Pollan at rob@aalrc.org. For additional information, please visit www.aalrc.org and check out the technology pages!

Plaxo can keep track of friends, family, everybody

plaxo

Plaxo is a free service that allows you to update the contacts you have in address books created with Microsoft Outlook, Outlook Express, Mac OS-X, Palm, Netscape, or Yahoo. That's pretty much everybody. When you join Plaxo at www.plaxo.com, your address book and appointment calendar information can be made available online from anywhere you can connect to the Internet. Click "Update Contacts" and the Plaxo service sends a message to everyone on those lists asking them to update their information. With any luck, they'll respond.

In the past, we've seen studies that say about one-third of the population of the United States will have moved within any two-year period, so it's hard to keep up. The free service started in 2003, and so far more than 4 million people have signed up. For a fee of \$20 a year, Plaxo has a new premium service that allows the user to send cards for birthdays, holidays, and other special occasions. A number of extension services are being rolled out by this company, allowing you to send books, flowers, and other gifts to selected people on your address list. Visit the Web site to find out everything they're up to.

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Adult Education Legislation Update

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- HB 2747, An Act to Repeat the Second Effort Scholarship Program was referred to the House Education committee on March 7th. These four-year scholarships benefit our top 10 GED graduates. Contact members of the House Education Committee supporting continuance of scholarships of our Top 10. Cite specific examples of how the scholarship has benefited your graduate - what difference did it make?



GED success stories - displayed at the legislative breakfast Photo provided by: Dubs Byers

Continue to inform our Arkansas legislators and United States Congress persons. Stand together as one unified voice for Adult Education.

Your Legislative Committee:

Sharon Ellis, Chair

Patricia Bates, Dubs Byers
George French, Becky Linsky,
Paulette Martin, Marsha Taylor,
Peggy Weir, Ruth Ann Williams

Professional Development Update

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As teachers, most are used to PD being provided at no charge; however, paying a fee in order to get the required hours may be worthwhile to some.

FREE:

<http://www.congressclass.org/>
<http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/>
<http://www.vluonline.org/course/index.asp>
<http://www.floridatechnet.org/pdc.asp>
<http://www.learner.org/>

<http://tappedin.org/tappedin/>
<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/>
<http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/>
<http://www.maisplace.org/profdev.htm>

This is a link that gives many other links to Professional Development

FEE REQUIRED:

<http://www.careerteched.com/>

<http://www.ableacademy.org/>

Other sources for Professional Development include classes that are offered by local hospitals or community organizations. Many offer classes in Stress and Time Management, and other areas that are pertinent to adult education teachers. One can also read professional articles, watch educational videos, and research areas of interest for PD credit. There are Professional Development opportunities other than the Resource Center and local adult education programs if one is persistent. According to the State Department of Education, the decision as to what counts for professional development hours is a local decision. Remember to get **prior** approval from your local administrator in order to get proper credit for a self-study program.