

## *How to Contact Your Legislator for Increased Adult Education and Literacy Funding*

### Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center

3905 Cooperative Way,  
Suite D  
Little Rock, AR 72209  
Phone: 800-832-6242  
501-907-2490  
FAX: 501-907-2492  
<http://www.aalrc.org>



The 87<sup>th</sup> General Assembly will return to the Capitol in January 2009. Adult Education and Literacy are an issue we all hope will gain additional funding in 2009. If you are wondering just how you can make an impact during the next session, it's important to plan ahead. This article will give you suggestions for your marketing plan.

# Adult Learning Network

*The Adult Learning Network is a quarterly publication of the AALRC.*

First, know that both "reach" and "frequency" are key elements of marketing. To get your message across, you have to "reach" your target - in this case, your legislator - to get increased funding for adult education and literacy. There are a number of ways to reach your legislator, and you may want to include more than one method of contact when making your plan. But you can't reach your legislator just once and expect him/her to remember. Instead, establish a plan on how representatives of your program will contact your legislator at least **SIX** times before January 2009. Ideally, one of your representatives will be a student who has benefited from your program's services.

The most effective strategy is to first call your senators and representatives using the phone number listed on the [www.arkansas.gov](http://www.arkansas.gov) website. That will be their preferred phone contact number. Go to [www.arkansas.gov/house](http://www.arkansas.gov/house) and [www.arkansas.gov/senate](http://www.arkansas.gov/senate) to find the names, addresses, telephone, and email contact information for your district's Representatives and Senators. Phone contacts are BEST.

When you call, ask for a 15-minute appointment. Here's one example of this type of request: "Hello, Representative / Senator \_\_\_\_\_, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I live in your district. I would like to visit with you for fifteen minutes to share some information about adult literacy in Arkansas and introduce you to an adult literacy student. When may I come to your office or meet you at the local coffee shop?"

While at the meeting, share a student story. If you've asked a student to accompany you to the meeting, take about five minutes for him/her to share his/her story and literacy accomplishments. If a student isn't available, develop a one-page biography (with pictures, if possible) about two or three of your students. It's also helpful to bring a one-page, bulleted information sheet about your program to leave with your legislator. They appreciate getting information this way rather than having to rely on taking notes.

Be sure you ask your Legislator to support an increase in funding in the

*Continued on page 8*

The Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center provides equal access to all programs and activities.





## *News from the Disabilities Project Manager*

### Learning Disabilities Self-Advocacy Manual

The LD Pride website ([www.ldpride.net](http://www.ldpride.net)) has published an online LD Self-Advocacy Manual that may be very helpful for both adults and children to discover what learning disabilities are and how to be a good self-advocate. Topics covered include definition, causes, a worksheet about discrepancy and underachievement, processing, accommodations, remediation, legal issues, self-advocacy, and goal-setting. The manual can be viewed at <http://www.ldpride.net/selfadvocacy.htm>.

When sharing this site with an adult student, it would be helpful to first explain that this manual was designed for children and young adults with learning disabilities, and the graphics may seem too juvenile for adult students. However, the clear wording and liberal use of analogies for complicated concepts make the content appropriate for anyone who needs to learn about what it means to have a learning disability and how to better cope with areas of learning weakness.

### Online Multimedia about Learning Disabilities



Dr. Christopher Lee

Want to learn more about LD, but don't have time to read a bunch of books? Check out <http://www.ldonline.org/multimedia> for a plethora of multimedia learning opportunities, including videos, webcasts, public service announcements by Henry Winkler that you can download for free, and audio podcasts by Rick Lavoie. One of the videos is about Dr. Christopher Lee, who spoke at the AACAE conference in Hot Springs a few years ago. Another is a short clip about a boy with dyslexia who has written his own book, [My Year with Harry Potter](#). All of these multimedia options would be helpful and inspirational for anyone interested in learning more about learning disabilities.

### WAIS-III Contracts Renewed

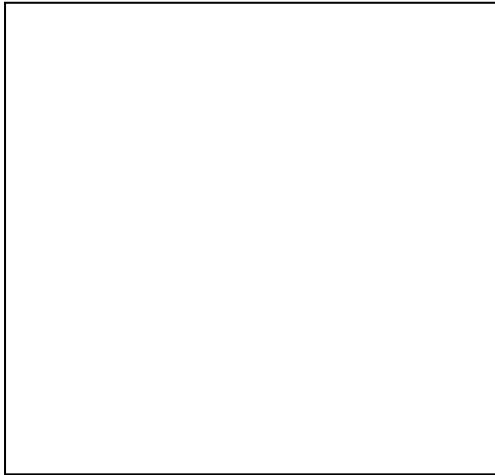
The AALRC has renewed its contracts for WAIS-III testing for students who need a learning disabilities evaluation and meet the requirements as specified at <http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/referralProcess.aspx>. The student must be working towards a GED diploma; have undergone a complete learning disabilities screening process or has previous, out-of-date documentation of a learning disability; be ineligible for a referral to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services for testing; and be unable to pay for an evaluation without assistance. If your program has a student who meets these requirements, please contact Patti White at [prwhite@madisoncounty.net](mailto:prwhite@madisoncounty.net) or 800.569.3539. There is one form to complete to request funding for the evaluation; it was sent to every program in 2007, but if you need a copy of the form, Ms. White will send you one.

*Continued on page 5*

*News from the Disabilities Project Manager*

According to the National Institute for Literacy, 50% - 80% of students in Adult Basic Education and Literacy programs who read below the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level probably have one or more learning disabilities, although many have never been diagnosed. Students who have the appropriate documentation of their disability may be eligible for accommodations on the GED Tests, such as extra time, private room for testing, frequent breaks, taking the test on tape, having a scribe, or using a calculator or talking calculator. Other accommodations may be available upon request, depending on the specific disability.

*Continued from page 4*



For students who will not be able to pass the GED Tests without accommodations, the referral process may be one of the most crucial aspects of their adult education. If you are not familiar with the process, please visit the website mentioned above, and contact Ms. White if you have any questions.

**Local Programs Gearing Up for Students with Learning Disabilities**

A number of local adult education and literacy programs have recently participated in or have scheduled training regarding teaching adults with learning disabilities – without having to travel! The benefits of these on-site workshops include more focus on local programs strengths and challenges, more interaction and discussion regarding local procedures and resources, and more opportunities to get information tailored to the local program’s needs. Participating programs include Mid-South Community College Adult Education; North Arkansas College, Berryville Adult Education; Carroll County Literacy Council; Crawford County Literacy Council; UAM College of Technology Adult Education; and ASU Newport Adult Education. One program, the Literacy Council of Benton County, requested and received an on-site student consultation to determine appropriate and effective instruction and testing strategies for a struggling student.

Training topics may include: learning disabilities awareness issues (definition, characteristics, observation tools, etc.); screening & diagnosis information; legal issues; assistive technology; resources and referral information; strategies & accommodations for teaching and testing. Local workshops available include LD 101 & LD 201, Teaching Adults with Manipulatives, De-mystifying AD/HD; and Don’t Panic! To schedule a workshop at your local program, contact Patti White at [prwhite@madisoncounty.net](mailto:prwhite@madisoncounty.net) or 800.569.3539.

*AALRC  
Advisory  
Committee*

*Dubs Byers,  
Chair,  
Pine Bluff*

*Emily Barrier,  
Little Rock*

*Carrie Boden,  
Little Rock*

*Janie Carter,  
Crossett*

*Richard  
Hampton,  
Texarkana*

*Tara Harrison,  
North Little  
Rock*

*Becky Linsky,  
Hot Springs*

*Billy Upson,  
Texarkana*

*Nancy  
Whitmire,  
Vice-Chair,  
Batesville*

*Ruth Ann  
Williams,  
Conway*





