

Joe Arnold Earns GED

By Vicki Ronald, Executive Director, Literacy Council of Benton County

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Adult Learning Network

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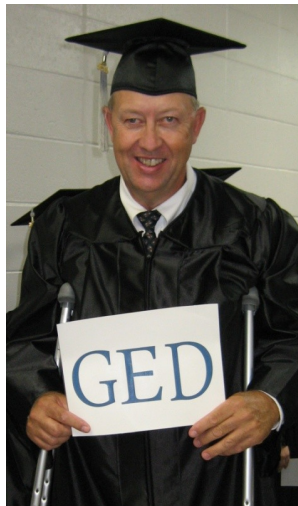
The Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center provides equal access to all programs and activities.

Literacy Council of Benton County's student 54-year old Joe Arnold is a great guy who had an unique start in life. When Joe was a baby, his father was outside holding him when lightning struck Joe's diaper pin, traveled through him, injured part of his brain and blinded him in his right eye. In his soft spoken manner, Joe talks about going to school. "The kids on the bus made fun of me. They called me 'retard' and 'stupid.' I wasn't stupid; it was the brain injury from the lightning that just made it hard for me to learn to read. But I understood things!"

"The other kids on the bus always made fun of me and called me retarded... but I always knew I wasn't."

Joe stayed in public school until the fourth grade. He was then transferred to a school for children with disabilities or developmental delays. At that time there wasn't much known about teaching people with learning disabilities, and although that school was a great place for a child with Down Syndrome or a very low I.Q., there wasn't much done there to help Joe. He left when he was 15. He still couldn't read. Joe had no problem getting his driver's license or his HAZMAT certification, because those tests were read out loud to him.

Fast forward to four years ago when Joe came to Literacy Council of Benton County with a goal of obtaining his GED so he could improve his employment. Always hardworking, he does physical labor now and is hoping to find something less strenuous as he gets older. There were better job options open to him, but he needed his GED.



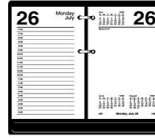
At Literacy Council of Benton County (LCBC) he was matched with a great tutor who patiently worked with him, and he did make progress, just not as quickly as he would have liked. His tutor asked if Joe had been tested to see if he had a learning disability. LCBC's Literacy Coordinator Jennifer Vandiver arranged for Patti White (Disabilities Project Manager with Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center) to evaluate Joe. Upon her recommendation, Joe was referred to a GED examiner and a psychologist. After their extensive examinations, Joe received approval for accommodations in his quest for his GED. Joe and his tutor got down to some seriously dedicated study sessions, with help from Northwest Technical Institute in Springdale, where Joe took his GED tests.

In the first part of April of this year, Joe took the last of the three GED tests. Then he waited. On April 28, his mailbox held his long-sought GED certificate! On June 21, 2011, Joe walked across the stage to receive his GED certificate as part of the NTI graduation ceremony in Springdale. The kids on the bus were wrong. You go, Joe!

Calendar
All events are at the AALRC unless otherwise noted.



Professional Development/Events:



July

- July 14 – GED Examiners
- July 19-21 – Summer PD
- July 25-27 – ESL Institute

August

- August 2 – Best Plus
- August 3 – TABE
- August 4 – AERIS
- August 8 – New Administrator Meeting

September

- September 13-14 – Standard in Action
- September 20 – AERIS
- September 20-21– LD Comprehensive (Session 1)
- September 28 – Excel
- September 29 – Movie Maker



TRAVEL
Reimburse-
ment

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

Mark Your Calendars for September 12-18, 2011



The National Coalition for Literacy is working with Members of Congress to dedicate National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week 2011 for the week of September 12. See activities from 2010 for ideas to raise awareness of adult education and family literacy this year at <http://www.national-coalition-literacy.org/>.

UALR Adult Education Classes Now Open for Enrollment



The fall semester is quickly approaching, and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) is the perfect place for you to earn a master's degree or complete your Arkansas Teacher Licensure in adult education. Currently there are more than 70 students in the program who work in GED, adult basic education, literacy, medical, military, community, religious, human resources, corrections, or non-profit settings. The program works with your schedule. You can take courses in eight- or sixteen-week formats. Most courses are online or web-enhanced, which gives you the flexibility you need and the opportunity to have some face-to-face interaction with your instructors and peers. There is still time for you to apply to the program if you plan to start in the fall. The classes do fill quickly, so it is in your best interest to apply as soon as possible and enroll at the first opportunity. More information can be found at <http://ualr.edu/med/AED/>.

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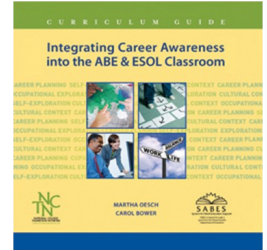
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Arkansas Adult Education Partners with the National Career Awareness Project

Arkansas Adult Education has been selected to participate in the National Career Awareness Project, a national effort to foster collaboration between adult basic education and career/professional development. Centers selected include Northwest Arkansas Community College Adult Education, Fayetteville Adult Education Center, Crawford County Adult Education Center and Conway Adult Education Center.

The National Career Awareness project is managed by the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCOS) and the National College Transition Network (NCTN), with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education.



“Arkansas Adult Education understands that academic preparation must be coupled with career readiness,” stated William “Bill” Walker, Jr., Director of Arkansas Department of Career Education. “Programs and support for adult education like the National Career Awareness Program are part of our plan to continually develop our state into a top contender for new business and industry opportunities.”

Participating adult education centers will develop a customized approach to implementing the Career Awareness Project curriculum into local adult education programs. Each center will have access to a support group of peers and facilitators/advisors with expertise in the area of career exploration and planning.

“The National Career Readiness Project is one of many ways local adult education centers are working to expand their service offerings to students,” commented Marsha Taylor, Director of Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center. “Our focus is to continue to train our students and prepare them for the demands of a knowledge-based work environment.”

Arkansas Adult Education works cooperatively with local, state, and federal agencies such as the Department of Human Services and the Department of Workforce Services to provide free adult education classes to each of the 75 counties in Arkansas. The Adult Education Division of the Arkansas Department of Career Education provides services to more than 75,000 Arkansans each year. The free Adult Education classes are English as a Second Language, Basic Math, Reading, Writing, and Workplace Computer Literacy. Adults who improve their academic skills by earning their GED® will earn nearly \$10,000 more annually.

To learn more about Arkansas Adult Education and the free classes available, call 1-877-963-4GED (1-877-963-4433) or visit www.aalrc.org.

New Education & Instruction Coordinator, Sherreccia Jackson

Please welcome the latest staff member, Sherreccia Jackson, to the Adult Education Division (AED). Mr. Jackson holds an advanced degree in both Education and Theology. Continuing his desire to be a “Lifelong Learner”, he will be defending his doctoral thesis in October of this year to complete the final requirements of his doctoral program to receive a PhD in Education.



Mr. Jackson brings to AED a total of eight years of educational experience, which includes the K-12 educational environment and higher education. Mr. Jackson, a Mississippi native, relocated to Colorado in 2006 to become the education director for a 1500-bed medium custody adult male correctional facility in an adult education center. He partnered with Colorado Community Colleges Systems and taught V-Net and Distant Learning classes to critical area high schools and was an adjunct professor of Social Science for a local community college.

Mr. Jackson is happily married to his wife of seven years, Tiffany Jackson. He is a published author and pastor. He enjoys reading, writing, cooking and spending quality time with his family and friends.

In his new position as Education & Instruction Coordinator AED, Mr. Jackson will assist with program reviews and site visits, run statistical reports for the state, assist in streamlining processes in AERIS and review AED policies and procedures for clarity, conciseness, and compliance.

News from the Disabilities Project Manager

Program Reviews and ADA Compliance



When the Program Managers of the Arkansas Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division conduct program reviews at local adult education and literacy centers, the review includes eight questions about program compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Following is an examination of each of the questions, including helpful websites to help your program better prepare for its program review and ensure that your program is in compliance with the ADA.

1. **Does the program have a written process for screening, referrals, diagnosis, and tracking of students with disabilities? Possible screening components may include the following:**
 1. Informal interview
 2. Informal observation (e.g., low TABE scores, distractibility, sub-vocalizing, hearing/vision problems, processing speed, lack of progress, other characteristics of adults with learning disabilities, etc.)
 3. Washington State Learning Disabilities Screening (13-Question Tool)
 4. Payne-Jordan Learning Needs Inventory
 5. Vision Therapy Assessment Screening Tool
 6. PowerPath™ screening tool
 7. Test/re-test with and without accommodations

Many programs use a variety of screening tools to best meet the needs of individual students. For your program review, you should compile copies of the questionnaires your program uses to include in the binder you prepare for the review, and be prepared to discuss other screening components used, such as informal observation and test/re-test with and without accommodations.

There are comprehensive learning disabilities diagnostic referral process guidelines available at <http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/referralProcess.aspx>. These guidelines should also be included in your program review binder, and be prepared to discuss your own experiences with the referral process. If your program has not made any referrals for learning disabilities diagnoses, remember that you may contact Patti White anytime at prwhite@madisoncounty.net or 800.569.3539 for assistance with that process.

2. **Does the program follow guidelines according to the *Arkansas Adult Education Policy and Procedures Manual for Serving Students with Learning Disabilities and/or Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (LD Policy Manual)*?**

Both the checklist and the manual are available at <http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/policyManual/index.aspx> (the checklist is a separate link at the top of that page). You should print a copy of the checklist and fill it out if you haven't already done so, and include it in your program review binder. There are page numbers by each item on the checklist that direct you to the page of the LD Policy Manual that includes the information on the checklist.

News from the Disabilities Project Manager

- 3. Are all programs accessible and barrier-free in accordance with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)? Does the program conduct an annual self-evaluation of ADA compliance?**

There are two Program Accessibility ADA Checklists available to ensure your program's compliance with the accessibility requirements of the ADA. The most commonly used is the one included in the LD policy manual (Appendix B), which you can print from the website at

<http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/policyManual/appendixB.pdf>. There is another, more environmentally comprehensive checklist available at <http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/policyManual/index.aspx> (see link at the top of the webpage) that would be good to include with the other one in your program review binder.

The purpose of these checklists is to make sure that students with disabilities have full access to your program, including physical access and access to services and materials provided.

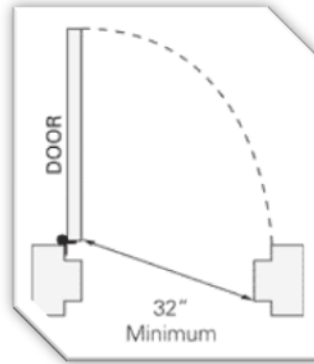
- 4. Who is the designated ADA Coordinator for the program? Does the program have this person's name and contact information clearly posted near the program's point of entry?**

If your program is affiliated with a public school system or a post-secondary educational institution, there may be someone already designated as the ADA Coordinator. You can check with your institution's administration to find out who that person is and then post his or her name and contact information in your own program location. If your program is unaffiliated with any other institution, as most literacy councils are, you should designate as your ADA Coordinator a paid staff member or administrator who is knowledgeable about all issues related to adult students with disabilities.

- 5. Does the program provide public notice of its commitment to equal access to all programs and services?**

There are sample public notice statements available at <http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/policyManual/appendixD.aspx>. You should post one of the shorter notices on your program's letterhead close to your program's front door, and another one near your receptionist's desk. These usually say something like, "For information about program services for persons with disabilities, Contact: *[insert the name and phone number of disability contact person here]*."

Longer equal opportunity statements should be included in program bulletins, handbooks, and application forms. One such example is included on the website mentioned above.



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News from the Disabilities Project Manager

6. Does the program have a written ADA grievance policy?

There is a sample grievance policy available at <http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/policyManual/appendixG.aspx>. You should print this or something similar on your program's letterhead to include in your program review binder.

7. Does the program file the "Learning Disabilities Annual Report" each year with the AALRC Disabilities Project Manager?

The LD Annual Report form is available at <http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/policyManual/index.aspx>. You should print a copy of your last 3-5 annual report forms to include in your program review binder.

8. Does the program have a separate, locked, confidential file for housing confidential documents related to disabilities? Does the file include a "Student Records Log" form in the front of the file?



There is a sample Student Records Log form available at <http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/policyManual/appendixE.pdf>. This should be printed and kept in your confidential file cabinet to document access.

If you have any questions about any of the forms or procedures regarding ADA compliance, please contact Patti White at prwhite@madisoncounty.net or 800.569.3539.

New GED Request for Accommodations Forms

GEDTS in Washington D.C. has just released their new accommodations request forms for immediate distribution and use. Copies of old forms should be destroyed and no longer distributed, although accommodations requests already in process using the old forms will be accepted until September 1, 2011.

When students with disabilities ask about the accommodations process, please include the following documents along with your verbal explanation:

- The appropriate request form(s)
- The Documentation Guidelines for Candidates
- The appropriate Documentation Guidelines for Evaluators

All of the documents are now available at http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ged/test/Take/Accommodations_Disab.htm and will also be available on the AALRC's website at http://aalrc.org/resources/ld/ged_forms.aspx.

For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Patti White at prwhite@madisoncounty.net or 800.569.3539.

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Talk

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

Having a hard time seeing your web pages?



Whether you are browsing the web or your students are using web-based educational software, sometimes it helps to enlarge the page. Hold down Ctrl and press “+” to enlarge, and hold down Ctrl and press “-” to shrink. Pressing Ctrl and 0 will bring it back to the original size.

Another way to achieve the same thing, if you have a middle mouse wheel, is to hold Ctrl down while turning the mouse wheel up or down. This works in Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Firefox.

Great Educational Websites

Khan Academy has over 2100 instructional videos that students can watch at their own pace, as many times as they would like.

Go to <http://www.khanacademy.org/about> to see the video that explains all of the amazing features available on the website. This complete, custom, self-paced learning tool includes a dynamic system for getting help and a custom profile, points, and badges to measure progress.

According to the site developers, “Students can make use of our extensive video library, practice exercises, and assessments from any computer with access to the web.”

http://mpsabe.mpls.k12.mn.us/ABE_Computer_Labv2.html
Great English and GED links.

<http://www.az-aall.org/AALL/Pages/Links/Studentlinks.htm> Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning Links for ABE/GED/ESOL Learners.

<http://freerice.com/index.php> Free Rice - Great site for learning in a game-like format. It defaults to a vocabulary game, but click on “change subjects” to see the rest it has to offer.



Arkansas Literacy Councils Hosts Annual Meeting

Arkansas Literacy Councils held its Annual Meeting recently at the Arkansas Governor’s Mansion. Eighty delegates representing 38 of ALC’s 41 active councils attended the annual meeting, an exceptional turnout.

Current ALC Board President Steve Arnold presided over the Annual Meeting, at which two new members were elected to the ALC Board of Directors: Barbara Hanley of North Little Rock has worked in the adult literacy field for 30 years, and served as an ALC Board Member from 2002 to 2008—two of those years as president. Denny Altes of Fort Smith established several successful waste management and recycling businesses and served in the Arkansas House of Representatives for one term before his election to and service in the Arkansas State Senate from 2002 to 2010. Representative Altes was again elected to the Arkansas House in 2011, where he currently serves.

Six representatives to the ALC Member Advisory Committee (MAC) were also elected: Patsy Brown of Garland county, Denise Hester of Mississippi county, Linda Nelson of Ouachita and Calhoun counties, Wendy Poole of Washington county, Paula Shaffer of Chicot, Ashley and Desha counties, and Nicole Stroud of Independence, Fulton and Sharp counties. Due to term limits, ALC said goodbye to MAC members Eddy Kay Hansen of Arkansas county, Mary Ella Riley of St. Francis, Cross and Lee counties and Myra Jester of Hempstead, Nevada and Sevier counties. Martha Pineda of Monroe county remains on MAC for another year.

Arkansas Service Commissioner Bruce Davis spoke briefly at the meeting about ALC’s successful AmeriCorps program and awarded Governor’s Volunteer Excellence Award certificates to those AmeriCorps members in attendance. ALC’s Arkansas Reads AmeriCorps program consists of 40 members at 26 sites throughout the state. These service members recruit and train other volunteers to promote sustainability in literacy councils after their service term has expired, and they also recruit and tutor adult Arkansans in need of literacy services.

The ALC Annual Meeting guest speaker was Shane Broadway, current director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, who spoke of his own family’s experience with illiteracy and lack of formal education. Broadway applauded literacy councils for their important role in educating Arkansans in need of improving their basic reading, writing, and math skills, and for helping their students achieve better futures.



Arkansas Service Commissioner Bruce Davis congratulates AmeriCorps Members Linda Euwing and Karla Odhiambo.

AALRC Library Update



“Shots Fired on Campus” and “Flashpoint on Campus” are two new AALRC library additions in the professional development section. Presented by the Center for Personal Protection and Safety, these instructional DVDs are designed to empower the viewer with knowledge and strategies for preventing and surviving violence on campus. Training materials are included in both DVD packages.

If you are interested and you would like to check out these or other library items, please contact Klaus Neu, AALRC Media Coordinator, at klaus@aalrc.org or 501.907.2490.