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Articles examine methods and technologies; explore locations and applications; and feature leaders who find successful, innovative ways to reach adult learners using KET materials. Unless otherwise noted, the material in this publication is not copyrighted. Please feel free to use it in the cause of adult education.

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## MONTANA PROGRAM FINDS KEY IN WORKPLACE ESSENTIAL SKILLS

The building is a former elementary school in Missoula, Montana. Inside, you'll find adult education programs; an Even Start Family Literacy Program; special education services; an independent study high school project; on-site staff from the state Department of Labor; and a teen resource program called "FUTURES." This one-stop center serves youth and adults 16 years of age and older in three counties.

Notwithstanding this comprehensive range of programs, there was still more to be done in the area of career training and KET's *Workplace Essential Skills* was identified as a tool that could help, according to Donna Bakke, Program Coordinator for the Missoula County Public Schools.

"We had a career development program," Bakke notes, "but we needed a more comprehensive approach that would mitigate transportation problems, childcare issues and other barriers. We decided we needed not just a class . . . but follow-up. We looked at *Workplace Essential Skills* (a series of tapes, workbooks and online lessons designed to help pre-GED adults get and keep a job). The Missoula Job Service staff came in with some follow-up ideas, and we took on the series. It was perfect for what we wanted to do."

Using the first two modules of *Workplace Essential Skills*, four-week sessions began in

August 2000. For two weeks, Roberta Woome, a Job Service Employment Specialist, teaches Employment Essentials using the first eight lessons in the series as well as other materials. An Adult Education Instructor teaches communication and customer service skills (one week) and does follow-up, working with collaborating agencies to make sure clients get support for their individual goals. The fourth week focuses on STEPS, a Pacific Institute program designed for people with low self-esteem who have trouble keeping a job. Classes meet every day for three and a half hours to six hours per day. Because some potential participants face childcare issues or work during the day but would like training to help them advance, night sessions may be added in 2001.

Students include workers who have been injured and must re-train for other types of jobs; those who have not worked for many years, and those who have trouble keeping a job. Through December 2000, 45 people had been served in classes averaging six or seven. Instructors report that students bond and "develop a support system among themselves," Bakke notes.

Employers visit as guest speakers. Bakke adds, "One guest hired a student at once. He was very impressed with the curriculum and that students were

taking the time to learn these important skills."

During a visit from state officials – a visit students did not know about in advance – participants were asked if the class sessions helped. "We got positive feedback on the videos and the workbooks," Bakke notes. "The curriculum is so upbeat, and it doesn't get boring. They were real positive about it – information is not just 'poured' on them; they participate."

### Research Is Next Step

At the end of March 2001, the center will implement pre-GED Math and Reading in conjunction with the Northwest Initiative for Program Improvement – or NWIPI, a multi-state outreach of cities in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska and Montana.

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## NURTURING SENSE OF COMMUNITY A FIRST STEP FOR NEVADA FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

For several years, the Nevada community of Sun Valley has housed mobile home parks and, primarily, low-income residents, about 17,000 in all. The demographics are changing with the introduction of a new subdivision, but there are still few jobs or retail services closer than Reno, several miles away.

That is the challenge for the five-year-old Sun Valley Family Resource Center, one of 40 such facilities around the state designed to provide family support in at-risk neighborhoods. To begin fulfilling its mission, the Center surveyed the community, according to Center Director Pat Johnson. Results showed satisfaction with the four local elementary schools but concern that there was "not enough to do" for children. It was also obvious that — because jobs, retail and other services, and even the middle schools, were located in Reno — there was no strong sense of community among Sun Valley residents.

From that survey came a campaign to spruce up the area. That included grass around all of the schools (located, after all, in a desert). A children's clinic was established. A teen center is being revived. Residents "are taking the community's destiny into their own hands; it's exciting to see that happen," she says.

Achieving goals together is an important step for local residents, but far from the end of the story. As in any community, there is an almost overwhelming variety of needs for residents of all ages. The Center helps people buy homes, and provides bicycles so children not served by bus routes can get to school, for example. "We provide a large number of services, and collaboration is a BIG word with us," Johnson says. The Center meets many family needs on site; for the rest, it links with other agencies and becomes, in effect, "a broker of services; we work with health professionals in the area, family wellness programs, counseling and literacy services."

Local schools are especially strong partners, she notes. "The schools put on workshops on managing money for children, family story telling, attention deficit disorder," and many other topics on which parents need information. "I work very closely with them"

to avoid duplicating services . . . "We help each other."

Adult education and employment are also strong concerns. Many Sun Valley residents lack opportunity and/or education; they are the underemployed, "the working poor. They work hard and are struggling to meet daily needs. There are very few jobs in the Valley." Last year, the Center initiated GED instruction linked to telecasts of KET's *GED ON TV* on Reno's Channel 5. The program netted seven graduates. Learners came to the Center

two nights a week, "and they all worked together," Johnson says. "They were all women with families, some single parents" who had tried more traditional methods of GED instruction but ran into barriers including child care, class availability at convenient times, and other issues. At the Center, "students come and work with a teacher to see what their needs

are." In class, they "work with each other, and they stay with an issue until ALL the students master it. It's based on what each person needs." Perhaps equally pivotal, learners "can bring their children; especially babies."

Some studied video tapes of *GED ON TV*, as well as utilizing the telecasts, workbooks and direct instruction. "The real key is learners' comfort level and students working through things together," Johnson says. "They realize they're not the only ones who don't understand."

The students make Johnson proud: "One of our ladies said, 'I don't think I can do this. I'm too old.' She's one of our best successes." After earning her certificate in a short period of time, "she was offered a better job at more money."

Another student applied to community college; a third sought additional classes toward her goal of becoming a travel agent. Still another Hispanic young lady came to the program feeling that she could never pass the test, Johnson recalls. But as she progressed in the Center program, began to feel comfortable and build her confidence, "she took the test and passed. She was very bright. She had to learn NOT to doubt her own abilities."

The Center recently added *Workplace Essential Skills* to its agenda. Students were recruited among GED participants and

through fliers in the schools, at parenting classes and in the courts. Johnson feels that the skills emphasized in *Workplace Essential Skills* are useful in a variety of ways. "I have particularly noticed when we do our GED pre-tests that some very basic math skills and writing skills weren't there. Yet, those are skills we all need. At home, people need to be able to communicate with the power company, for example. Otherwise, they must rely on others or go without." Other clients have mastered math and writing, "but they have no clue how to look for a job, how to fill out an application. We've become a satellite for America's Job Bank. I'd like to incorporate that into the *Workplace Essential Skills* resume and job-seeking phase," so that learners can practice in the real world.

Local businessmen viewed the *Workplace Essential Skills* tapes and confirmed that "everything in there is relevant to the workplace; to be a successful employee, and to advance," she adds. "*Workplace Essential Skills* zeroed right in on the things people need to be in the job and to be successful."

Johnson started out with one class for adults and another for teens. "So many young people don't have these skills," she notes. Even college students applying for jobs at the Center exhibit few interviewing skills or any perception that they might apply volunteer or team experiences to the requirements of a particular job. Yet, putting people this age in a "regular" *Workplace Essential Skills* program might be like asking them to "go to class with your mother," Johnson muses. The gap in life experience between the young and the older adult is so vast, that perhaps each group can best be addressed separately. "The ways that you engage a young person and an adult are different," she notes.

The GED and *Workplace Essential Skills* programs give Valley participants "the tools to make changes and achieve their goals; to build the confidence to go for better jobs, or to advance where they are," Johnson notes. The programs "enhance the qualities these participants already have." ☺

Montana Program finds Key in WES  
continued from page 1

"Our state has decided to do some research on using the *Workplace Essential Skills* curriculum and how it would improve instruction in GED studies," Bakke explains. Could using the curriculum lead to a difference in retention? In participation? The six-month study will focus on using actual *Workplace Essential Skills* modules in GED classes and attempt to answer the question of whether or not the types of teaching techniques used for the series could have beneficial applications in GED instruction. Instructors will keep logs on their own observations and student comments, and will track academic growth and student satisfaction.

"We want to have six students in a group at the Missoula center, another six in individualized programs at the Office of Public Assistance, and another six in a very small town with few resources and high unemployment," she says, in order to compare different environments and different techniques.

Because most schools and libraries in Montana have Internet access, rural students can learn through the online component of *Workplace Essential Skills*. "Our State ABE

Director is excited to have a workplace curriculum available, especially for rural areas," Bakke says. "The online component can be such a help." Smaller communities may not enjoy the luxury of instructors on site on a regular basis, "but people can still learn online. We hope volunteers (instructors or aides) may be a component, too; it would be great if program participants/graduates could become mentors and tutors." And, whether the students meet in a school or a library, an additional benefit comes in seeing adults who feel that they failed at academics get to know those institutions in a new way, one that is exciting, not intimidating.

Whether working with various agencies in Missoula County or with several states through NWIPI, Bakke and her colleagues are dedicated to making sure that participants have access to the services they need, and that appropriate resources remain available to adults throughout their lives. Teamwork is the key to effective service delivery. ☺

**Time is running out...**  
for students to take the current GED exam. Students who are already preparing for the current GED exam have until December 31, 2001 to finish taking the test. Starting January 1, 2002, only the new exam will be offered. For more information about the new GED exam, visit the GED Testing Service web site at [www.acenet.edu/calec/ged/home.html](http://www.acenet.edu/calec/ged/home.html)  
**... act fast!**



## COMMUNITY SUPPORT PLUS OUTSIDE GRANTS = EXPANSION FOR DECORAH LIBRARY

Strong volunteer involvement and community support have made it possible for the Decorah (Iowa) Public Library to become an area leader in outreach services. The corollary to that, of course, is that the more you do, the more space you need.

That's why, in 1997, the facility expanded, resulting in 18,000 square feet of much-needed space. Included was a public program room with fiber optic communication equipment. The four-year, \$1.6 million expansion project was financed through a combination of sources. "Local people committed to the Library" formed the inspiration and base of the fund-raising project, says Wanda Gardner, Library Director. "There were raffles; the school kids held chili suppers, with proceeds going to the Library; a stamp club sold special cancellations, etc." Those activities raised approximately \$700,000, complemented by a generous gift of \$300,000 from the City, and another \$600,000 from an NEH Challenge Grant and other grantors.

Such success is not new to the Decorah facility: It is a winner of the Excellence in

Small or Rural Library Service Award, the Bessie Boehm Moore Award for service to the aging, the Gale Research Financial Development Award, and the National Organization on Disabilities Award, all through the American Library Association (ALA); the Outstanding Large Print Program Award and the Large

**"Keys to success are strong community support (both volunteer and financial), and finding grant funding."**

Print Community Service Award through Thorndike Press — G.K. Hall; and the Governor's Volunteer Award for outstanding service from the State of Iowa.

The Library houses a large-print collection of approximately 5,000 materials, which is loaned to patrons of more than 100 libraries throughout Iowa. With a total collection of 43,000 materials, the Library records annual circulation of more than 165,000 — well above the state average for libraries of similar size.

An impressive record for a facility born in 1963 in an old Post Office, purchased for \$1; a \$200,000 annual budget, and staff of six, only three of whom are full time.

In addition to the invaluable efforts of local volunteers, Gardner attributes the facility's success to involvement in the community. Visibility is enhanced through such means as belonging to the local Chamber of Commerce. "We've become a part of the downtown community," she notes, "and are seen as an asset." The Library also is highlighted in periodic newspaper and radio spots, and participates monthly in a local radio interview show.

Today, there is a computer budget, but things didn't start out that way. It was the "staff's tenacity and fund-raising savvy" that led to the facility's being automated, having computers networked throughout the building,

and developing a three-county computer network, as well.

"Money is no excuse for not automating," Gardner says. "We have had to fight for every penny all the way." She believes the fund-raising success is due to "collaborative — not just cooperative — efforts with others." For example, the Library houses a Mezzanine Gallery, operated by the Decorah Regional Arts Council, and hosts receptions for exhibiting artists; a Postal Museum, funded through an Iowa Humanities Grant; the County Historical Archives; and a "Toys Go Round" toy and equipment lending library, and the Decorah Genealogy Association research library, both staffed by volunteers. Keys to success are strong community support (both volunteer and financial), and finding grant funding. Gardner feels: "Grantors are looking for the best use of their funds, giving money to the programs benefitting the most people ... You can better provide for your own community by reaching outside your own neighborhood." ☺

## STUDENTS COULD GET A NEEDED JOLT IN MASSACHUSETTS PROGRAM

Welfare To Work initiatives have provided a first step in helping Americans achieve self-sufficiency. Now, however, "we have a lot of people trying to maintain or gain a place in the workplace who really don't have the skills to advance or maybe even hold a job. They have to be able to think better, read better, calculate better. It has to be done," according to Roger Hooper.

The best way to help those adrift in the workplace is to reach them at home, says Hooper, Distance Learning Project Director with Mass Interaction, formerly the Massachusetts Corporation for Educational Telecommunications (MCET) in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

"They probably don't have the time or the resources to complete a program at a center," he points out. "The optimum attendance of adults at a center in Massachusetts is six hours per week or fewer than 300 hours per year." That's not a lot of time, and getting the skills those adults need is a big job. Learning at home could give them more time to get that job done. And KET's *Workplace Essential Skills* can serve as an excellent focal point for home-based learning, Hooper adds. "The series is actually not just work skills, but life skills. It's an incredibly well thought out curriculum package with all sorts of bells and whistles . . . and I say we can design a whole program around this curriculum with the experience we have in distance learning."

Much of that experience is being gleaned from four adult learning pilot sites in the state. Seven entities – each funded separately by the Massachusetts Department of Education – are collaborating on developing distance learning strategies out of current learning centers. Competitive grants were awarded to the various entities, which are approaching the mission from different perspectives, but with the same goal: To build out their services with an effective distance learning component. Hooper's job is to coordinate and document what happens.

Using experience and knowledge gained from the four pilot sites, the Massachusetts ABE Distance Learning Project – including Mass Interaction and SABES (the state's System for Adult Basic Education Support) – has proposed a project design called JOLT (Jobs and Learning Together). Designing JOLT included providing for student intake services and skills assessment, placement in proper programs, interactions with a tutor or

each other, measurement of progress and academic counseling; staff development opportunities, including techniques for "counseling someone you can't see" and teaching on video rather than "live"; and determining the curriculum and how to teach it.

**"A lot of us feel that Workplace Essential Skills is the most successful expression so far of a fully articulated and integrated distance learning tool – it includes the web, print, video, etc. There's nothing else like it! It represents not only a curriculum package to look at, but a key to developing a new distance learning program."**

"The reason this program design was created was the dovetailing of two very important factors," Hooper notes: "One was a lot of people in low-paying jobs, still needing basic skills instruction that they don't have the time or experience to access . . . and Two, the appearance of *Workplace Essential Skills*. Our entire mission is to develop opportunities to learn through telecommunications for people who can't access centers.

"This is where *Workplace Essential Skills*, *Crossroads Café* and other series come in," Hooper adds. "We can work with people to see what is most appropriate for their target audience and how to deliver programs so that they're more than just a viewing experience.

"With *Workplace Essential Skills*, the curriculum and instruction are fully integrated; adaptable. We don't have to develop instructional strategies from scratch. A lot of us feel that *Workplace Essential Skills* is the most successful expression so far of a fully articulated and integrated distance learning

tool – it includes the web, print, video, etc. There's nothing else like it! It represents not only a curriculum package to look at, but a key to developing a new distance learning program."

As currently envisioned, the Massachusetts Housing Agency would facilitate JOLT outreach through community learning centers in privately owned, subsidized housing developments. Facilities are wired for cable, so delivery of telecommunications elements would be feasible. JOLT provides for an on-site, paid coordinator to work with tenants and to train qualified tenants as mentors, with the goal of one mentor for each three learners. "This would give people an opportunity to see that their learning can result in a marketable skill," Hooper says. "It opens the horizons of what can be – they may have entered a program thinking they want to become truck drivers or to advance in that field; then they realize they could become teachers. They thought they were 'stupid'; or that it was their fault (that they didn't succeed in school); or that the system was not made for them; and then . . . they can't believe it when they realize that they are capable of helping others."

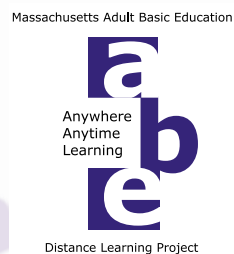
Peer-led mentoring and tutoring can "ensure maximum retention and progress in the instructional program," explains a JOLT concept paper. Such support will help learners "develop successful careers, and become models, mentors and tutors to their own children and to their co-workers and communities while they attain a self-sufficiency plan for a life of work and career development."

The need is great. More than one million Massachusetts residents lack either a high school diploma or English proficiency equal to that of a native speaker, or both, reports the JOLT concept paper. The Department of Education estimates that "44% of the adult population of the state – some 877,000 adults – cannot read or write at the fifth grade level, and are therefore functionally illiterate." JOLT is designed to help.

Hooper cautions that no one thinks telecommunications tools serve adults "better" than do regular learning centers. Rather, the use of such tools "addresses a critical problem intrinsic to the adult education field: the shortage of available slots in classroom-based programs, combined with a target population facing various barriers (transportation, work schedules, childcare issues, etc.) which would

prevent their taking slots even if such were available." A coordinated, statewide, distance learning outreach would not replace existing programs; rather, it would provide *additional opportunities* through technology.

"Our job is to bring the message to the learners, rather than the learners to the message . . . and to make that message rich enough to be effective and deliverable anytime, anywhere." ☎



### Getting in Under the Wire

"We're getting lots of calls from learning centers and, in one case, a state department of education, ordering videotapes and workbooks for the current GED series," says Ron Griffin, national sales manager for KET.

"There plenty of students who have already started studying for the existing GED exam or who have already taken some parts of the test and want to complete it and get that diploma before December, so they're hurrying before the new exam goes into effect in January," Griffin adds. "We're getting books and tapes out to folks as fast as we can."

Teachers interested in ordering materials for the current test may call Ron Griffin at (800) 354-9067 to find out about special pricing.

## 2000 REASONS AMERICA SHOULD READ

Name some reasons why America should read.

How would you reply? Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) got hundreds of answers recently in its 2000 Reasons America Should Read online lottery.

The contest was part of LVA's innovative campaign to increase literacy awareness via the Internet. Title sponsor for the event was Tic Tac® Breath Mints, a subsidiary of Ferrero, USA and a long-time supporter of LVA and literacy causes. The contest ended on September 30, 2000 and all entries were placed in a drawing held October 7 during the LVA National Conference.

libraries found the 2000 Reasons website and incorporated it into their programs," Carman says. "A large number of adult students also submitted reasons. While learning to read, students find out there is a whole world of words that they can access on the Internet."

The contest "struck a chord with such a wide range of people who work in the literacy field," Carman adds. The more than 1,200 entrants included people studying English for Speakers of Other Languages; learners in their 80s, and children, including one who wrote, "I love to read because I love Garfield®."



Winners were:

First Prize, \$2,500: Katie Johnson, 30, a Director of Marketing. Reason: "To escape into another world. I have been a voracious reader since I learned to read at age 3. Whenever my day is going a little rough, I take a book down to the park and read it all away."

Second Prize, \$1,000: Heidi Baker, 32, a non-profit Homebuilder. Reason: "Opening a book is like opening a door to the whole world and traveling without ever leaving home!"

Third Prize, \$500: Margaret Duff, 50, an Even Start Coordinator. Reason: "Whether I am reading a newspaper, magazine, novel, historical account, biography, or a book to increase my knowledge of a particular topic, my world expands. I can be in someone else's shoes for a little while and get a perspective I didn't have before. Reading will allow me to stay connected to the world my whole life, no matter how old or infirm I may become. For these reasons, I enjoy reading."

"We had a wide range of submissions, from Ireland and Australia, Great Britain and Canada, not just the United States," according to Tracy Carman, Communications Specialist with LVA Marketing & Communications. Responses included statements from local literacy services directors as well as representatives of national organizations and federal programs. "A lot of LVA affiliates, literacy organizations, and small groups in

It was an adventure to look at the new submissions as they came in, Carman says. "A number of learners described (learning to read) as a window that had been opened. Suddenly, they could see a whole world out there . . . There is still a stigma attached to (low level literacy) and it's a really big step for the learner to go to an organization and ask for help. But as long as they hide the situation, they can't get help. The universal message from learners is: Don't be ashamed to get help. Things WILL get better for you." ☎

For more information about LVA and literacy issues, visit [www.literacyvolunteers.org](http://www.literacyvolunteers.org); call toll-free 1-877-HELPLVA, or (315) 472-0001; or write to Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc., 635 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13203.

## WORKPLACE ESSENTIAL SKILLS WINS REGIONAL AWARD

"Workplace Essential Skills #5: Interviewing" is the winner of a Gold Regional Award in the current Cinema in Industry (CINDY) competition. A host of formats are represented in the competition, which includes categories in a variety of fields including Business, Industry and Government; Education; Fundraising; Medical; Student Productions;

and many others. Last year, CINDY drew more than 2,300 entries from 17 countries. The competition is a project of the International Association of Audio Visual Communicators.

Winning a regional award renders an entry eligible to progress into the current Fall International CINDY Competition. ☎



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New video and online workplace-readiness series from PBS LiteracyLink®

## RELATIONSHIP OF CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION, RECIDIVISM TO BE TRACED IN STUDY

More than 3,400 former inmates are the focus of a federally funded study examining the impact of correctional education on rates of relapse into criminal behavior. The study covers inmates released in Fall/Winter 1997-98 from prisons in Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio.

An initial review of results for one state – Maryland – indicates that analysts can expect to see a 19% reduction in re-incarceration for inmates who simply participate in education programs while in prison, according to Steve Steurer, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Correctional Education Association (CEA). Types of education – GED classes, vocational training, etc. – have not yet been sorted out; only the fact of participation in an educational program. To help address concerns that factors other than education might be responsible for positive changes in former inmates' lives, "every variable has been factored out," adds Steurer, who is also Coordinator of Academic Instruction for Maryland's Correctional Education Program. "There are 455 variables. The study groups are absolutely identical; the only difference is education."

For the *Correctional Education Association Three State Recidivism Study*, the states' correctional education programs joined with CEA to pool criminal justice, correctional and education data in a format that would allow both aggregate and individual state reports to be produced. Researchers, correctional and education staff from the federal government and the three states agreed on the study design; developed data collection tools, and gleaned information from inmate interviews, criminal justice records, correctional and

educational sources, parole officers and employment databases. Phase I followed inmates for one year after release. Phase II will provide an additional year of criminal history data.

The ongoing study is building a rich resource including demographic information on family and community background, economic status and employment, educational experience, involvement in drug and alcohol treatment, offender perspectives on education, motivational factors and much more.

The projected 19% drop in recidivism would be indicative of significant cost savings for prison systems, Steurer says. For example, using 1999 figures for the state of Maryland, if 1,200 inmates did not return to correctional facilities, \$23,280,000 in housing and food costs would be saved; as well as a potential \$867,240 in costs of supervising persons on parole or probation. (At present, the Maryland budget for correctional system teachers and classroom equipment/materials is about \$11,700,000.) Other benefits when inmates do not recidivate include the translation of ex-offenders into workers who pay taxes; parents who exercise family responsibilities; and citizens who contribute positively to the community.

"What all this means is that for every dollar a state spends on correctional education programs, it could get back many times that amount in social benefits and public safety," Steurer says.

For more information as it becomes available, please visit [www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/OCE/research.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/OCE/research.html).

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR THE NEW GED 2002 TEST

This spring KET will begin production of a three-part multi-media staff development resource to help teachers prepare students for the new GED 2002 Exam. The Kentucky Department of Adult Education and Literacy will underwrite the project.

"Teachers all over the country have asked us about staff development for the new exam," says KET's Milli Fazey, "So much about the new test will be different. We called on Caren Van Slyke, who probably knows more about the new test than anyone outside GED Testing Service."

Van Slyke has worked closely with KET and PBS LiteracyLink® over the past five years as content consultant and editor for *Workplace Essential Skills*, released in fall 1999, and *GED Connection*, scheduled for release this coming August.

"We've asked Caren to teach three demonstration lessons," Fazey explains, "one on math, one on writing skills and the essay, and one on critical thinking skills and interpreting and understanding graphics. Those are the areas that will have major changes from the current GED test. We'll tape the demonstration lessons, which should be about 45 minutes each. We've also asked Caren and her team to prepare a staff development workshop for local programs, including video, a workshop guide and handouts; a self-study guide for instructors; and online teacher-training modules."

Print materials are expected to include information on the new GED tests and activ-

ities that teachers can use on their own or in conjunction with fellow instructors for professional development on classroom strategies for the new tests.

"We'll start with math," says Fazey. "Then writing and critical thinking and graphics literacy. Videotapes, print materials, and the online portion should be ready shortly after taping."

Watch for more information in the next issue of this newsletter.

### Caren Van Slyke

Former GED instructor, staff development trainer, and founder of Chicago-based learning Unlimited, Caren Van Slyke has over twenty years of experience in adult education and many credits to her name. Former adult education editorial director for Contemporary Books, she is often employed as content consultant, product developer, sales force trainer, and workshop presenter for major adult education publishers.

Over the past five years she has served as content design consultant and print developer for KET and PBS LiteracyLink in the development of *Workplace Essential Skills* and the soon-to-be-released *GED Connection*. Van Slyke also a presenter in the joint PBS LiteracyLink/GED Testing Service teleconference produced last spring by WHYY in Philadelphia. This past year, Van Slyke developed a correlation for GED Testing Service linking the GED Tests to the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) Equipped for the Future project.



## WHAT IF ALL KENTUCKY READS THE SAME BOOK?

Imagine grandchild and grandparent; supervisor and employee; members of a church group – in fact, everyone in Kentucky – reading the same book and then discussing it. Imagine sharing the enjoyment of a narrative scene, or expanding on interpretations of an ethical decision made by one of the characters. Imagine enjoying literature and sharing impressions.

This is a vision that has moved Kentucky Educational Television (KET), adult education and family literacy centers, and a variety of other agencies to implement *What If All Kentucky Reads The Same Book?* The "What If" project is a high profile, statewide reading campaign designed to create excitement and a sense of community that crosses age, geographic and economic divisions.

Scheduled to launch on Jan. 18, 2001, the campaign echoes the goals of [bookclub@ket](mailto:bookclub@ket), KET's monthly discussion series: to encourage reading and discussion, and to call attention to the wealth of good literature that originates in Kentucky. The plan is to get literally everyone to read Barbara Kingsolver's *The Bean Trees*, the program's May selection.

"We envision young and old talking about the book together," according to Tona Barkley, Advertising and Promotion Manager for KET. The project is expected to generate a variety of events and gatherings around the Commonwealth, as well.

In addition to airing the regular [bookclub@ket](mailto:bookclub@ket) discussion of the work, KET also will present Kingsolver on a May 31 call-in program. The show will have a live audience, and Kentucky "What If" participants who sign up on KET's web site or call KET at 1-800-334-8409 will be eligible to win tickets to be part of that audience. Kingsolver is donating her fee to provide free books that will be made available to people who can't afford to buy them.

KET also plans to rebroadcast a Kingsolver biography first aired on the *Signature* series. WFPL-FM, a Louisville

public radio station, will make two Barbara Kingsolver programs available to other public radio outlets across the state. Well-known Kentuckians will appear in video, audio and print public service announcements promoting the project.

At [www.ket.org](http://www.ket.org) on the web, visitors will be able to link to the club page and view a rolling tally of the number of people signing up to participate; a calendar of activities for each county; a discussion guide; a teacher resources area; a discussion forum; a partners' page with links to partners' web sites; and streaming video of some broadcast and promotional elements.

In addition to adult education and literacy centers in nine counties, other partners in the project include the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning; *The Courier Journal*; the Governor's School for the Arts; Hawley-Cooke Booksellers; the Kentucky

Arts Council; Kentucky.com; the Kentucky Center for the Arts; the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives; the Kentucky School Media Association; the Kentucky Press Association; the *Lexington Herald-Leader*; the Lexington Public Library; the Louisville Free Public Library; WFPL-FM (Louisville); WEKU-FM (Richmond), and WRVG-FM (Georgetown).

For more information, visit [www.ket.org](http://www.ket.org).



## Picture This!

Five years in the making  
PBS LiteracyLink®  
*GED CONNECTION*  
Is bringing the new  
GED 2002 Test into focus.

We can have all kinds of fun playing off the concept of this camera lens, but we think you'll smile even more when you see the finished covers of the new *GED CONNECTION* videotapes and workbooks, produced by KET for PBS LiteracyLink.

### Why will you smile about the new series?

- It was created specifically to help students prepare for the rigorous new GED 2002 exam.
- It contains 39 engaging half-hour videotapes, featuring
  - interviews with scientists, astronomers, poets, politicians, playwrights, and other experts who use GED skills in their lives.
  - straight talk about what's on the new test and how to prepare for it, from the GED Testing Service director and test editors for Reading, Writing, Math, Science and Social Studies.
  - interviews with actual GED teachers, graduates and hopeful students
- It also includes 3 instructional workbooks, containing loads of practice and graphics, including charts, graphs, maps, and diagrams.
- Your students will benefit from state-of-the-art, online GED activities.
- You will have a comprehensive Teacher's Guide for each lesson containing lesson objectives; discussion topics and group activities; and explanations about how the videos, workbook chapters, and online lessons reinforce each other.
- You'll be able to see some of the actual programs at the COABE Conference in Memphis this coming March.
- You'll be able to order previews and sample workbook chapters this coming April.

Now picture a bright future  
for your GED students.  
See what develops!

