
NJALL NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 2

Fall 2014

WIOA is the New Law

By Barry Semple

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, replacing the Workforce Investment Act, was signed into law on July 22, 2014. It reaffirms the ongoing role of American Job Centers and stringently promotes program coordination and alignment of employment, education, and training.

Adult Education as part of WIOA is now a “core program” and will have to report the same common performance indicators as training programs. These indicators include: % of workers that entered employment, % of workers that retained employment, median wages of these workers, credential attainment of these workers, and measureable skills gains of these workers.

The performance indicators will be significantly influenced by the final federal regulations and by state and local unified plans. These new requirements will alter the goals, curriculum, and outcomes of adult education programs. The new law goes into effect July 1, 2015. The proposed regulations will be drafted in January 2015, and on January 22, 2016 the final regulations will be published. The full implementation of WIOA performance measures will take place July 1, 2016.

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Meet our NJALL 2014 Scholarship Winners

By Judy Faherty

Adult educators gathered on Friday, June 6, 2014 to celebrate the 2014 NJALL Scholarship winners at NJALL’s Annual Scholarship Breakfast and Award Ceremony at Mercer County Community College. Three outstanding adult students, Dennard Brown, Pasang Schreck, and Maxine Watson were awarded this year’s scholarships. NJALL annually awards scholarships to adults who have earned a High School Diploma by attending high school equivalency preparation classes or completing Adult HS requirements at a NJ adult education program. All three 2014 winners are now college students. Their inspirational acceptance speeches highlighted the ceremony. Each expressed their gratitude for being selected as they shared the story of their personal journey.

Dennard Brown, of Newark, attended the Essex County College Adult Learning Center to earn his high school diploma. He talked of having been an “A” student through the 6th grade until negative actions and street life caused him to lose his way. Eventually, he realized that he had to make a change for the better to try something different and positive. After two and a half years of learning, studying, and tutoring, Dennard was honored to pass the high school equivalency exam and become a high school graduate. He now attends Essex County College majoring in Criminal Justice. He has hopes of becoming a positive influence for vulnerable disenfranchised people both by setting a good example of overcoming adversity and by working to keep others on the right track. Social justice is his ultimate goal.

Pasang Schrek was born in a remote Himalayan village in Nepal which had no school. At age seven, she took a seven-day journey, mostly on foot, with her father to live with her aunt’s family in order to attend school. Pasang was treated

Scholarship Winners, continued on page 5

From the Editor

Welcome to the Fall 2014 issue of the NJALL Newsletter. Fall in New Jersey means change; it means cooler temperatures and brightly colored foliage. This year it also means changes to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and changes in Aid to Adult High Schools. You can read about WIOA and the coming changes on page 1 and about the NJ Assembly and Senate votes on Aid to Adult High Schools on page 3. A new series in this issue is "Did You Know..?" In each issue the Newsletter will highlight an aspect of adult education and its role in adult education. In this issue, we look at WIBS. Also in this issue are the traditional features of Advocacy (page 4) and information on our Webinar series (page 3).

In this fall issue, meet the 2014 NJALL Scholarship winners (page 1) and the NJALL Teacher of the Year Award winners (page 2). Our Spotlight On series highlights the NJ Youth Corps of Middlesex County. NJ Youth Corps is a state-wide program that helps at-risk youth earn their high school diplomas and gain employment skills. Read about the NJ Youth Corps and one of its success stories on page 6.

Be sure to peruse our list of FREE WEBINARS (page 3) offered throughout the fall. It's never too early to start thinking about attending the NJALL CONFERENCE to be held on Friday, April 24, 2015 at Brookdale Community College in Lincroft, NJ.

If you have any suggestions for adult education programs we can spotlight in upcoming issues, please contact us at njallmail@gmail.com. Look for the next issue of the NJALL Newsletter in the New Year.

Carol Cochi



Mary O'Connor (center) with her husband John (left) and NJALL Board Member Josette Peterson (right).

From the President of NJALL

NJALL is a professional association for adult educators. Our project is adult literacy. Most professional associations are made up of members who pay dues to receive services non-members do not get. That model is exclusionary and tends to be bureaucratic. NJALL is different. We are a network of professional adult educators with NJALL as the hub to provide support and services. We have no members and we do not charge dues. Instead we have participants, professionals who join the network simply by participating in a NJALL activity. If you participated in one of our free webinars, our conference, our advocacy activities, our scholarship program, or any other NJALL activity then you are part of the NJALL network. Welcome! We look forward to your future participation.

Hal Beder

Teacher of the Year Award Winners

By Josette Peterson

Each year the New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning solicits, from the field of adult education, the names of teachers who have demonstrated dedication, professionalism, and exemplary performance in the field of lifelong learning. These recommendations are then carefully reviewed by the awards committee and voted upon by the NJALL board. It was a tough competition this year with many outstanding candidates. This year's Teacher of the Year Award winners are Mary O'Connor and Miriam Faber. Mary and Miriam received their awards at the NJALL Annual Conference on April 25th at Brookdale Community College.

Mary O'Connor has been a Tutor/Trainer with Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) in Essex and Passaic Counties for over 1 year. Her time at LVA has been highlighted by her exemplary leadership skills in conducting workshops, mentoring new tutors, and assisting the LVA staff whenever necessary. As a trainer, Mary helps tutors to prepare for their first meeting with students, helps to put the tutor and student at ease, and follows up with new tutors to determine their progress and offer any support they need. Mary also conducts workshops to help tutors establish sound practices to ensure success with their students. No task is too small for Mary who shows the same interest whether conducting a differentiated conversation group or recording and filing students' time sheets. She is always ready to assist with any task, tutor, student, or LVA staff member. Mary was an English teacher for over 4 decades before joining LVA, and she is happy to share her knowledge and love of the English language with others.

Teacher of the Year, continued on page 7

FALL WEBINARS

October 10 2:00 – 3:00 PM

Ready, Set, Write! Getting Started (Co-sponsored with WE LEARN)

Presenters: Shellie Walters, Marie Doerner– WE LEARN

For students in basic education classes, writing can be very difficult. What do you write? How do you get started? In the *Ready, Set, Write* webinar, we will take you through the creative process of writing. This webinar is for teachers who are looking to help their students and for students who are stuck and want to move forward.

Shellie Walters is a former ABE student and leader. She is now in her second year of college. She is always trying to develop other students around her. She is on the board of her local program and is involved in the Seattle Speakers Bureau and helps to recruit new students to join. She has been involved in the Women's Perspectives Committee and serves on the WE LEARN Board of Directors.

October 14 11:00 am to 12:00 pm

Writing for the Journal of Prison Education and Reentry: Practitioners Sharing Experiences from Around the World

(Co-sponsored with *The Journal of Prison Education and Reentry*)

Presenters: Bill Muth and Ginger Walker, Virginia Commonwealth University

The Journal of Prison Education and Reentry is a brand new, open access international journal with two major contributing streams: research papers and practitioner papers. We take seriously the idea that researchers and practitioners can learn from each other and that everyone's contributions to the conversation are important. In this webinar we will (a) provide an overview of the journal and some basic parameters for getting a manuscript accepted for publication, and (b) facilitate a brainstorming session with the participants to generate possible topics and strategies for authoring papers.

Dr. Muth, Associate Professor of Adult and Adolescent Literacy, uses sociocultural and critical frameworks to study prison-based literacy events-including art-literacy experiences like mural making-that help build relationships and family biographies, humanize public spaces, and value the lived experiences of incarcerated parents and their children. At Virginia Commonwealth University he is track coordinator for the Curriculum, Culture and Change Track in the PhD in Education Program and Co-Administrator of the Online Adult Literacy Certificate Program.

Webinars, continued on page 4

NJ Senate Votes on Adult High School Aid

By Barry Semple

Most adult high school programs in New Jersey closed when their state aid was terminated in the 2007-2008 school year. Currently, however, the state legislature is currently considering bills that would restore student aid for approved adult high schools.

Assembly Bill No. 3341, restoring state aid for adult high schools, was passed in June 2014. Senate Bill No. 2230, which is identical to the bill in the Assembly, has been reported out by Senate committees for a vote by the full Senate. The text of the bill states: "This bill provides additional state aid for individuals enrolled in approved adult high schools and post-graduate education programs operated by a school district, and post-secondary education programs operated by a county vocational school district or consolidated county college program.... In the first year of the program, a school district or county college would receive \$1500 for each student enrolled in the program."

We will be closely tracking the progress these bills make for restoring financial aid for a valuable and greatly needed adult education program.

SAVE THE DATE!

NJALL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

April 24, 2015

**Brookdale Community College
Lincroft, NJ**

See our website for details:

Website: <http://www.njall.org/>

FALL WEBINARS, cont'd

October 21 3:00 – 4:00 PM

What Does Genre Have to Do With It? Making Connections Between Texts and Real-world Literacy Practices

Presenter: Kristen Perry, University of Kentucky

In this webinar, Dr. Kristen Perry will discuss the ways in which an instructional focus on genre in adult literacy education can help adult learners develop and expand their literacy skills and practices. The presentation will provide information on (1) the ways in which genres are connected to literacy practices (that is, the ways in which people use literacy in the world), with a focus on both the *structure/features* of a given genre, as well as that genre's *purpose and use* in the world, and (2) the ways in which literacy basic skills instruction can be connected to instruction on genres and practices.

Kristen H. Perry is an associate professor at the University of Kentucky and director of the Cultural Practices of Literacy Study. Her work focuses primarily on literacy and culture in diverse communities, investigating everyday home/ family and community literacy practices, particularly among African immigrant and refugee communities. Her teaching experience includes teaching in multi-grade classrooms in Colorado, teaching in Africa through the Peace Corps, and teaching adult refugees in the U.S.

November 18 3:00 – 4:00 PM

Teaching Science Using Free Online Videos

Presenter: David J. Rosen, Newsome Associates

A national group of adult education science teachers has recently created a comprehensive list of free online science instruction videos suitable for adult learners, and has reviewed some of the videos. We will look at these resources, evaluate science videos, and discuss using science videos in traditional and flipped classrooms.

David J. Rosen was the Director of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute at the University of Massachusetts in Boston from 1986 to 2003. Now, as an education consultant, he provides assistance to: universities, community colleges, charitable foundations, research organizations, state education agencies, state professional development organizations, not-for-profit community-based organizations, and international non-governmental organizations.

Webinars, continued on page 5

ADVOCACY

By Nicholas Montalto

In its advocacy work, NJALL continues to focus a great deal of attention on the special needs and circumstances of the state's large and diverse immigrant population. Several members of NJALL's Immigrant Integration Task Force are now serving on a work group established by the State Council on Adult Education Services (SCALES) to study the needs of New Jersey's skilled immigrants, i.e. immigrants who earned college degrees in their home countries but who are unemployed or underemployed in this country. NJALL also continues to advocate on behalf of the least educated members of the DREAMER population, i.e. young immigrants who came to the U.S. with their parents at an early age. For those young people who dropped out of school to work or raise families, and for whom work authorization and relief from deportation might be available through the DACA Program if they can satisfy the program's educational requirements, the availability of high school preparation programs and equivalency testing becomes critical to their future life prospects. If and when Congress passes immigration reform, these young people will not be allowed to advance to full legal status without a high school diploma. Indeed, the Senate version of immigration reform required two years of college in order to qualify for legalization. The push for immigrant education puts new strains on an already overburdened adult education system. Over the last six years, adult education enrollment has dropped 27 percent nationally. NJALL has communicated its concerns to the State Department of Education and asked that high school equivalency testing procedures not discriminate against these individuals by creating identification requirements that are difficult or impossible to meet.

Did You Know...?

WIBS are Important

By Barry Semple

The Workforce Investment Act was originally authorized by Congress in 1998 and reauthorized this summer, sixteen years later, as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). As required by both laws, the 18 local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) in New Jersey provide regional planning concerning business needs and the needs of unemployed and under-employed individuals. They manage the federal resources for supported job training, job search assistance, and adult education services related to employment. They also oversee the 30 One-Stop Career Centers in the state. WIOA maintains the requirement that WIBs have a business majority and chair. The required number of members has been reduced to 19 under the new law.

The new WIOA spells out the roles and responsibilities of both the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and the local boards (WIBs) in coordinating and aligning workforce programs and for developing strategies to meet worker and employer needs. The SETC is responsible for evaluating WIBs and developing a 5 year unified plan for the NJ workforce system. WIBs are required to develop and submit 4-year unified plans that spell out how they intend to accomplish program coordination and achieve their training and employment goals. The section of the plan relating to the goals

WIBs, continued on page 7

FALL WEBINARS, cont'd

November 21 2:00 – 3:00 PM

Ready, Set, Write! Going Deeper

(Co-sponsored by WE LEARN)

Presenter: Geraldine Cannon Becker, WE LEARN

As hard as it may be for writers to get started writing, it is often just as difficult to wrap up the process. In the *Ready, Set, Write: Going Deeper* webinar, we will show participants how to look for key words and cue phrases in their writing draft, which is a work in progress--words and phrases that might help the writer build to a statement of significance for the end of the essay and create a corresponding title for the finished work.

Geraldine Cannon Becker, BA, MA, MFA, Associate Prof. of English and Creative Writing at the University of Maine at Fort Kent, is faculty advisor for SAGES (the Student Association for Greater English Studies). She has led adult basic education reading circles for the Maine Humanities Council, and is a member of the WE LEARN Board of Directors.

December 2 3:00 – 4:00 PM

Improving Persistence with Socially Relevant Instruction

(Co-sponsored with WORLD EDUCATION)

Presenter: Cynthia Peters, World Education

In this interactive session, participants will see lessons that teach basic skills and boost attendance. Research shows that students persist when instruction is rooted in socially relevant content. Explore a wide range of themes (from voting to fashion) and discover how to provide an empowering and motivating context for learning.

Cynthia Peters is the editor of The Change Agent, a magazine for adult learners that teaches basic skills in the context of issues that are relevant to adults. Her expertise includes writing, editing, developing content and lesson plans, and providing professional development (both in person and via webinar) on a wide range of topics. She teaches an online course for World Education called "Helping Students Stay: Exploring Program and Classroom Persistence Strategies." Cynthia has also taught ABE, ESOL, the GED, and Bridge to College.

Register at: <http://www.njall.org/>

Scholarship Winners, continued from page 1

poorly and expected to work before and after school both in the home and in the family's carpet factory. Because she was hungry for education, she left to live on her own at age 14. She took classes wherever possible and worked to help others by returning to her village to teach children and open a small orphanage. Eventually she met and married an American missionary, had two sons, and moved to the United States. Pasang lives in Matawan with her family and attends Brookdale Community College. She hopes to become a nurse and eventually work in remote areas of Nepal.

Maxine Watson, of East Orange, grew up in Jamaica WI. She came from a very poor, large family working in the fields and caring for the animals while going to school. Her parents deeply encouraged education but didn't have the resources to support it. Eventually she came to the US to pursue a better life. While working as a Certified Home Health Aide (CHHA) in order to support her family in Jamaica, she attended the intensive Saturday GED program at the Essex County College Adult Learning Center where she successfully prepared for her high school diploma. She now attends Essex County College full time, continues to work as a CHHA, and is a full-time student in a Certified Nursing Assistant Program. She is passionate about wanting to become a nurse and be better educated and able to lift herself and her family out of poverty.

Two previous scholarship winners were invited to speak to share their experiences and offer encouragement to the newly selected honorees. Jadyra Rios, 2012 winner, and Sheila Meszaros, 2007 winner, were this year's speakers.



Sheila Meszaros; 2014 winners Maxine Watson, Dennard Brown, Pasang Schreck; and Jadyra Rios

SPOTLIGHT ON: NJ Youth Corps of Middlesex County

By *Ushindi Lewis, Program Coordinator,
Youth Corps of Middlesex County*

New Jersey Youth Corps (NJYC) is a fulltime, year round program that supports 16-25 year old at-risk youth. NJYC of Middlesex County is one of twelve corps in the state of New Jersey (including Newark, Camden, Trenton (2), Vineland, Jersey City, Patterson, Union, Phillipsburg, Monmouth, Atlantic/Cape May). NJYC of Middlesex County is funded by the Department of Workforce and Labor and supported and sponsored by the New Brunswick Board of Education/New Brunswick Public Schools-Adult Learning Center (Timothy Timberlake, Principal).

The NJYC of Middlesex County staff, which consists of a Program Coordinator, Teacher, Paraprofessional, School Counselor/Transition Coach, and Crew Leaders, serves as mentors and role models. Each staff member contributes to making corpsmembers fully functioning and well-rounded adults. Corpsmembers receive education development in basic skills and preparation to obtain a High School Diploma, life skills and employability skills instruction. They also receive personal and career counseling to build self-esteem, clarify values, and develop leadership skills, all while they are developing their career portfolio. This portfolio consists of a cover letter, resume, references, transcript, and certificates earned while in the program. After completing the program, transition and continuing support services are given as corpsmembers progress towards college, training, employment, military services, or other national and domestic service opportunities.

The community service opportunities in which our corpsmembers participate help them develop positive employability skills while addressing unmet community needs. Community Service/Work Experience Teams of youth, called "crews", carry out a wide range of service projects in a variety of locations, such as New Brunswick Board of Education, North Brunswick Parks and Recreation Department, Anshe Emeth Community Development Corporation, Elijah's Promise-Soup Kitchen, Hillsborough Park and Recreation, Suydam Street Church, Puerto Rican Action Board (PRAB), and Greater Brunswick Charter School.

Talking about successful corpsmembers is one of the most important things the staff can do to motivate and inspire those who have lost hope for ever completing their High School Diploma. NJYC's motto "the start of a brighter future," simply starts with wanting to change the outcome of an at-risk environment in a positive way. Alumni corpsmember, Henry Callahan set forth to accomplish a positive outcome and turn around his life for the better.

NJ Youth Corps, continued on page 8

CATCHING UP WITH PAST SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

By *Judy Faberty*

Two previous scholarship winners were invited to speak to share their experiences and offer encouragement to the newly selected honorees. **Jadyra Rios, 2012 winner**, of Newark attends Essex County College and has recently been accepted into their very competitive nursing program. Jadyra emphasized that the ongoing support from the scholarship committee has been as valuable to her as the actual monetary scholarship. **Sheila Meszaros, 2007 winner**, graduated from Mercer County Community College and will transfer to Wm. Paterson University in the spring of 2015. Sheila spoke of her struggles and aspirations as an adult college student and her determination to reach her goals, despite having to take time out to address personal issues.

NJALL is also supporting five earlier scholarship winners who are progressing toward their goals in higher education. **Cathy Hall, 2010 winner**, and straight "A" student, is finishing Camden County College, planning to transfer to a four-year college and working towards becoming a teacher. **Ashley Rose Vega, 2011 winner**, who recently became a mom, is an honor student at Bergen Community College. **Dion Cannon, 2012 winner**, attends Essex County College, where he's pursuing a career in criminal justice. **Katherine del Rosario, 2013 winner**, is completing her studies at Hudson County College and planning to transfer to a four-year institution. **Emma Lu, 2013 winner**, earned her citizenship this year and started her second year at Camden County College.

Each year, the NJALL Scholarship Committee seeks to find motivated adult students who have demonstrated the ability to meet life challenges and have the potential for success in higher education. The Scholarship not only helps adult students to cover expenses like childcare, textbooks and transportation, but also validates the motivation and effort they exhibit in pursuit of their educational goals. The NJALL Scholarship Program celebrates the extraordinary perseverance and achievements of adult students served by New Jersey's adult education professional community.

The Nuts and Bolts:

- The NJALL Scholarship provides up to \$1000 annually for a maximum of four years.
- The 2015 Application will be available by March 1, 2015 at: <http://www.njall.org/>
- We count on our professional adult education community to encourage promising students to apply.
- The Scholarship Program, in existence since 1992, is supported entirely by individual donations.

The NJALL Scholarship Program recognizes adult students who have completed non-traditional high school programs to earn a High School Diploma with hopes of continuing their education in college.

and objectives for funded adult education programs has traditionally been developed by Adult Literacy Committees in many WIB regions. Programs will be evaluated based on the percentage of participants obtaining a recognized post-secondary credential, secondary school diploma, or equivalency during program participation or within 1 year after program exit. They will also be evaluated on the academic gains of the participants.

The federal aid under this Act is the major source of aid for adult education programs in New Jersey. It is vitally important that we become familiar with the requirements of the new Act and take a very active role in our Workforce Investment Board and especially the Adult Literacy Committee.



Miriam Faber is the Supervisor of Grants and Program Management and Director of ESL, ABE, and GED Programs at the Morris County School of Technology. Miriam began her career as a literacy instructor in the Even Start and Head Start programs and the Ramapo Hills community. Her passion and devotion landed her in an administrative role from which she worked toward shaping the Adult Education and Literacy program in north-western New Jersey. A few of the highlights of Miriam's career include: keeping the Adult Education and ESL/ABE and GED programs in Morris, Sussex, and Warren counties alive and running through the years; forming a consortium to apply for federal grants to maintain adult education programs; beginning and maintaining an ESL program for parents of Head Start students in the Dover area; planning and implementing the Even Start Program for parents and children of Head Start including the summer program and weekly field trips; and serving as an initial member in the Morris/Sussex/Warren Literacy Committee working with the county WIB, Literacy Volunteers, Community Colleges and Libraries to work for the best education for area students. Miriam's sense of responsibility to both literacy and students of New Jersey has made the opportunity of literacy education available to the greatest number of people possible. At the time of her retirement in December 2013, the Morris County School of Technology was running 23 ESL classes and 9 ABE classes with over 1,000 registered students.

Literacy New Jersey

Literacy for Life 2014 Conference

November 1, 2014

The Conference Center at Mercer County College

Website: <https://literacynj.org/literacy-life-conference-2014>

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A NJ Youth Corps Success Story

Henry Callahan came to NJYC of Middlesex County a focused and determined young man looking for opportunities he could turn into his reality. That focused young man has now turned himself into a valued employee with the New Brunswick Public Schools (NBPS) Building and Grounds department as a custodian.

Henry started NJYC of Middlesex County in November 2009 and began with the community worksite at the New Brunswick Public Schools Middle School. For eight months, corpsmembers spent their days cleaning, prepping, and painting every room in the new Middle School, and Henry played a pivotal role in leading and completing the project. He came into the program with some painting experience and under the pressure of a short deadline, Henry sharpened his skills by showing up to work every day focused and ready to motivate other corpsmembers.

During the community service project at the NBPS Middle School, Henry's work and determination did not go unnoticed. It was suggested that as soon as he completed our program, he should apply for a position with NBPS as a custodian. In December 2010, Henry applied for the position and once he received his High School Diploma, he was hired as an hourly Custodian. His placement at various locations within the district allowed him to use his skills in carpentry, landscaping, and painting. He also received his Black Seal Low Pressure Boiler license that would ultimately promote him in his field. Then in 2011, Henry was offered a full-time contractual position.

Henry is a self-starter and has always taken the initiative to help anyone in need. He motivated his two younger sisters to value their education and join our program. Henry never stopped encouraging them to graduate. The three siblings all received their High School Diplomas within the same school year, primarily due to Henry's perseverance. Henry is a true leader who has a passion for life and a deep appreciation for those who have helped him reach his goals. We are very proud to call Henry one of our co-workers as he continues to flourish. His life is a prime example of what New Jersey Youth Corps is all about.

Have you thought about contributing to the NJALL Scholarship Fund?

Since 1992 NJALL has awarded two \$4000 scholarships (\$500 per semester for full-time) to outstanding adult students who have been served by you, our professional adult education community.

The Scholarships are funded entirely through individual donations. Every penny donated goes directly towards the scholarship grants and every donation counts towards continuing this important program. For donation details, go to: <http://www.njall.org/>