



**Wharton County
Junior College**

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A CAPABILITY TO LEARN

WCJC AEL program provides residents with education needed to succeed

WHARTON, TEXAS – The Wharton County Junior College Adult Education and Literacy program has made its New Year's Resolution for 2015: enroll more than 1,200 students in its GED and ESL classes.

If that sounds like a lofty goal, consider this: In 2014, nearly 900 students from four southeast Texas counties – Wharton, Fort Bend, Colorado and Matagorda – were enrolled in the program. This current year, two additional counties – Waller and Austin – will be added to the program's service area.

Dr. Cyrus Johnson, director of WCJC's AEL program, couldn't be happier about the expanded service area. He is a firm believer in the benefits of education – for all.

"We believe everyone is capable of learning," Johnson said. "We want to provide them with the option to come back into the learning process in order to be successful."

The AEL program began offering orientation classes in January, with sessions held in Sugar Land, Wharton, El Campo, Richmond and Bay City as well as in the two newest service areas, Waller and Austin counties.

The orientations offer an overview of WCJC's General Educational Development (GED) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and provide "locator" testing aimed at determining where each student stands as far as language acquisition and basic learning skills.

Students can then begin taking the regularly scheduled GED and ESL classes. The program is offered at no cost to the student.

"We work on their strengths and upgrade their weaknesses," Johnson said. "All they need to bring is an open mind and a willingness to learn."

In addition to Johnson, the AEL staff includes Tara Zekavat, instructional supervisor; Holly Eisel, testing technician; Maria Guevera, secretary; Maria Alvarado, data technician; Jackie Fields, distance learning; and Roweena Britton, evening receptionist.

Johnson said the program's benefits are far reaching.

“We provide services that attract employers to the students while attracting students back into the education system so they can get the skills they need to be successful,” he said.

More information about the AEL program can be found on the college’s website, www.wcjc.edu

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