

Issue No. 13, February 9, 2011

Each issue of the E-News reports on CAAL's programs and publications, including follow-up activities related to the National Commission on Adult Literacy. Occasional feature articles are offered, along with news about complementary work by other groups.

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CAAL NEWS IN BRIEF



[DOING BUSINESS TOGETHER: Adult Education and Business Partnering to Build a Qualified Workforce.](#) by CAAL Policy/Research Associate James Parker, has just been released. The 24-page publication is based on the findings of two surveys and an invitational Roundtable held on July 12, 2010. Building on exemplary partnerships in 20 states, it provides guidance on how to develop successful state partnerships to upgrade basic and workforce skills in the context of economic and workforce development goals.



[Letter on Workforce Budgets and Appropriations](#). CAAL is one of 50 signatories to a January 31, 2011 letter to House and Senate Budget and Appropriations leaders, OMB, and the White House. The letter emphasizes the need for an adequately funded workforce development system as a matter of great urgency. It says that: "We are keenly aware of the deep constraints and difficult choices facing Congress in today's fiscal climate, but reducing our nation's investments in workforce development, basic skills, and postsecondary education will have an immediate impact on business' ability to find qualified workers, and will do lasting damage to our nation's position as a global leader in the 21st-century economy." The letter makes four specific funding recommendations: (1) At a minimum, maintain current funding levels for employment and training programs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act. (2) At a minimum, maintain current funding levels for adult basic education. (3) Ensure the federal Pell Grant program is fully funded. (4) Ensure Unemployment Insurance (UI) Administrative Funding and Reemployment Programs are fully funded.



CLOSING THE GAP is the working title of CAAL's final report on its project on certification and credentialing of staff and faculty in adult education. The report will be available in the next few weeks. In the meantime, **[CERTIFYING ADULT EDUCATION STAFF AND FACULTY](#)**, by Cristine Smith with Ricardo Gomez, is an informational companion paper commissioned to help inform the invitational Roundtable CAAL sponsored on this topic on June 10, 2010. This paper was released on January 3, 2011 and is available from CAAL's website. Readers should realize that although this latter publication reflects the best information obtainable from state and national sources at the time of the research, certification practice and policy is in flux and details of state activity may have changed in some cases since then. As the report's author cautions, the report should be read as an indicator of what existed at a specific point in time (last Spring in most cases) and as pointing to trends and possibilities. Depending on how the material will be used, readers may wish to check the currency of data on states of specific interest. Texas and Nevada recently notified CAAL of data changes. For updates go to mjanysek@txstate.edu (Michelle Janysek) and kzutter@doe.nv.gov (Ken Zutter) respectively.



CAAL'S WEBSITE RESOURCES. Recent analysis of CAAL's website use shows strong continuing interest in its reports, talks and essays, letters, and other resources. In 2010 alone, site visitors downloaded nearly 110,000 CAAL reports. Interest in CAAL materials has stayed remarkably consistent over the past three years, with strong attention to the *Reach Higher, America* series of papers, and CAAL's seminal publications in ESL and "transitions." A number of vintage publications also continue to draw heavy use, including *Adult Literacy and the American Dream* (2002), *Current Issues in Correctional Education* (2004), and *The Role of Corporate Giving in America* (2006). To review the listings, visit the CAAL [Publications](#) page, [Talks and Essays](#), and [Letters and Media](#). Another popular title, issued in October 2009, is **[THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY TO TRANSFORM ADULT LEARNING: Expanding Access to Adult Education & Workforce Skills Through Distance Learning](#)**. It is relevant to ongoing discussions on some of the adult education listservs.



TV411 What's Cooking?

STIRRINGS IN TECHNOLOGY

TV411 is an Emmy winning public television series launched over 10 years ago by ALMA (the Adult Literacy Media Alliance of the Education Development Center). It has had millions of viewers since it first aired. Today some public television stations still broadcast it. In 2002, in response to public interest, ALMA created tv411.org as a way to facilitate easy, ongoing access to TW411's services in reading, writing, math, vocabulary, health literacy, GED preparation, and other content areas. Most lessons are in English, but some selections are in Spanish. The programs also offer curriculum planning and staff development materials.

Now ALMA is engaged in a substantial revision of its website to make fuller use of new multimedia formats, facilitate social interaction, and provide multiple entry points for accessing online content. Funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Starr Foundation supported research on how adult learners use new media and how best to engage them. In October 2010, based on that research, NSF provided further funding for a full-scale development project. Planning for the project has begun in earnest. The goal is to take advantage of new internet-based technologies to reach millions of new students.

A new program element will be *TV411 What's Cooking*, a web-based video cooking series. The series will be designed for adults who enjoy food and cooking shows but lack a strong background in reading, math, science, and nutrition. There will be both English and Spanish versions. Support materials will be developed for instructors who want to use the new series in adult education programs. A pilot with Head Start will adapt the program for parenting workshops. *TV411 What's Cooking* and the new updated TV411 will be publicly launched in fall 2011.

For more information contact Alex Quinn, Project Director at aquinn@edc.org, or phone 212-807-4240.



IT'S A FACT



The U.S. Census Bureau recently issued its 2009 Annual Survey of State Government Finances ([click here for summary](#)). It found that total state government revenues dropped to \$1.1 trillion in 2009, a decline of 30.8 percent from \$1.6 trillion in 2008. For information on your state go to <http://www.census.gov/govs/state>.



According to [Issue 19 of OVAE Connection](#) (U.S. Department of Education), the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) has released state-by-state data which shows that "Adults Are Critical to Regaining U.S. Leadership in Number of College Degree Holders." According to SHEEO, "the goal of 55 percent U.S. degree attainment to match that of the leading nations cannot be accomplished solely by increasing the degree attainment of traditional-age students."



REPORTS FROM THE FIELD



[**Michigan's No Worker Left Behind: Lessons Learned from Big-Picture Workforce Policy Change**](#) tells the remarkable story of how targeted basic skills services geared to emerging or in-demand industries have dramatically increased enrollment of the state's unemployed and underemployed workers. "No Worker Left Behind" has been planned and implemented through collaboration of all stakeholders, including local workforce boards. The program reflects a shift away from emphasis on short-term job search and job placement towards long-term investment in training for in-demand skills and credentials. Local workforce boards have committed a substantial part of their training funds to the effort, supplementing state funding. In announcing the program in 2007, Governor Granholm set a goal of reaching 100,000 participants within three years. As of October 2010, nearly 150,000 adults had enrolled in the program, and as of December 2009, 75 percent of enrollees had either completed their instructional program and retained or obtained a job. There are other impressive outcomes as well. Unfortunately, due to a huge cut in Michigan's share of federal WIA funding between July 2008-2010--despite a doubling of unemployment during that time--Michigan has had to trim its enrollment goals and does not now have the capacity to meet the full demand for NWLF services. Nevertheless, the state remains firmly committed to the exemplary program and continues to provide the highest level of service it can afford. This new report was written for the National Skills Coalition by Larry Good of the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce.



[**Breaking New Ground: Building a National Workforce Skills Credentialing System**](#) is a new report from ACT. It calls for intensified national efforts to create one consistent credentialing system to validate worker skills and to ensure that skill demands keep pace with the supply of current and future trained workers. The report proposes a uniform framework for educators, employers, and workforce development leaders to replace thousands of different certifying programs in every state that are not accepted across the board and do not fit into a defined career pathway because they are not portable, transferable, or stackable. ACT aims to "create order out of chaos," says ACT's Martin Scaglione, president of the Workforce Development Division. A major recommendation is for a "layered" national credentialing system that builds on a single foundation skills credential with increasingly more targeted occupational and job specific skills credentials layered on.



In January, the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) released a [**New Toolkit on Using Federal Funds for Integrated Service Delivery**](#) to help state and local policymakers, program

directors, and others identify federal funding available to support integrated service delivery. The Toolkit draws on the Center for Working Families model, which offers a combination of key related services instead of just one service at a time. The service elements include job readiness and career advancement, access to financial aid mechanisms such as public benefits and tax credits, and a range of services to improve and build financial assets.



[**Adult Student Waiting List Survey, 2009-2010**](#) is the latest report from the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education (NCSDAE) on the impact of waiting lists for adult education and literacy classes. An Executive Summary highlights the findings of a 2010 local program survey with eye-opening facts and figures. Another section includes data tables and individual state reports supporting the Summary's conclusions. Among the findings are that 50 states have waiting lists, and that the number of months on the lists has doubled since 2008. (Note: Waiting list estimates, while one useful indicator of active demand, fall far short of actual need for adult education services.)



[**Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century**](#) is a major new report from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The report was released on February 2nd at a special event in Washington, DC hosted by The American Youth Policy Forum, which has a strong historical interest in "the forgotten half." The report states that "the American system for preparing young people to lead productive and prosperous lives as adults is clearly badly broken." It deals specifically with school reforms needed to equip adolescents and young adults to become job-ready. For over half a century, the report says, "the United States led the world in equipping its young people with the education they would need to succeed." Yet, at this juncture just a decade into the 21st Century, we have fallen behind many other nations in educational attainment, and evidence abounds of how serious a "skills gap" we have when it comes to qualifying for jobs that pay a family-sustaining wage. This topic is not new. It has had the focused attention of several groups in the past 3-4 years, including the National Commission on Adult Literacy in its [**Reach Higher, America**](#) report. But it is a topic of new urgency because teens now face Depression-era employment prospects, with low-income minority teens most severely affected. For many youth, vocational training is probably a better pathway to family-sustaining jobs than postsecondary education. The report indicates that youth development has been too narrowly focused on a single academic, classroom-based approach, instead of a comprehensive network of multiple pathways leading from high school to both postsecondary education and career training. Respected education leaders and policymakers are hailing the report and urging attention to its recommendations.

E-News is made possible by support from the Dollar General Corporation,
the Joyce Foundation, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.,
Harold W. McGraw, Jr., and other individual donors



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Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy ~ 1221 Avenue of Americas ~ 44th Fl ~ New York, NY 10020
Tel. 212-512-22363 ~ Fax. 212-512-2610 ~ www.caalusa.org



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