

## Issue No. 25, February 9, 2012



### FACTS, FIGURES, & IMMINENT DANGER

▶ The [Institute for Women's Policy Research](#) (IWPR) in Washington, D.C. -- in ***Low Literacy Means Lower Earnings, Especially for Women*** -- reports that women with low literacy skills are far less likely than low-skilled men to have or get a job that pays a sustaining wage. In ***Improved Job Growth in January for Both Women and Men***, IWPR reports that women in general have regained about 25 percent of the jobs they lost during the "recession" (December 2007 through September 2010) while men have regained more than 40 percent. (As of January 2011, 12.8 million workers remain unemployed.) These and other analyses are available from the IWPR homepage.

▶ Countless organizations including CAAL are weighing in on the need for Congress to **extend federal unemployment insurance benefits without barriers** requiring recipients to have either a GED or a high school diploma or equivalent, or be tested for drugs. For many reasons, these barriers to benefits would be counterproductive in the extreme. CAAL posted some of its reasons for opposing this on the blog of the National Coalition for Literacy (NCL). The National Council of State Directors of Adult Education prepared an NCL blog article titled ***One Million Six Hundred Thousand Adults***. (For the NCL items, go to the website of the [National Coalition for Literacy](#).) The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) published an [article in the Huffington Post](#) on February 8th. Readers are encouraged to also weigh in with Congress, which will be debating UI extension over the next couple of weeks. A page provided by [unemployedworkers.org](#) makes it easy to do so.

▶ The February 7th issue of **Education Week** includes a lengthy article titled ***States Shake Up Adult Education to Help Low-Skilled Workers***. It cites President Obama's proposal to train two million workers for jobs. It highlights the huge number of adults needing skills upgrading to be college- and job-ready, and points to the essential need for adult education programs (including programs offered by colleges) to be enabled to provide the services these Americans must have. It discusses several state leadership efforts to move in this direction.

▶ Adult education enrollments and funding have decreased substantially over the past several

years, according to a recent analysis by the Center for Law and Social Policy, titled [Adult Education Funding Levels and Enrollment: State and Federal Funding Woes Spell Trouble for Low-Skilled Students Seeking Further Education](#). At a time when national need requires an increase in support for our adult education system, and waiting lines for adult education classes exist across the country, trends are headed in the wrong direction: Funding for adult education and ESL dropped 17% since 2002. State funding, a major source of revenue for ABE services (some \$3.50 for each \$1 of federal funding), is on the decline because of state budget problems. And annual enrollments in Title II programs have declined by about one-third, down to 2 million currently.



On February 6th, on behalf of the National Commission on Adult Literacy, CAAL sent a [letter to Senator Tom Harkin](#) in response to the [Rebuilding the Middle Class](#) talk he gave at the Center for American Progress on February 1st. The letter urges explicit attention in the Rebuild America Act to the role Adult Education must play in preparing our workforce for realities of the 21st century global economy.



**The Migration Policy Institute** is open to applications for its fourth year of *E Pluribus Unum Prizes*. Applications can be submitted through March 15. The program gives three \$50,000 prizes and one Corporate Leadership Award to "exceptional initiatives that promote immigrant integration," which may include adult education and workforce skills programs that effectively integrate immigrants into communities, workplaces, and classrooms. Information and applications are available online at [www.integrationawards.org](http://www.integrationawards.org). Questions should be addressed to MPI Program Coordinator Chhandasi Pandya, [cpandya@migrationpolicy.org](mailto:cpandya@migrationpolicy.org) (202-266-1937).

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