

# LITERACY NEWS

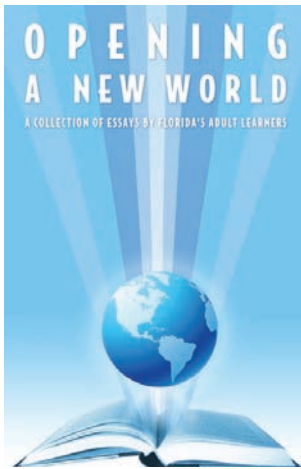


FLORIDA LITERACY COALITION, INC.

FLORIDA'S NEWSLETTER FOR LITERACY TUTORS,  
TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPPORTERS

Number 120

SUMMER 2008



For more information on the adult learner essay book, see page 7.

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Developed by Florida Literacy Coalition, Inc.

## State Leadership Grants – A New Direction

Florida is fortunate to have State Leadership federal funds exceeding three million dollars annually earmarked for professional development activities and initiatives for adult and family literacy programs. Historically, these funds were used to supplement understaffed state efforts in the field. These resources had been tied to process deliverables, such as trainings and technical assistance, rather than student performance. In keeping with Florida's new legislation and policies as they relate to Workforce Education Accountability (SB1699) State Leadership resources are now being aligned to student performance.

With that, various changes are currently being put in place:

- State Adult Literacy Resource Center**  
 Volunteer literacy training and coordination statewide has been centralized and will be the responsibility of The State Adult Literacy Resource Center, commonly known as the Florida Literacy Coalition.
- Under this new configuration, the Regional Adult Literacy Centers will be discontinued. FLC will serve as a single point-of-contact for capacity building, professional development, and resource services with a special emphasis on serving community and faith-based organizations.
- Five Regional Training Councils (RTCs)**  
 The five RTCs will continue to provide staff development opportunities. It is their charge to provide increased regional training in all aspects of adult education efforts with an emphasis on instructional effectiveness and program management.

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## Staying Healthy: An English Learner's Guide to Health Care and Healthy Living

### A New Resource Available from the Florida Literacy Coalition

With the generous support of the Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education, the Florida Literacy Coalition (FLC) has developed a new health literacy curriculum and corresponding student resource book which integrates health literacy into ESOL instruction. These materials will serve to increase health literacy awareness among ESOL students and encourage them to make healthy choices in relation to nutrition, preventative health care and other health related issues.

"This effort grew out of a need that was identified in 2006 when doing a small health literacy pilot with the GROWS Literacy Council in Apopka," stated FLC

*(Continued on Page 8)*

Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center

# Literacy in Florida

## New Board Members Elected To FLC Board

The Florida Literacy Coalition is pleased to welcome the following new members to its Governing Board of Directors.

**James Parker**  
Managing Director  
RSM McGladrey, Inc.

**Suzanne Beranek**  
President  
Beranek Communications

**Gayle Hope**  
Senior Vice President  
Wachovia Bank

**Sandy Newell** of the State Library of Florida rotated off the Board at FLC's Annual Meeting in May.

A very special thanks to Sandy for her many years of service.

### State Leadership Grants – A New Direction (Continued from Cover)

- Florida TechNet**  
TechNet will be the central web-based host of adult education professional development materials and will be the technology-based event and meeting provider.
- ACE of Florida**  
ACE of Florida will continue and expand its role as the professional development organization for adult education practitioners, as well as assisting the Adult Education office with special projects relating to program evaluation, conference and meeting planning.
- Statewide Professional Development System**  
Funds have been allocated for a formalized and structured statewide professional development system. This will include a resource map and strategic plan for implementation in 2009-2010.
- Centralized Delivery System for Distance Learning**  
A centralized delivery system for adult education distance learning will be developed to allow for consistent and cost-effective learning courses and programs.
- AD Hoc Committees**  
The Practitioners' Task Forces are being reorganized into five ad hoc committees. These committees are as follows: Curriculum and Standards Literacy (i.e. STAR and GED Math Initiative), Assessment and Accountability (program evaluation), Professional Development (credentialing), Postsecondary and Workforce Linkages (transition), and Resources Services Coordination (recruitment and retention).

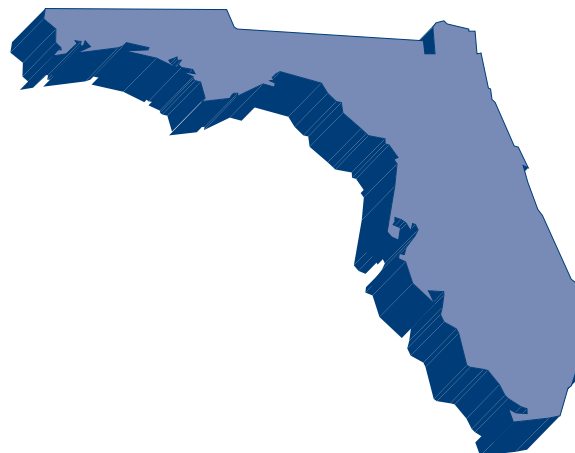
The Office of Adult Education is accepting statements of interest for these AD Hoc Committees. Selected members must be administrators and practitioners employed and working directly with adult education students. For more information contact Teresa Bestor, Director, Adult Education Programs, (850) 245-9906 or [teresa.bestor@fldoe.org](mailto:teresa.bestor@fldoe.org).

*Written by Linda Palmer, Florida Department of Education, Office of Adult Education.*

## Legislative Update

The Florida Legislature recently passed, and the Governor signed, the FY2008-09 state budget that included a 4.25% (or \$17 million) reduction in Workforce Development funding to school districts, vocational-technical centers, and community colleges. Performance based incentive funds were also reduced by 41.5% to \$5.9 million.

These reductions don't apply to federal grants authorized under the Workforce Investment Act.



# Literacy in Florida

## MANAGING AN ADULT ESOL CLASS WITH MULTIPLE SKILL LEVELS WEBINAR

**When:** July 22, 2008  
4 pm - 5 pm

Bringing Conferences to Your Desktop

One-hour Internet Seminars/ Webinars will be presented in live time as well as being available on the website in recorded format. These webinars will address topics that have been requested by adult educators. Speakers will be national experts in the topics being presented.

For more information, contact NAASLN at 888-5NAASLN or on the web at [www.naasln.org](http://www.naasln.org).

## CONTINUING TUTOR EDUCATION

**When:** July 26, 2008  
10 am - Noon

**Where:** Adult Literacy League, Inc.  
345 West Michigan Street,  
Suite 100  
Orlando, FL 32806

For more information, contact Natasha Rogers at 407-422-1540 or via email at [nrogers@adultliteracyleague.org](mailto:nrogers@adultliteracyleague.org).

## GED TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS WEBINAR

**When:** August 19, 2008  
4 pm - 5 pm

For more information, contact NAASLN at 888-5NAASLN or on the web at [www.naasln.org](http://www.naasln.org).



## 2008 ACE CONFERENCE

**When:** September 22-25, 2008

**Where:** Hyatt Regency Bonaventure  
250 Racket Club Rd.  
Westin-Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33326  
  
Direct Line 954/ 616-1234  
Registration 954/ 616-1234

For more information, contact Valorie Boyd at 850-222-2233.

## PROLITERACY WORLDWIDE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**When:** October 1-4, 2008

**Where:** Peabody Little Rock  
Little Rock, AR

For more information contact the conference team at [conference@proliteracy.org](mailto:conference@proliteracy.org) or call (315) 422-9121 ext. 352.

## CONTINUING TUTOR EDUCATION

**When:** October 16, 2008  
11:30 am - 1 pm

**Where:** Adult Literacy League  
Orlando, FL

For more information contact Natasha Rogers at (407) 422-1540 or via email at [nrogers@adultliteracyleague.org](mailto:nrogers@adultliteracyleague.org).

## LERN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**When:** November 15-18, 2008

**Where:** Hyatt Regency  
San Francisco, CA

For more information contact Jason Martin at (850) 222-2233.

## **New Florida ESOL Course Standards Released**

Work has been completed on the Florida Department of Education's new ESOL Course Standards which are slated to take effect July 1, 2008.

Content subject areas include:

- Civics, Family and Community Resources
- Communication
- Employment
- Consumer Education
- Health and Nutrition
- Transportation and Travel
- Safety and Security

For more information go to [www.fldoe.org/workforce/adult\\_ed.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/adult_ed.asp)

## Submit Your News!

Has your organization received funding or planned a major public event? Do you know something that would benefit other adult and family literacy practitioners?

FLC invites you to submit short articles and other news items related to funding, events, staff, hot topics, research and more. Contact Yari Payne at [payney@floridaliteracy.org](mailto:payney@floridaliteracy.org).

## Literacy in Florida

# Florida Literacy Conference Inspires and Educates

The 24th annual Florida Literacy Conference, recently held at Walt Disney World, was attended by nearly 500 adult and family literacy practitioners, volunteers and students. With more than 70 sessions, events and keynote presentations, many participants shared how the conference gave them a great opportunity to network and learn from one another.

The opening general session speaker David Harvey, President of ProLiteracy International, helped to kick things off with a discussion of the important role that we can all play in serving to inform and advocate for good public policy relating to adult education and literacy.

Adult Learner Day was a great success with over 90 students in attendance. This year's Adult Learner Committee did an admirable job of coordinating the 7 sessions offered for students. Adult learners from the Palm Beach Library's Adult Literacy Program presented a session entitled "Don't Give Up!" Students enjoyed lunch sponsored by the local Ocoee Wal-Mart.

The Florida Literacy Awards Banquet provided a great opportunity to recognize the outstanding contributions of businesses, programs and individuals working in support of literacy. The keynote speaker for the evening was Gene Columbus from the Orlando Repertory Theatre.

The following individuals, companies and organizations were recognized at the Florida Literacy Awards Banquet for their outstanding contributions to literacy.



David Harvey kicks off the 2008 Florida Literacy Conference



Glenda Novell answers questions during her presentation

## Florida Literacy Awards

### **Outstanding Business Partner: Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), Florida State Office**

Established in 1993, the Corporation for National and Community Service (or CNCS), an independent federal agency, serves as the largest grantor for service and volunteer projects in the United States.

Working in partnership with the Florida Literacy Coalition and 18 community-based literacy partners, CNCS has granted more than a half million dollars in resources to support the AmeriCorps VISTA Florida Literacy Project during the last four years. The Corporation's primary support has been through the provision of full-time national service members. These individuals, who commit a year of their life to service, receive a modest monthly living stipend, medical insurance and a year-end educational award. They have in turn made a tremendous contribution to literacy, touching the lives of countless adults working to improve their reading, writing and English language skills.

In the last year alone, the project's 16 AmeriCorps VISTA members have helped to recruit numerous volunteers, build programs and secure over \$216,000 in cash and in-kind resources. CNCS's grant has been particularly effective in helping to expand literacy services in rural Florida communities, where there are often few resources to draw upon.

CNCS has played a very significant role in helping to support and develop quality adult and family literacy programs for low income citizens throughout the state.



## Literacy in Florida

### **Outstanding Media Partner: Bright House Networks**

Bright House Networks has been a proud supporter of literacy efforts since 1988. The company's generosity of human and financial resources has benefited more than four coalitions in the West Central Region of Florida. In the early '90s, Bright House established the PACES Scholarship for adult high school and GED graduates. Since that time, this program has awarded \$120,000 in scholarships to sixty adults who have completed their education at a post secondary institution.

This community-minded corporation has also sponsored the Polk County Annual Spelling Bee since its inception and contributed airtime for literacy focused public service announcements valued at \$12,500 per year. Recognizing the importance of reducing the digital divide for families, Bright House entered into a collaborative program with Polk County Schools in which children and their families have the use of computers with educational software and internet access during their after school programs.

In addition to all this, Bright House Networks has a generous release time policy for employees who wish to volunteer. Their Public Affairs Manager is a tutor trainer for READ Polk, company officials have served on the Board of READ Polk, and 19 of their employees are trained as tutors for adults and children.

### **Outstanding Literacy Volunteer: Mary Flynn**

Mary Flynn's passionate commitment to achieving a more literate community has earned her the Outstanding Literacy Volunteer Award.



Top row left to right: Gene Columbus, Ray Graber, Joe Pankowiecki, bottom row left to right: Marilina Viera, Suzanne Richards, Mary Flynn, Margaret A. Kinslow

Mary volunteers her time, energy and talents to the Clay County Literacy Coalition (CCLC) but nowhere is her commitment stronger than in her role as a one-on-one tutor. Mary has willingly chosen to tutor literacy students who have disabilities, a demographic which many tutors do not wish to work with. Over the five years that she has been tutoring, almost all her students were able to progress and advance to enrollment in GED classes. This is something that many believed impossible for those students. She is original and creative as she works with her students to develop plans to reach the goals that they wish to accomplish. She is well versed in many aspects of literacy, yet she is also a good listener and takes into consideration the individual needs of each of her students.

Mary uses innovative techniques and strategies to reach her students, but her commitment to CCLC extends beyond her work as a tutor. She has taken time from her busy professional schedule to become trained in a program that assists students to learn the skills of reading, English and mathematics by using a computer. She has volunteered to take on the role of "back up instructor" when the regular instructor cannot be there as well as being the editor of the Coalition's quarterly newsletter and website coordinator.

Mary, the Director of Human Resources for a large multi-state firm, is truly committed to her students and to CCLC. Mary has even said, "Very simply, my first and foremost passion is literacy."

### **Excellence in Education: GROWS Literacy Council, Inc.**

GROWS (Greater Reading or Writing Skills) Literacy Council, in Apopka, FL, is a non-profit community-based organization dedicated to empowering low-income men and women to read, write and speak English. Since 1988, GROWS staff and volunteers have provided instruction to more than 3,000 adults and families Central Florida. Their services include literacy, ESOL, Workplace Literacy and Family Literacy instruction.

GROWS works to assist participating adults and families in overcoming the many obstacles that they face in their everyday lives and to help them become confident and contributing members of their communities. Selected by the Florida Family Literacy Initiative as one of 12 Family Literacy Academies, GROWS is consistently ranked as one of the top-performing family literacy programs in the state.

Incorporated within their coursework is the extensive use of guest speakers and hand-on projects and activities. They regularly draw upon experts in the community to visit their ESOL classes to talk with students about topics such as family health care, state laws, proper parenting and financial literacy.

# Literacy in Florida

Their great work, especially with Hispanic adults and families in Northwest Orange County, will have a lasting impact for many years to come.

## **Flight for Freedom Award: Douglas Smith**

As a child, Douglas Smith helped his parents, his 11 brothers and 7 sisters pick cotton as sharecroppers in South Carolina. He didn't have the opportunity to attend school, in part because of his obligations on the farm and also because in those days schools were segregated in South Carolina, and the school for black children was too far away.

At age 16, Douglas decided to move north and eventually found employment as a restaurant porter at a pizzeria and bakery. He instantly became enthralled in the workings of the business. After 19 years in the restaurant business, Douglas and a partner opened a successful bakery in New York City.

After suffering a back injury, he decided to move to Jacksonville. Douglas had always focused on his family and business and this was his chance to focus on himself. He first enrolled with Learn to Read Jacksonville in September 2006 after seeing the organization on a TV show. Douglas has shown substantial educational gains, progressing several skill book levels since that time. "I'm like a kid with a new toy," says Douglas of his education.

Douglas has also emerged as a student leader for Learn to Read and adult literacy in Jacksonville. In 2007, Douglas completed the Literacy Ambassador Training through the Florida Literacy Coalition. He serves on the Learn To Read Board of Directors and speaks to incoming students during program orientations. Douglas is always willing to share his story at any function and has spoken at 20 events since becoming an ambassador reaching hundreds of people, including adult learners, volunteer tutors, donors, corporate leaders and the general public.

Put quite simply, Douglas Smith is an exemplary student who has touched many people with his words of inspiration and his dedication to lifelong learning.

## **Mary J. Brogan Leadership Award: Margie Kinslow**

For many years, adults in Brevard County who wanted literacy instruction looked to the public library system and its volunteers-based tutoring program. In 2007, this longstanding program was unfortunately closed due to budget cuts.

That's when Margie Kinslow stepped in. Having taught school for 35 years before retiring in 2006, Margie was

looking for a way to serve the community. Margie assumed leadership of the waning Literacy Alliance of Brevard County which had no funding, office or staff. This dynamic leader soon secured a building, formed a Board of Directors, acquired an inventory of books from the former library program and began recruiting, training and matching volunteer tutors with students.

Margie now tutors her own students while working five days a week as the Literacy Alliance Executive Director and she does this all as a volunteer.

**A special thanks to the conference  
planning committee, volunteers,  
presenters, and the following  
sponsors for their support  
and generosity.**

### *Platinum*

Florida Department of Education,  
Division of Workforce Education  
Dollar General Literacy Foundation  
BlueCross BlueShield of Florida  
Publix Super Markets Charities

### *Gold*

Florida TechNet  
English Discoveries

### *Silver*

Espro Financial

### *Bronze*

Pearson Longman

# Literacy in Florida

## Adult Learner Essay Book Inspires New Writers

The release of *Opening a New World, A Collection of Essays By Florida's Adult Learners* was the highlight of the Florida Literacy Coalition's recent annual meeting, as six of the publication's authors volunteered to read their work. This fourth annual publication provides a creative outlet for adult learners to express themselves as published authors while encouraging writing in programs and classrooms across Florida.

This year's book includes essays, poems and short stories comprising 192 entries. The essay book has been an outlet for many adult learners to earn recognition for their efforts in their ongoing education. For some though, it has meant even more.

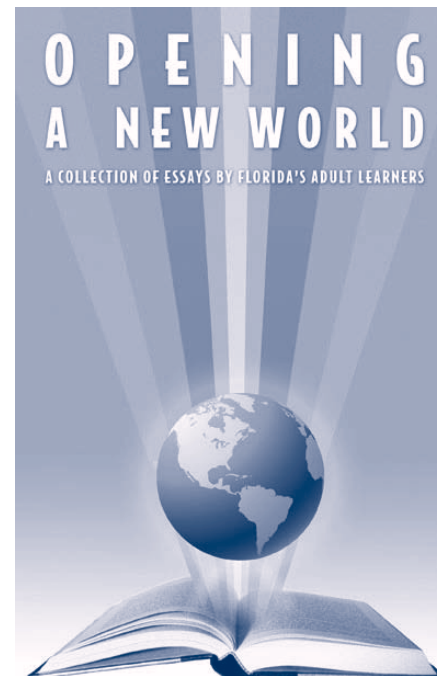
**Kimberly Hall** is one such student who wrote about her experience in her essay titled *The Positive Impact of Prison*. Kimberly's dream was to be a writer; but those dreams were put on hold due to alcoholism, frequent absences from home and the custody loss of her son. Eventually she wound up in jail.

Once in prison though, her life began to change for the better. Through the encouragement of her counselor she entered into classes that helped her bright mind to soar. Opportunities to attend art therapy classes and an anger management program helped her to develop better coping skills.

The chance to participate in a writing class really opened new doors to creative expression for Kimberly, which in turn led to becoming a published author in the 2007 adult learner essay book *Living Our Dreams*.

Having her short story published was something that Kimberly had only dreamed of when she had been out on her own, yet in prison she had accomplished this long awaited goal. As Kimberly herself said, "If not for prison I would not have had the chance to clear my head. Now I realize what I want out of life."

*Opening a New World* is freely available to download on-line at [www.floridaliteracy.org](http://www.floridaliteracy.org). A limited number of hard copy books are also available. If you are a teacher or tutor who would like to have a copy as a resource in your classroom, please contact Sarah Feuer at [feuers@floridaliteracy.org](mailto:feuers@floridaliteracy.org).



**Save the Date!**

25th Annual Florida Literacy Conference  
May 6-8, 2009  
Belleview Biltmore Resort, Clearwater



# Literacy in Florida

## Staying Healthy: An English Learner's Guide to Health Care and Healthy Living

(Continued from Cover)

Executive Director, Greg Smith. "In researching ESOL health literacy resources, we found ourselves having to piece together content from a variety of sources. There was very little available for adult ESOL teachers who wanted a ready made curriculum with strong supporting student materials."

Through the efforts of an outstanding team of health literacy and ESOL curriculum developers, FLC has been able to develop a student resource book and corresponding teacher's manual that address the following topic areas:

- Health Care
- Nutrition
- Your Doctor
- Chronic Diseases
- Medicines
- Staying Healthy

At the end of the book, students can quickly refer to the illustrated glossary to look up definitions of key words which appear in bold throughout the publication.

Written at the 4th-5th grade reading level, this resource book has a host of photographs and illustrations to help English learners better grasp the concepts and vocabulary presented in the publication.

With easy-to-read charts and tables, practice dialogs, and "how to learn more" sections, students are encouraged to seek additional information and assistance from expert health care professionals; locate free and low-cost health

care facilities; and take an active role in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

The teacher's guide includes ideas for lessons, activities, and ways to facilitate learning for both teachers and their students. Suggested activities encompass Pronunciation,

Grammar, Math, Hands-on Learning, Comprehension and Technology, allowing teachers to adapt their lessons to their students various learning styles. The teacher's guide also includes suggestions for teaching health content, including ideas on how to discuss cultural similarities and differences regarding health care.

The Florida Literacy Coalition would like to thank Orlando Tech, United Methodist Cooperative Ministries in St. Petersburg, and The GROWS Literacy Council for their outstanding efforts in field testing the materials.

These publications are available free to view and download at the FLC website, which also includes sample class projects

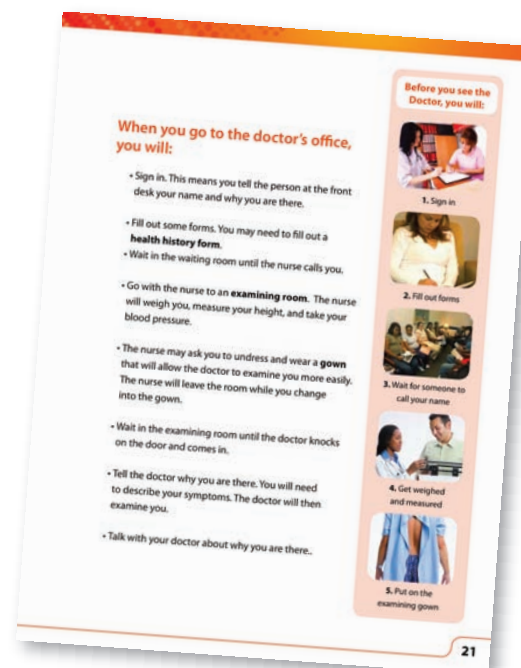
developed by students and teachers at each of the pilot sites.

A limited supply of hard copies will also be available for free to Florida adult ESOL programs starting in July 2008.

The downloadable publications and materials request form can be accessed at [www.floridaliteracy.org](http://www.floridaliteracy.org)

**Staying Healthy:  
an English Learner's Guide to  
Health Care and Healthy Living**

- Student resource book & teacher's guide
- Written at the 4th-5th grade level
- Suitable for high-beginning level ESOL learners and above
- Simple, concrete, practical, with lots of graphs and images
- Correlated to CASAS competencies and Florida Adult ESOL Course Standards





## Funding Opportunities

### Literacy Trivia Event A Fun Fundraising Idea

The Wisconsin based Janesville Literacy Council has found a fun way to combine the popularity of trivia with an entertaining event to raise money for literacy.

The Literacy Council's Literacy Trivia Contest has grown into a popular community event netting the volunteer based program approximately \$11,000 in 2008 alone.

All sponsored teams participate in two rounds of play. The two teams that correctly answer the most questions proceed to the finals. The winners are recognized with a traveling trophy and plenty of bragging rights for the year. Funds are raised through the \$250 team entry fee and the sale of spectator tickets, which also includes a buffet.

"The teams seem to be hooked on the event," shared Literacy Council Director, Cathy Jennings. This is evidenced by the participation of 250 people and 22 corporate/community teams at the event this spring.

The trivia contest is coupled with a unique silent auction in which the Council auctions off donated chairs that have been painted by local artists to reflect themes from their favorite books.

If you have questions or would like a copy of the contest rules and procedures, contact Cathy Jennings at [cjennings@janesvilleliteracycouncil.org](mailto:cjennings@janesvilleliteracycouncil.org).

### Funding Opportunities

#### Verizon Foundation

##### Education, Literacy and Health Grants

The Verizon Foundation is offering grants for organizations involved in literacy and education, domestic violence prevention as well as health and safety issues.

Eligible applicants are nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) status.

Deadline: November 1, 2008

Contact the Verizon Foundation directly for complete program information and application guidelines:

<http://foundation.verizon.com/grant/guidelines.shtml>

#### Marmot Foundation

##### Literacy Grants

The Marmot Foundation offers bi-annual grants ranging from \$15,000 – \$50,000 to organizations such as health providers, literacy organizations, youth and social service agencies.

Deadlines for the grants are Apr. 30 and Oct. 31.

For more information and an application packet, call the foundation at (302) 654-2477.

### Tutor Tips

- Put correct word sequence or answers on paper to keep by the telephone. Examples: questions for doctor/pediatrician, where/when family member is going to be and time of return.
- Make sure student watches your lips and tongue when you pronounce words.
- Have student practice in front of a mirror.
- Praise, praise, praise!
- Ask questions about children, grandchildren, and other family members.
- Tongue-twisters are helpful with pronunciation.
- For sentence building, give 4 words that are related and have the student write a complete sentence using the 4 words.
- Today's News items – Use specific news items for that day's sessions.
- Internet Examples – Search the internet to find examples/topics from previous sessions to use as review.
- Attendance at class – Calling the student the night before class improves attendance. It also reminds the student that homework is due.
- Experience as much as possible with your student – cooking, sewing, gardening, going on farm tours, going to garden shows.
- Read aloud together from newspapers, magazines, supplements, brochures and discuss main ideas. This also helps improve pronunciation and reveals patterns where help is needed.

Source: *Literacy of Northern New York*

## Literacy in U.S.

# The National Adult Education Honor Society

## A great way to recognize outstanding adult learners

Are you looking for ways to provide meaningful recognition to your adult education and literacy students? The National Adult Education Honor Society (NAEHS) provides a great vehicle to salute those adult learners who have demonstrated real determination to improve their education.

Since 1992, more than 30,000 adult GED, ESL, ABE and literacy students have been recognized by this national organization.

To qualify for NAEHS membership adult education students must demonstrate the following attributes:

1. Dependable attendance
2. Cooperative attitude
3. Work ethic

Honored students receive an embossed NAEHS membership certificate, a lapel pin and two letters on



NAEHS letterhead . . . one a recommendation for employment and the second a recommendation for financial assistance to continue their education. Both letters emphasize the student's attendance, cooperation and work ethic.

### How do Programs Become Involved?

Getting started is easy. Simply apply for a NAEHS charter on-line at [www.naehs.org](http://www.naehs.org). The one-time \$50 charter fee includes an attractive NAEHS banner that can be proudly displayed. To nominate students, return to the website and enter your nominee names. There is a \$15 fee for

each student membership. Submit names at least 14 days before your award program.

Each local program selects their nominees and determines when, where, how an awards ceremony will be held.

Currently a dozen Florida programs participate in the program. For references or to learn more, visit the NAEHS website at [www.naehs.org](http://www.naehs.org) or call 859-685-8559.

## U.S. Naturalization Test: New Developments

Since the 1980's, there has been a routine way to prepare for the United States citizenship examination: the applicants found the ninety six history and civics questions and the sample English sentences which were printed in the back of the Guide to Naturalization (M-476) and they would memorize them.

Applicants would go for their interview at the their appointed time and date and answer the questions provided by the naturalization adjudicators as if the assignment was part of their multiplication table practices in grade school. However, once the future U.S. citizens left the naturalization office, the majority of them could not even recall what they had learned or why the concepts would be important to their new life in this country. Applicants were unable to use any of the answers to those questions to make a better life for themselves and their families.

In the late 1990's, Congress assigned the former Immigration and Naturalization Service agency with the task of creating a "more standardized, fair, and meaningful

naturalization process" (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2006). The revised test, with an emphasis on the fundamental concepts of American democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, will help encourage citizenship applicants to learn and identify with the basic values we all share as Americans. Furthermore, it will become the blueprint for these new citizens to learn the process and concepts of participation in the American government.

### Changes on the New Test

Applicants will need to master specific ideas related to: the American system of government, basic principles of democracy, rights and responsibilities, early American history, recent history and other vital information. Under the English language components, applicants would read a history and/or civics content question and the adjudicator would then dictate the answer to that same question that the applicant originally read. The new test will no longer be a list of trivia questions which once mastered the applicants would not understand how they relate to their

# Literacy in the U.S.

daily life in the United States. Rather it will cover materials which will assist the new citizens to understand why and how they can improve their community and what they need to do so they can help their neighbors and their friends to be a part of this great country. The new citizens would be able to learn what is it to be an American citizen with the right to exercise their vote, to run for office and mostly to be able to give back to our society in order to make it a better place for all of us who live here and choose to call this great country home.

## Expectations of those taking the new Redesigned Exam

Presently, citizenship applicants would expect a totally different process and outcome of their interview experience based on the jurisdiction where they tested. The major aim of the redesign process is to ensure that naturalization applicants have uniform, consistent testing experiences nationwide, and that the civics test can effectively assess whether applicants have a meaningful understanding of U.S. government and history.

Towards that goal, the Office of Citizenship will undertake a complete training of its naturalization adjudicators to assure that procedures are the same in every Naturalization Office around the country. Applicants, who applied before October 2008 and are scheduled for their interview before October 2008, will take the existing test. Applicants who applied before October 2008, but who are scheduled for their interview after October 2008 will have a chance of taking the existing test or the new-redesigned test. Everyone that applies for naturalization after October 2008 will be required to take the new redesigned test. After October 2009, the only test available should be the new redesigned test, thereby giving an opportunity to all new United States citizenship applicants to be a part of a more uniform naturalization experience and to seek out the opportunity to embrace their new country completely.

By Dr. Gemma Santos, Miami Dade Public Schools. Dr. Santos was a member of Redesign Committee on the U.S. Naturalization Examination

Adult Education and Literacy programs are eligible to receive a free copy of the Civics and Citizenship Toolkit. Go to [www.citizenshiptoolkit.gov](http://www.citizenshiptoolkit.gov)

Website and Information on the new test: <http://www.uscis.gov/newtest>

## Sample Questions from the New Naturalization Test

- What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?
- What did the Declaration of Independence do?
- What is the economic system in the United States?
- What are two ways that Americans can participate in their Democracy?
- What does the President's Cabinet do?
- What is one reason colonists came to America?
- Name one problem that led to the Civil War.
- What did Martin Luther King Jr. do?

There are one hundred questions to study. Applicants will be asked to answer 10 questions, of which they must get 6 correct.

## Resources

### 990 Online

Do you need help preparing your IRS 990?

990 Online provides non-profit organizations with a user friendly web based system for preparing IRS tax forms 990 or 990EZ and request for extension. This service, provided by the National Center for Charitable Statistics, is free for organizations with less than \$100,000 in receipts and provides a sliding scale for larger organizations.

For more information, visit <http://efile.form990.org>

### Libraries Adapt Services to Immigrants

The American Library Association recently released a study to assist public libraries in developing programs and services for immigrants.

*Serving Non-English Speakers in U.S. Public Libraries* is the first national study to examine services provided by libraries for limited and non-English speakers. The study researched the effectiveness of library services, barriers to usage, and promising practices.

Spanish was ranked second to English as the priority language for developing programs. Sixty eight percent of non-English library patrons used special language collections while thirty nine percent accessed special programming. The majority of libraries meeting the needs of these students were found among libraries serving communities with fewer than 100,000 people.

Most respondents thought that immigrant services offered by libraries were only moderately effective. Top barriers for Spanish speakers included poor reading habits and a lack of knowledge regarding available services. Libraries reported that the most successful library programs and services developed for non-English speakers included: English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, language specific collections, computer classes/internet access and story time.

For a full copy of the report, please visit [www.ala.org/nonenglishspeakers/](http://www.ala.org/nonenglishspeakers/)





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### BENEFITS INCLUDE:

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- Eligibility to submit nomination for the Florida Literacy Awards
- Membership Certificate (Organizational Members)

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For more information, contact Samantha Sparks, Resource Specialist at [sparkss@floridaliteracy.org](mailto:sparkss@floridaliteracy.org) or visit [www.floridaliteracy.org](http://www.floridaliteracy.org) and click on Become a Member.