

*Adult Education Learn More. Earn More.
Bus Tour*

Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center
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http://www.aalrc.org



The goal of the Arkansas Adult Education Learn More. Earn more. Bus Tour is to increase awareness of the free adult education classes in rural Arkansas. The “hook” to bring people to the bus is the ability to register to win tickets to the Super Bowl. There will be a great deal of media coverage about the tour prior to the tour’s arrival at each scheduled location.

Dates: October 1st – November 9th

Locations: Pine Bluff, Conway, Stuttgart, Monticello, Russellville, West Memphis, Blytheville, El Dorado, Searcy, Jonesboro, Newport, Camden, Hot Springs, Batesville, Leslie, Arkadelphia, Harrison, Rogers, Helena, Heber Springs

The bus will be a rolling billboard, wrapped with information about adult education. It will be parked in a high-traffic location with a red 10 x 10 ft canopy, have two banners promoting the bus tour, and the opportunity to register to win tickets to the Super Bowl. Adult education personnel will be on hand to distribute materials and talk to potential students.

*AACAE Conference in
October 2010*



The annual statewide Arkansas Association of Continuing and Adult Education (AACAE) & Arkansas Literacy Councils, Inc. conference will be held October 21 & 22, 2010 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Little Rock.

This conference will be attended by approximately 400 adult education and literacy instructors, tutors, administrators, paraprofessionals, volunteers, GED examiners, and state personnel. Your participation will allow you an opportunity to attend great professional development sessions, network with colleagues, and visit vendors to preview new classroom materials.

Make sure to register today! The registration form can be found on the AALRC website at <http://aalrc.org/>.

Adult Learning Network

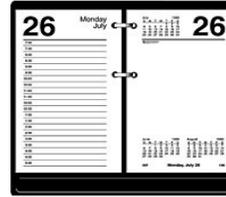
The Adult Learning Network is a quarterly publication of the AALRC.

The Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center provides equal access to all programs and activities.

Calendar
All events are at the AALRC unless otherwise noted.



Professional Development:



October

- October 1 – ESL Basics – Day 3
- October 6 – GED Examiners’ Annual Conference – Pulaski Technical College
 - North Little Rock Session ID: **122899**
- October 13 – LD 201 Session ID: **127151**
- October 13-15 – Adult Numeracy Initiative - 10 participating programs
- October 20 – Building Effective Local Partnerships and Collaborations
 Session ID: **133069**

November

- November 3-4 – LD Comprehensive Series, Part 1 Session ID: **127154**
- November 4-5 – Guided Reading
- November 9 – Google Docs Session ID: **127417**
- November 10 – Windows Movie Maker Session ID: **127418**
- November 11 – Health Literacy Session ID: **129209**
- November 12 – Health Literacy Session ID: **129220**
- November 19 – Poverty Simulation Session ID: **127426**

December

- December 7-8 – LD Comprehensive Series, Part 2 Session ID: **127154**
- December 9 – Social Media Session ID: **127432**
- December 10 – SMART Board Session ID: **127421**

Meetings/Events

- October 1- ALC Member Advisory Committee
- October 4-8 – System 7 Training – ARS
- October 8 – ALC Board
- October 8 – AR Works – Career Coaches Meeting
- October 21-22 – AACAE – Embassy Suites – Little Rock

- November 18 – PBL Officer Training
- November 18-19 – Advisory Council
- November 22-26 – AALRC Closed for Thanksgiving

- December 3 – WAGE Advisory
- December 20 – January 2, 2011 – AALRC Closed for Holidays



TRAVEL
 Reimbursement

Local programs funded with state or federal adult education funds must adhere to Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration guidelines when requesting travel reimbursement.

*Governor
 Mike Beebe*

*State Board of
 Career
 Education*

*Director,
 William L. “Bill”
 Walker, Jr.*

*Division of
 Rehabilitation
 Services
 Robert Trevino*

*Division of
 Adult Education
 James H.
 Smith, Jr.*

*Division of Career
 & Technical
 Education
 John Davidson*

*Communications
 Deborah
 Germany*

*Human Resources
 & Development
 Pam Harris*

*Finance
 Charles Brown*

Dollar General Presentation Series



DOLLAR GENERAL PRESENTATION SERIES

Prior to the annual statewide Arkansas Association of Continuing and Adult Education (AACAE) & Arkansas Literacy Councils, Inc. Conference, there will be a one-day symposium about grassroots advocacy for practitioners on October 20th. The AACAE Committee encourages you to attend this session. The session will feature practical, hands-on strategies for planning and implementing a successful grassroots advocacy program. Participants will discuss strategies and tactics and create action plans that integrate advocacy with community and business partnerships. Speakers and panelists will include national advocacy experts from the adult education field, policy makers from Arkansas, and representatives of successful local partnerships and collaborations.

Through the generous support of the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, the Coalition will offer two competitive \$5,000 grants to participants to help them to build their advocacy programs. There is no fee to attend this program. Due to high demand, pre-registration is required and participants will be required to attend the full-day session. Registration will be online at http://www.escweb.net/ar_esc/default.aspx with the session ID 133069. For additional information, please contact the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center.

UALR Update

Provided by Carrie Boden

Do you love teaching adults? Are you thinking about taking that next step to further your education? If so, the Adult Education Program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock might be the perfect place for you. In addition to preparing for Arkansas Teacher Licensure, you can also earn your Master of Education in Adult Education degree. Currently there are approximately 75 students in the program who work in GED, adult basic education, literacy, medical, military, community organizing, religious, human resources, corrections, or non-profit settings. The program offers opportunities for you to network with your peers and to explore various aspects of the field of adult education. The program also works with your schedule. Most of the courses are offered in an online format. If you prefer some face-to-face interaction, some elective courses are offered in hybrid (some online and some meetings on campus) or weekend (meets on weekends on campus) formats. There is still time for you to apply to the program for January 2011. The classes do fill quickly, so it is in your best interest to apply as soon as possible and enroll at the first opportunity. More information can be found at <http://ualr.edu/med/AED/>.

FM Hearing Helper System

Provided by Katie Keen

As an AmeriCorps worker for Literacy Action of Central Arkansas, I have had the opportunity to work with many different types of people and challenges. I was reminded of this when I began teaching reading to a student who has a hearing impairment, and realized I had no idea just how severe her hearing impairment is. At fifty years old, Janice had made it through life with the reading capability of a first-grader and the disability of being virtually deaf, maybe slightly less so with the help of hearing aids. Being soft-spoken myself, I often left our lessons exhausted from yelling so she could hear me, only to receive a call later from her daughter telling me I needed to speak up. She didn't seem capable of making the appropriate phonemic sounds, and I was beginning to suspect that she was becoming as discouraged as I with the lack of progress we seemed to be making. That was until we came across the FM hearing helper.

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News from the Disabilities Project Manager

How Can I Teach Sarah? The Saga of One Tutor's Quest for Answers, Part 3 (Final Episode)

This will be the final chapter in the saga of Sarah and Gail, a literacy student and her tutor who were facing some instructional challenges. My initially earth-shaking brainstorm that this series would become an interactive platform for sharing ideas about teaching methods has unfortunately failed. After only one response for the first chapter, and no responses for second, I have decided to wrap up this saga and wait for my next literary inspiration. Nonetheless, a timely ending for the story, as you'll see at the end.



After Gail's last lengthy communication (see Part 2 at <http://aalrc.org/news/newsletters/2010V2/index.htm>), I replied to her that I had suspected that Sarah might be a tactile-kinesthetic learner. This was an educated guess, knowing that about 80% of students with learning disabilities are indeed concrete, hands-on, tactile-kinesthetic learners. Her score of "4" in that area of the learning styles inventory was more definitive than Gail thought. Most students will score some points in each learning style category, as much learning is contextual. For example, although I may be primarily a visual learner, if you want me to learn a song, I need to hear it, not just read the sheet music.

At any rate, Gail was concerned that the literacy council may not have any manipulatives for her to use, and that Sarah's level of commitment to learning to read may not be solid enough for her to take the time to practice with the manipulatives even if they were available.

So I encouraged Gail to get back to the bigger picture for awhile. There are a lot of issues going on with Sarah - health, family, expectations, no repetition of skills between sessions, etc. In short, Sarah is facing a lot of learning challenges, including a lack of motivation and no family support.

With that big picture in mind, Gail and I decided to go back to Sarah's original learning goal, which was to be able to write out the numbers on checks. I asked Gail if it mattered to Sarah if she has to use a "cheat sheet" to do that? Because that's pretty do-able. On the other hand, if she wants to memorize how to spell the numbers and write a check without looking to see, for example, how to spell "twenty-one," I would be tempted to remind her that she said that was her goal, and then just work on memorizing how to spell numbers. If she can nail that one down, then she might want to pick a new goal.

Either way, I couldn't see how Gail could work productively with Sarah until they collaborated to set some really specific goals. I urged them to make the goals very short-term, as in "By next week, I will be able to spell 'five' from memory."

Also, considering Sarah's age and refusal to practice skills during the week, I suggested again that she might benefit from some assistive technology tools to help her function in her daily life while she works on remediation of basic skills.

My final suggestion was that Sarah might benefit from working on her thinking skills, also known as metacognitive skills, or learning how to learn. One idea would be to have her listen to an audio book that she could check out from the public library - some kind of short novel or something she might be interested in. Have her listen to one chapter a week and be prepared to answer questions about what she heard. Questions should range from easy (Who are the main characters?

News from the Disabilities Project Manager

What happened in the story? etc.) to hard (What was your favorite part so far? Why? Is there anything about the main character that reminds you of yourself or someone you know? What do you think will or should happen next in the story?). This kind of questioning allows Sarah to practice thinking without feeling so frustrated and should eventually strengthen some critical thinking skills. If Gail could ask Sarah the same questions each week, Sarah would begin to think about the questions while she listens to the story in anticipation of knowing how to answer the questions more quickly.

Gail responded, *“Sarah is thrilled with the idea that we can make a ‘cheat sheet’ for her to use when writing checks. We made a list of all the numbers 1-100 with the spelling of each number next to the number. After we had completed the list, she told me that she had accomplished what she ‘set out to do,’ and she had decided that since she no longer needed any help, she wanted me to work with her granddaughter instead, who is studying to pass her driver’s license exam. I was stunned. I thought she wanted to learn how to read, and I have the feeling that she’s giving up too soon. I don’t think she thought it would be something that would take a lot of time or work, and now that she sees what’s involved, she just doesn’t want to do it. I’m trying not to feel like a failure, and she assured me repeatedly that I helped her with what she wanted help with, even though that may not be all that she needs help with. She’s excited that I’ll be working with her granddaughter, and promised to keep in touch.”*

I thought about making up a different ending for this story, but finally decided that it would be too weird to relate a real-life story and end it with fiction. Hopefully, the strategies and observations discussed throughout the saga will be helpful to teachers and tutors who currently have students with similar characteristics and learning needs. But it’s always hard to say goodbye to a student. Even so, I send Sarah my best wishes for a happy and healthy life. Maybe – after a break – she’ll be back to try again.

Writing Skills and Students with Learning Disabilities

There’s a really good article by Charles A. MacArthur about students with learning disabilities and writing skills at http://www.ldonline.org/article/Writing_Disabilities:_An_Overview. He includes this quote from a student with learning disabilities:

“Good writing is writing one, maybe two pages, and having periods, capital letters, indenting, paragraphs, spelling everything right... and that’s all I’d say about that.”

The essay can be one of the most challenging parts of the GED tests for many of our adult students with learning disabilities. Not only might they

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News from the Disabilities Project Manager

have fine motor problems that affect handwriting, but many also have attention and self-regulation problems that affect persistence and organization, and some have limited motivation to produce good writing. For those who also have reading disabilities, there is the additional problem of the ability to proofread effectively. I encourage everyone to read the entire article online, but in the meantime, here are some ideas you might try that are not included in the article.

First, use graphic organizers with the student to help them plan their writing. One great thing about graphic organizers is that the student can start with a template. There's nothing worse than a blank piece of paper staring at you when you're trying to brainstorm writing ideas. Templates are available at many educational websites, including www.inspiration.com and <http://www.adlit.org/>. Once the student is familiar with using graphic organizers and concept maps, they may want to create their own template. These allow the student to let their creative juices flow without having to deal with outlines and Roman numerals.

Second, provide the student with highlighters so they can color-code their ideas to organize them into categories, which may later become paragraphs. They can highlight according to main ideas, supporting details, and stray thoughts, or they may want to devise their own color-coding system. The teacher must first guide the student through this process. Many students have no idea how to effectively and creatively use highlighters for organizational purposes.

Another suggestion is to let the student type their essay into a word processing program such as Microsoft Word. When the student has completed the essay, they can listen to it by copying/pasting into a **free** screen reader program like ReadPlease (www.readplease.com), NaturalReader (<http://www.naturalreaders.com/>), or Thunder (<http://www.screenreader.net/>), then listening to their essay out loud. Many times, students will be able to recognize errors in writing by listening to what they've written instead of reading it. If no software is available to listen to text, the student should read their essay out loud to themselves to better identify errors.

Finally, some students with writing disabilities will be able to communicate their thoughts much better with access to a scribe. With dictation, the student can focus more on the content and fluidity of what they want to communicate as opposed to struggling so much with mechanics that they lose their train of thought altogether. Furthermore, the student's verbal vocabulary may be much more extensive than their written vocabulary. Even if the student makes mechanical errors regarding spelling and punctuation while dictating, those errors will not be as destructive as a lack of content and focus regarding the overall written product.

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Talk

Note: To link to any web address (URL) in this newsletter, go to the AALRC's home page at <http://aalrc.org>, look up this newsletter, and then just click on the appropriate link.

Looking for a Good Deal



Everyone is looking for a good deal, and with this economy we really need to stretch our dollars. If your organization is 501(c)(3) nonprofit, then a good place to start is TechSoup.org for very cheap software and computers.

You can also get software at educational discounts, used / refurbished equipment, and find good deals on new equipment using the sites listed below.

M & R - Manufacturing and Redistribution located in Little Rock is the place to find deals on used state equipment. You can find anything from computers to furniture and more. There is even online bidding at their website: <https://www.arstatesurplus.com/>

<http://techsoup.org> TechSoup distributes donated and deeply discounted technology products to eligible nonprofits and public libraries in a supportive, educational environment. In order to be qualified to receive any donated products, organizations must be able to demonstrate their status as 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations or public libraries.

<http://www.dell.com/outlet> - Good deals to be found on refurbished Dell products. Same warranty and support as a new machine.

<http://bestbuy.com> – You can find some good deals here if you look often. Click on Computers – Laptops or Notebooks – then on the left you will see “On Sale”, “Special Offers”, and “Package Deals”.

<http://www.geeks.com/> - Good deals to be had but pay attention to whether it is new or just refurbished.

Educational-priced software: <http://www.academicssuperstore.com/> , <http://www.journeyed.com/> , <http://www.gradware.com/>

You can also try a Google search for “refurbished computer”. You will find reputable sites like Office Max, Dell, Tiger Direct, geeks.com, discountpc.net, CompUSA, and Circuit City.

Enable Virtual Wi-Fi

Would you like to connect a wireless device to the internet but you only have a wired connection available? Then you can use Windows 7 Virtual Wi-Fi to set up your computer to become a wireless router that will allow you to connect any wireless device that is capable of using WPA2 encryption (most newer devices will have this capability). Your wireless adapter driver will need to support this, and not all do. Your wireless adapter manufacturer will have the latest drivers, so install the most up-to-date driver first. Then go to <http://virtualrouter.codeplex.com/> and download Virtual Router. It's free, but they accept donations. Once installed, you should be sharing your Internet connection in no time.

Arkansas Literacy Council's Executive Director Connects with Arkansas

Marie Bruno, Executive Director of Arkansas Literacy Councils (ALC) for 15 years, has accepted a position with Arkansas Capital Corporation Group/Connect-Arkansas. Marie's last day with ALC was August 13, 2010. A reception honoring Marie for her years of service and dedication to the literacy council was attended by council directors, Department of Career Education staff, Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center staff, friends and well-wishers. Steve Arnold, ALC Board President, presented Marie with a crystal award for her years of service and immeasurable time dedicated to adult literacy.



Marie is now employed as Vice-President with Arkansas Capital Corporation Group/Connect-Arkansas. Her new position allows her to stay connected with Arkansas Literacy and Adult Education. She will be working initially with communities in southeast Arkansas to provide broadband services.

Connect-Arkansas is a private nonprofit, which is implementing a community-based initiative to promote internet access and education. Governor Beebe signed the Connect-Arkansas Broadband Act in March 2007. This act ensures creation of a competitive broadband or high-speed internet infrastructure that improves personal lives and the economic capabilities of Arkansans. Marie will help to ensure that more rural communities get these services, thus making it possible for literacy councils and adult education centers to better serve their communities.

To find out more about this initiative, check out Connect-Arkansas at <http://connect-arkansas.org>.

AALRC Library Update

"*Keys to Teaching Grammar to English Language Learners: A Practical Handbook*" by Keith S. Folse, is now available from the AALRC Library. Mr. Folse, who was a presenter at the ESL Summer Institute 2010 at the AALRC, is the coordinator of the Masters in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (MATESOL) program at the University of Central Florida, and has written more than 50 textbooks for ESOL learners and teachers.

Please contact Klaus Neu, AALRC Media Coordinator, at klaus@aalrc.org if you would like to check out this new resource for developing more effective grammar and language lessons in your ESOL classroom.

FM Hearing Helper System

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I first learned about the FM hearing helper in a learning disabilities workshop. I was told it was a tool used for students in need of hearing help, and although I was initially a little skeptical because it seemed my student needed more than extra hearing help, I decided to give it a shot. Klaus Neu allowed me check it out from the AALRC library for four weeks at a time and showed me how to use it. I introduced it to my student at our next session, and was completely surprised and ecstatic with how well it worked! For the first time in our three months of meet-

ing, she confidently made the appropriate phonemic sounds. "What letter does the word *fish* start with?" "F!" she would exclaim. It was so amazing to see how proud and encouraged she became, and it's all thanks to the FM hearing helper.