

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN INCREASES AWARENESS OF GED CREDENTIAL

“YOU CAN TAKE THE FIRST STEP.”

By now, every radio and television station in your area should have received public service announcements (PSAs) with this message. The PSAs urge young people in their 20s and 30s to simply make a move toward getting their GED® credential and give them compelling reasons to do so—access to more possibilities in life, better paying and more stable jobs, and more confidence in themselves.

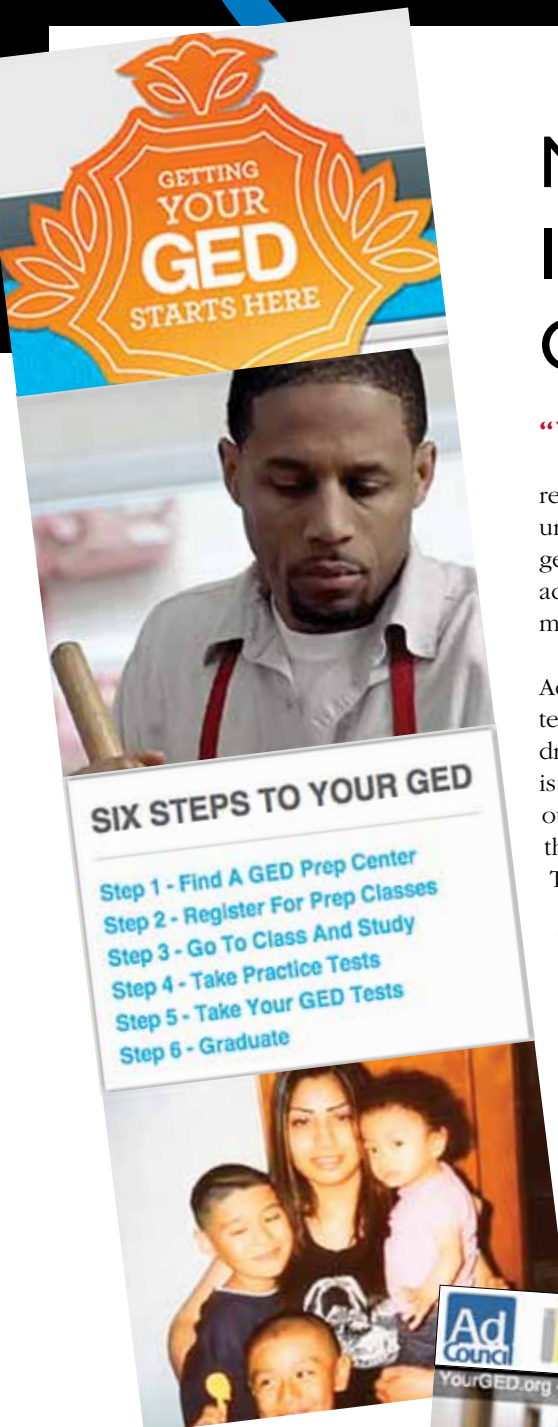
The PSAs, sponsored by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation and the Ad Council, are part of a national GED Achievement Campaign which includes television, radio, print, outdoor, and online ads in English and Spanish, all drawing attention to the need for a GED certificate. Along with the PSAs, there is a national outreach team cultivating commitments from top national media outlets. In addition, the Ad Council also has 10 regional managing directors throughout the U.S. who are promoting the campaign to their area media. The PSAs are also being posted on sites such as YouTube.

Insight from the research showed that young people believe, “I can see a better life, I just can’t see how I’m going to get there.” The campaign directs potential learners to a toll free number—877-38-YOURGED—as well as a new website, yourged.org. The site provides visitors with referrals to local GED programs and information on the GED diploma process. The campaign also has a mobile component. Prospective students can text 69222 from their cell phones and receive messages about literacy centers closest to them.

“As a longtime supporter of literacy and education, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation strongly believes that furthering one’s education can improve lives for generations to come,” said Cal Turner, chairman of the Dollar General Literacy Foundation. “The Foundation is enthusiastic about the potential impact of this campaign.

Our goal is to inspire potential GED candidates and make it easy for people from all walks of life to access local resources that will help them begin their journey to a

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www.yourged.org/real-stories/cynthia

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KET

Kentucky Educational Television

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Worthwhile websites

Many websites provide useful tools and information for adult educators. Here are some we encourage you to explore. If you have a favorite website you'd like for us to share, please send us an e-mail at adulded@ket.org.



November 16, 2010: National Community Education Day

The National Community Education Association (NCEA) advocates for community education, which they define as "community members—individuals, schools, businesses, and public and private organizations—becoming partners in addressing community needs."

NCEA supports:

- parent and community involvement in public education
- the formation of community partnerships to address community needs
- the expansion of lifelong learning opportunities for all community residents

November 16 has been designated to draw attention to the benefits of community involvement in education.

Learn more at ncea.com.



Just the Facts

They call themselves, "the definitive Internet reference source for

urban legends, folklore, myths, rumors, and misinformation." And snopes.com actually lives up to its billing. There you can find out if something you heard or read is fact or fiction. Click on the "Hot 25" list for the most current misinformation being circulated as fact—the kind of thing your well-meaning friends and family pass along.

Next time someone sends you an email saying "the U.S. government is proposing a 1% tax on debit card usage" or "an animal shelter will soon be closing and will euthanize all the animals that have not been adopted," check it out at snopes.com before you pass it along.

CLICK, CONNECT, PLAY: GET MORE OUT OF YOUR MULTIMEDIA MATERIALS

Need to know how to get the most out of your multimedia materials? KET is holding a **multimedia utilization workshop** in Lexington, Kentucky, February 21-22 using *GED Connection* and *Workplace Essential Skills* to show how you can reach more learners at more levels more effectively. Visit ketadullearning.org to learn more.



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KET RECEIVES 2010 NCL LITERACY LEADERSHIP AWARD

KENTUCKY EDUCATIONAL

TELEVISION (KET) is one of five literacy leaders to be recognized by the National Coalition for Literacy (NCL) this year. As part of Adult Education and Family Literacy Week September 13-17, the National Coalition for Literacy is presenting its annual Literacy Leadership Awards on September 15. The award recognizes individuals and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to improving literacy and raising awareness of adult literacy and English language learning needs in the U.S.

KET is being honored as “a leading producer of adult basic skills and workplace education programming. LiteracyLink’s *Workplace Essential Skills* and *GED Connection* series, both produced by KET, are now available to 87 percent of American households through public broadcasting.”

KET was the first public broadcasting network to develop a video series for GED® preparation in the 1970s with new series following in 1986 and 2001, in concert with release of new GED Tests.

Workplace Essential Skills teaches skills and attitudes adults need to apply for and succeed in a new job. Reading, communication, writing, and math lessons are set in workplace context, showing real employees using skills on the job.

“We are very proud of the impact our literacy resources have had in the Commonwealth and across the nation,” said

Shae Hopkins, KET executive director. “And it is an honor to be recognized by the National Coalition for Literacy for those efforts.”

In addition to KET, this year’s honorees are

- **Sen. Thomas Harkin** (D-IA), and his staff of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. They have been instrumental in supporting adult education at the federal level, as well as representing the needs of America’s working families.
- **Archie Willard**, a long-time student advocate and leader who has nurtured the development of adult learner leaders through his early support and leadership of Value, the national student organization.
- **Rep. John Yarmuth** (D-KY) a tireless advocate for literacy since his election in 2007. He has supported family literacy programs and Even Start. He also introduced the 2009 Literacy Education For All, Results for the Nation (LEARN) Act.
- **Betsy McKay**, director of Bilingual Leadership Development for McDonald’s USA LLC. This award-winning program helps managers and manager trainees become bilingual. ⑩

To learn more, visit NCL’s website at national-coalition-literacy.org.



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Street Skills



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Kentucky Educational Television

Producers of *GED Connection*, which airs on PBS stations coast-to-coast.

(WXXI) marks the spot for adult literacy in New

NAME AN ADULT LITERACY initiative and WXXI is probably doing it or has done it.

That's a pretty broad statement, but it matches the equally broad literacy efforts of this public television in Rochester, New York.

"A local public broadcasting station has tools at its disposal to support and improve literacy that few in the community have," says Marion French, assistant vice president of education and interactive services. "By collaborating with literacy providers, educational organizations, and community partners, stations can improve the access and quality of adult education programs for all in its region."

French believes that a local station can improve the daily lives of its community members by helping them become more literate and thus able to obtain the knowledge and skills they need to be more employable and self-sufficient. She further believes that public television has the ability to improve its community's economic outlook, health, and educational gains of children in school. It's her job to turn these beliefs into reality.

The Greater Rochester region includes an 11-county viewing and listening area made up of an urban center with suburban and rural areas surrounding it. For that diverse group, WXXI provides four public TV channels and six public radio stations, as well as locally produced programming and news.

As you might expect with a broadcast station, literacy services begin with programming.

"WXXI broadcasts a regular block of adult literacy programming each weekday, including *GED Connection*, *Workplace Essential Skills*, *TV411*, and *Crossroads Café* on our main channel," French says. "We will soon provide the same programs online through a partnership with the New York State Education Department and the other eight New York State public stations.

The station also provides 15 hours each weekday of educational children's programming. "We offer many of these series online and through video on demand. These are free to schools and educational organizations," she says.

In addition, WXXI partners with regional adult literacy providers to promote their services and provide one point of contact for prospective students. Callers receive information about all the programs in the region and are encouraged to call as many agencies as needed to find the best fit for their needs and schedule, according to French.

WXXI is the only station to manage a New York State Regional Adult Education Network (RAEN) funded by the Adult Education Workforce Development

A local public broadcasting station has tools at its disposal to support and improve literacy that few in the community have.

division of the State Education Department. Now beginning its seventh year, RAEN provides professional development and technical assistance for adult literacy, family literacy, and workforce development programs in the region.

For those needing the most basic literacy services, WXXI's Ready To Learn program partners with local school districts, professional associations, families, and caregivers.

WXXI also provides educational productions such as *Homework Hotline* four days a week during the school year for all of New York State's public broadcasters. The live show provides a way for students to ask

questions, which are then answered and broadcast on the show, reaching students throughout the state.

Rochester Teacher Association's Dial-A-Teacher and New York City's Dial-A-Teacher partner with WXXI to provide an additional 14 hours a week of help to callers not on the show.

There's more. WXXI also:

- produces *Assignment: The World*, the longest-running instructional series on current events and global issues. It broadcasts nationally 32 weeks a year and is provided on-demand over the Web;
- partners to produce *Biz Kid\$*, a financial literacy series for families, and has produced local specials about financial issues, which you can see at wxxi.org/education/money;

- produces town hall meetings on such issues as financial literacy, childhood obesity, health issues, and dropout prevention; and
- covers issues in the community that impact literacy and workforce development.

"Each station and community is different in their needs," notes French, "but these ideas may work for adult educators wanting to invite their public broadcasting station to create a more in-depth adult education service in their community." ①

For more information contact mfrench@wxxi.org



7 ways your public broadcasting station can increase involvement in adult literacy

York



ABOVE: Marion French, WXXI assistant vice president, education and interactive services.

BOTTOM FAR LEFT: Adult Literacy educators and program managers discuss seminar content.

MIDDLE: Universal PreK educators from Rochester City District at WXXI Ready To Learn Workshop.

BELOW: Beverly Ray of aha! Process, Inc. presents a seminar to adult literacy providers. This seminar, based on the book *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* by Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D., provides an in-depth study of information and issues that will increase the participants' knowledge and understanding of the poverty culture.



1. KNOW THE FACTS

Research what is going on your region regarding literacy, educational outcomes, and workforce development. Here are some good places to start:

- nces.ed.gov The National Center for Educational Statistics has graduation rates and dropout rates in your region. You can look up estimated literacy rates by county or by state.
- www2.ed.gov/rschstat/facts.html U.S. Department of Education facts.
- www2.ed.gov/about/contacts/state/index.html

State education departments can be a rich source of information for data and directories of adult literacy providers and other partnerships.

Look up workforce trends for your region and nationally:

- dol.gov/dol/topic U.S. Department of Labor by topic
- dol.gov/dol/location.htm State Departments of Labor



2. HOST A LISTENING PROJECT

Invite key literacy agencies, workforce development, and other support agencies to your station to discuss their approaches to problems, their assessment of challenges, and the resources they need. Ask them specifically what your station might do to support their activities. This provides you with an insider snapshot of the field and where to get involved. If a large budget is required, it also begins the discussion of how to accomplish mutual goals.



3. RAISE THE FOCUS OF LITERACY IN THE REGION Public broadcasters can reach large audiences through their broadcasts and local productions and can focus discussion on literacy through local news coverage and programming choices.



4. CONNECT PEOPLE WITH NEEDED SERVICES THROUGH BROADCAST, MARKETING, AND OUTREACH

WXXI produces on-air spots to promote programs and local agencies where prospective students can get help. Partnering with the local ABC network affiliate, WXXI also uses spots for events, such as a call-in that helped veterans register for health services. On-air spots also help market educational services, video on-demand, and training to support literacy.



5. HOST EDUCATIONAL EVENTS AND SCREENINGS WITH TALK-BACK OPPORTUNITIES

WXXI hosts screenings and community cinema programs with talk back panels and speakers to facilitate follow-up discussion on educational issues, economic challenges, health, education and workforce opportunities, and staying in school. These programs are always well attended and center the issues in the community conversation.



6. PROVIDE TRAINING IN HOW TO USE RESOURCES Stations can share best practices, host their own training, or take part in existing training. WXXI provides more than 90 trainings a year to adult literacy and family literacy agencies, educators, caregivers and parents.



7. FORM OR JOIN RELATED INTEREST GROUPS OR COMMUNITY TASKFORCES

WXXI is a member of an Early Childhood Development Initiative and local Head Start Education Committees that focus on literacy and family support for parents of young children across agencies and across the community. RAEN also formed a Health Literacy Taskforce to coordinate with existing health, human services, and literacy organizations to share information and find ways to improve Health Literacy in the community.

One excellent framework for collaboration has been developed in New York State by the New York State Education Department known as the Literacy Zone. The idea is to involve all stakeholders in solving community issues by providing a “welcome center” to assist people in navigating the systems and services they need for literacy, workforce development and school success. By working together to coordinate services for populations in a particular neighborhood, zip code, school district or community it is hoped that a difference can be made in the outcomes for the designated population. The Literacy Zones are defined based on data showing need (poverty, low literacy, language barriers, etc.) Adult literacy is serving as a focal point, but the framework has interesting opportunities for other states and communities to embrace.

Serving as the convener of a community collaborative is a powerful role for adult learning and public broadcasting working on difficult literacy issues in their communities.



National campaign increases awareness of GED credential *continued from page 1*

brighter future through a GED.”

Grammy award winning country singer/songwriter Gretchen Wilson is also getting into the act as a campaign spokesperson. Wilson dropped out of high school at age 15 and received her GED diploma nearly 20 years later at the age of 34. She has since become an advocate to help spotlight the funding needs of adult education programs and the adults on waiting lists hoping to further their education.

“People need the right tools to succeed, and, at the very minimum, a major tool on the road to success is a high school diploma or GED,” said Wilson. “This campaign will go a long way toward educating people on how to take that first step to make a difference in their lives and the lives of their families.”

Adult educators can become part of the team, too.

Campaign officials offer suggestions for ways to get involved:

- Post Web banners, TV spots, and links to the campaign website on your websites and social networking sites.
- Run the print ads in programs, bill stuffers, and direct mail.
- Post ads or posters in public areas.
- Ask employees to promote the campaign through their social networking profiles, such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace.
- Encourage local literacy centers, libraries, and community centers to promote the campaign by posting the posters or print ads and including campaign information on their websites.
- Ask local media to run the PSAs and link to yourged.org from their websites.

The only restrictions are that the ads may not be altered (including adding/removing logos, phone/URL), and no ads can be purchased for placement.

The PSAs were distributed to media outlets nationwide. Contact your local media if you have not seen them in your area. The ads are given to the media free of charge, but media have to provide the air time.

Find a literacy program

Individuals looking for a local adult literacy program or GED® testing center in their area have a new reliable source—the National Literacy Directory, an online database that contains information about listing more than 8,000 U.S. This central database, at nationalliteracydirectory.org, also serves the GED Achievement campaign.

The National Literacy Directory also features a toll-free number (877-38YOURGED) that individuals can call to get local program referrals. This toll-free referral system operates 24/7, and Web and phone referrals are available in both English and Spanish.

The directory is the result of a joint effort between the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), and ProLiteracy.

“In the U.S., one out of seven adults has below-basic literacy skills,” said David C. Harvey, president and CEO of ProLiteracy. “This impacts how people understand important financial, educational, health care, employment, and legal rights issues. The National Literacy Directory is a critical link, connecting adults in need with local programs and resources that can help them gain skills to address everyday matters.”

Adult educators should review the directory and make sure the information for their area is correct. If you find that your program is not in the national database or that the information needs updating, click on the feedback button.



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Jane Oates



Brenda Dann-Messier



Martha Kanter

Adult ed has newly appointed friends in high places

BEFORE SHE WAS AN administrator in the federal government, **Jane Oates, assistant secretary of the Employment and Training Administration in the Department of Labor,** was an adult educator with an idea. She believed closed captioned videos could help her students learn to read since they could hear and see the words simultaneously. The problem was that this was before closed captioning was required or even widely used.

Determined to help her students, Oates obtained the boxes and continued her personal research into their effectiveness with adult learners. As Oates expected, the closed captioning helped.

The educator didn't stop there, however. She passed her idea along to the late Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA), who called her to Washington to discuss it. Shortly thereafter, Oates was asked to write the language that became a bill requiring closed captioning for all television programs. It was a boon for adult learners, the deaf, and the hard of hearing.

CRADLE TO CAREER EDUCATION REFORM

Oates is one of many former adult educators now serving in our nation's capitol. Another is **Brenda Dann-Messier, assistant secretary of education in the Office of Vocational and Adult Education.**

In a *Washington Post* profile, the newspaper said that Dann-Messier has always been an advocate of adult education. "As the

daughter of Jewish immigrants who were denied opportunities in the U.S., she learned early on that a good education is necessary for everyone," the profile says.

That understanding was underscored at Dorcas Place—Rhode Island's largest adult education center—where Dann-Messier was an outspoken advocate for family literacy, college preparation, and vocational education.

Today, Dann-Messier is an advocate of "cradle to career" educational reform.

"We need a paradigm shift from a one-shot opportunity to lifelong learning," she says.

The assistant secretary is also an advocate of President Barack Obama's goal of the U.S. having more college grads than any other country by 2020. High school graduates will close only 35 percent of that gap, Messier notes, so adult learners will need to be among those college grads if we are to achieve that goal—and the larger one of economic vitality that comes with it.

"Certainly we want to prepare our youth, but we also have an immediate problem and those are our adults and our young people who are graduating or just about to graduate, or who have graduated or who have dropped out of school. We need to bring them back into the [postsecondary] system.


"There are 93 million adults who have limited basic skills. Of those 93 million adults, 46 million are in the workforce. They have to gain additional skills to be

able to compete with the new economy. We need to grow and flourish in this country."

EDUCATION AND PROSPERITY ARE INTERWINED

Dann-Messier's boss, **Martha Kanter, under secretary of education,** also comes from adult education. Before joining the Obama administration, Kanter held numerous teaching positions before she became chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, one of the largest community college districts in the country, serving more than 44,000 students. She also created the school's first program for students with learning disabilities.

Delivering the commencement address at Palo Alto University, Kanter talked about how education and a strong nation are intertwined. She challenged the graduates to encourage someone else to complete a college degree.

Kanter said, "If you encourage a friend, a family member, a neighbor, or even a patient to move to the next level in his or her education, if you encourage him or her to do the hard work that it takes to finish high school for those of you who will work with youth and to enter and complete college for those of you who will work with the adult population, you will be an inspiration and role model for them. You will not only make a difference in someone else's life, but you will also be helping your country." 

adult learning

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onscreen, online, on paper, and on demand.*

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KET Adult Learning features innovative adult education professionals and programs; we hope you'll get some great ideas to use in your teaching!

If you'd like to submit comments, questions or story ideas, or to request permission to reprint stories, please contact Margaret Townsley, editor, or Debra Gibson, writer, by e-mail: adulded@ket.org.

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FACES & PLACES: DAWANA MARTIN

Flex/ability makes a GED diploma possible

"I can do that."

That was Dawana Martin's immediate reaction when she happened upon a *GED Connection* program on Warner Cable one day. "I am going to do this," Martin promised herself, but she was a single mom with two teenage boys. She was also raising her brothers and a nephew in her Columbus, Ohio, home.

She had other obstacles as well. One was the timing of GED classes. That was solved with the flexibility built into *GED Connection*. Martin could watch broadcasts of *GED Connection* on TV, work online, study with the workbooks, get help at a learning center, or use any combination of these methods.

The other problem was money to purchase workbooks, but Martin qualified for a program through the Ohio Literacy Network that provides free workbooks.

Obstacles out of the way, a few months later came the "proudest day of her life" for Dawana. She received her GED.

"My son recorded the entire graduation," she recalls. "I saw him drop a few tears. I held the diploma in the air and I was like, 'We did this. We did this together.'" 📺

To read more about Dawana and her family, go to ketadultlearning.org, and click on *Faces and Places*.

