

ADULT LEARNING

QUARTERLY

Classes Encourage Camaraderie and Greater Understanding for City Employees

Many of us enjoy warm images of our past: A time when neighbors held a “cabin raising” for newlyweds; or when ordinary citizens formed “bucket brigades” to fight a fire at the general store. It was a time when people watched out for each other and helped each other, because they had to. Our neighbors were *our* family; *our* town was our community.

In 2002, especially in urban centers, community spirit may exist in pockets, but no longer as a city trademark. Civic pride is a sentiment largely abandoned in populations moving to new areas every few years, and putting down true roots nowhere.

How do we recover the pride and the sense of shared goals?

The Kentucky League of Cities and the NewCities Foundation want to help communities find their heart again. A pilot project is demonstrating one way to do that, using PBS LiteracyLink’s *Workplace Essential Skills*, produced by KET, as a tool.

“Why not start with city employees and raise their educational level?” asks Sylvia L. Lovely, Executive Director/CEO of the League. “Then the city becomes a bully pulpit for education. Make those city employees part of your (municipal) image. Cities need to be centered.”

Morehead, Kentucky Mayor Brad Collins liked the concept and agreed to pilot a series of classes for city employees. The program, based on *Workplace Essential Skills*, includes videos, workbooks and online components, and emphasizes both work and life skills. Morehead focused on reading, math and communications.

Collins taught the classes, using the teacher’s guide that comes with the package. “The guide was very good,” he notes.

“I would advocate that anyone doing this use those guides; they were invaluable.”

Participants “looked forward to the videos,” he says. “They’re humorous; employees enjoyed the situations and could identify with them. Most even liked working in the workbooks. We took an extra week and did the math together in

“They’re communicating better; there is a new camaraderie,” Collins says.

“It’s amazing how much better they understand each other’s jobs. That’s a big plus for us.”

class. (That was more effective) than assigning homework, grading it and giving the answer in class.

Working together, they could see how to get the answers.”

Collins adds that the classes are giving some participants a new incentive to study for the GED. “They’re intelligent and talented, and I’m encouraging them to go on and get the GED.”

The city offered paid time for the participants, who attended one-hour sessions each Wednesday for about 20 weeks.

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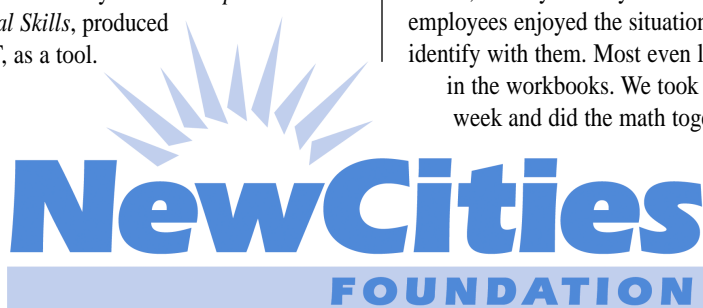
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Special Needs Query Prompted Newsletter Stories

Teachers who visit KET's new GED 2002 professional development web site find more than just an in-depth overview of the new GED exam; they find a place to ask questions—and get answers. If you click the “Talk To Us” button to submit a question or a comment, your message will be answered by KET's Joyce Probus.

“It's been exciting to hear from the 900+ GED 2002 site visitors who've sent comments and requests,” says Probus. “Grid and calculator issues spurred some of the first questions, followed by queries on scoring and administrative issues, online practice tests, and how to best use the new materials. We've enlisted experienced adult educators,

State GED administrators, and of course, the GED Testing Service and LiteracyLink sites as solid resources.


“We sometimes get questions from prospective students, and we take special care in directing them to a program where they can begin preparing for the exam. I've talked to a lot of wonderful people—it's a great web learning experience on both sides.”

Probus has received several inquiries about special accommodations for students with disabilities. One such question prompted the research that led to the stories below and at right.

Whether inquiries concern closed-captioned study aids (like those offered in the *GED*

Connection series), an overhead or talking calculator, or other special accommodations, Probus will find an answer and provide referrals to the appropriate agencies.

Since its debut last summer, more than 25,000 visitors have explored the site, and more than 800 have signed up to receive further information.

Teachers who haven't visited the site in awhile will be pleased to find all of the units up and running; teachers who have never visited the site will be pleased to find such a rich resource available free at www.ket.org/GED2002. 

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Special Accommodations Help GED Candidates Demonstrate Knowledge, Skills

Every GED candidate should have a fair chance to demonstrate his/her knowledge and skills. But for some who try to take the test under standard conditions, a disability may make it impossible to show their true potential.

Learning disabilities can affect the ability to store, process, and produce information, or to read, write, speak or do math. In addition, physical disabilities may affect the ability to sit for long periods of time, to write using a pencil and paper, or to read standard type sizes. Emotional disabilities may cause the individual to be distracted easily, or to distract others.

To address such needs, the GED Testing Service offers accommodations for adults with *well-documented* physical and/or learning disabilities, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and emotional or psychological disabilities. Accommodations may include: an audiocassette, large print or Braille edition of the test; extended time or a private room; a talking calculator; etc. There is no additional charge for special accommodations.

“The whole goal of the accommodation system is to find ways to help candidates;

to allow people who are *qualified* to have every opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge.” explains Joe Macaluso, ED.S., State Administrator of the GED Testing Program in Alabama. “Candidates with disabilities process information differently, which means they learn and demonstrate knowledge differently.” The disability may not be curable, but there are “ways to accommodate the disability so that the individuals have every opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned.”

The accommodations system seeks a balance—“helping those who genuinely need help, but not giving anyone an unfair advantage. This program is designed to put everyone on an equal footing,” he notes.

Each request for an accommodation will be considered on an individual basis and must document the disability. Form L-15, for learning disabilities and/or ADHD; or Form SA-001, for physical, emotional or psychological disabilities can assist a candidate in documenting that the disability involved interferes substantially with the learning process.

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Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Helps Learners with Disabilities Become Independent

Being as independent as possible is one of the goals for students at the E. H. Gentry Facility in Talladega, Alabama.

E.H. Gentry is part of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB), explains Patty Harper, a Communications Instructor at the facility. AIDB includes four schools, each with its own campus; a healthcare facility; Alabama Industries for the Blind; a special equestrian program; and Regional Centers in eight cities, each providing services ranging from painting classes for seniors to home visits for parents of sensory-impaired infants.



E. H. Gentry primarily serves sensory-impaired adults, age 16 and older, many with secondary disabilities including orthopedic impairments, learning disabilities, mental retardation, or a combination of those, Harper says.

When a student is accepted to Gentry, assessments of educational, emotional, mental and physical factors form the basis for a plan designed especially for that individual. Every person is different, and each has unique needs, goals, and ambitions, Harper explains. Classes are small to allow more individualized instruction, and each learner advances at his/her own speed. A facility case manager and a state rehabilitation counselor follow each student's progress and serve as an advocate for that student. Social workers help students with financial and personal matters that might otherwise hinder the student's progress while at Gentry.

GED Preparation

GED preparation, through the adult education program, is one of many services at E.H. Gentry, through both day and evening classes. Classes also are offered in Mobile and Birmingham at AIDB Regional Centers. Evening classes are primarily for community

residents who have sensory impairments, and are interested in pursuing a high school diploma. Learning aids include closed-captioned videos, with *GED Connection* soon to join that lineup. Alabama has purchased a statewide license and hopes to have the programs aired on Alabama public television in the near future.

Other aids include electronic magnification of on-screen text and voice output that "reads" on-screen text to the student, large screen computers, electronic notetakers and personal data assistants, Braille books, large print text, and sign language. Teachers also familiarize students with the Casio® *fx-260 SOLAR* calculator and the Orion T134 talking calculator, required for the GED 2002 test.

When test time comes, application is made to the GED examiner for any special accommodations needed by each student—extended time, audio tape, large print, Braille copy, a scribe, etc. The test is administered at Gentry and sent to the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa for scoring.

Full Range of Services

GED preparation is only one of a complete range of services focusing on successful living at work and at home.

- Communications classes—Braille, sign language, money management, vocabulary building, script writing (helping the visually impaired person produce his signature), etc.
- Independent Living classes—grocery shopping, comparative shopping, cooking, personal hygiene, labeling of clothes, family life, and money management, coin identification, and techniques for folding bills to distinguish denominations by the fold or shape.
- Transitional living—When appropriate, students in Independent Living classes move to transitional living apartments to practice what they are learning.
- College preparation—Students who qualify may enroll in freshman level classes at a local community college. A college prep program is offered in the summer for high school level students who are sensory impaired.
- Recreation Therapy—Exercise programs, arts and crafts, and ceramics classes.
- Job Transitioning—Job coaches help the graduate learner transition from school to real world employment.


- Vocational training—Auto body, business enterprise program, business education, carpentry, custodial services, food services, laundry and dry cleaning, vending machine repair, welding. Assistive technology for the visually and/or hearing impaired includes voice output, electronic magnification, and purse-like computer note takers that allow the student to input data in Braille. "If Helen Keller were alive today, she might use a refreshable Braille display," Harper notes. This allows the learner to input with a keyboard or 6-key entry, with the data displayed in Braille, so that the learner can check his/her work.
- Work adjustment—Staying on task, clocking in, reporting to a supervisor, respecting another's work space, etc. are learned by actually having jobs in which students can be paid by how much they produce. Such contracted jobs include packaging products, cutting wood stakes, building birdhouses and others.
- Leisure Time Activities—Shopping trips, sporting events, dining out and other activities planned for students.
- Giving back—through their own Student Government Association, students provide Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets for needy individuals, and collect donations for the victims of September 11th, and other causes.

Satisfying Career

Harper recalls two visually impaired young ladies, both high school dropouts. They enrolled in Gentry's adult education classes, eventually got their GED certificates, completed college prep courses for two semesters and then returned home to enroll in a local community college.

Another visually impaired student passed her GED and has enrolled in Gentry's Business Education program. A hearing impaired student passed her GED and plans to enroll in a community college cosmetology program. A young man, blind and wheelchair bound, is learning Braille so that he can enter the GED program.

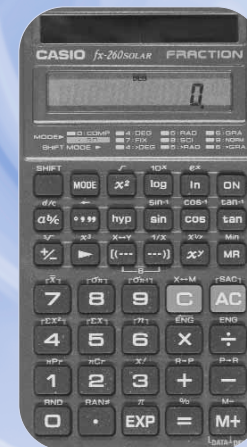
Working with the students is satisfying on many levels, she notes: "It's not just that we teach the students, we also learn from them; things like determination and perseverance.

"Our staff is very dedicated," she adds. "You either love this kind of work or leave it." 

math teachers

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Six States Find Creative Ways To Make Adult Educ

Since the release of *Workplace Essential Skills* in August 1999 and *GED Connection* in August 2001, many states have purchased statewide licenses to make the two series widely available to adult learners and adult learning centers within their reach.

Some act primarily as broadcasters, some serve as distributors of the materials, and some form partnerships to deliver and support instruction. Learners in all of these states benefit greatly from the generosity of the organization that acquired the statewide license.

The following profiles are snapshots of six states with very different ways of using and sharing the two series.

Georgia

Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) includes a nine-station television network, as well as Georgia Public Radio and PeachStar Education Services. PeachStar provides programming for all grade levels, including post-secondary, to 2000+ public libraries, state and technical colleges, universities, public schools and correctional facilities across the state. PeachStar also offers staff development training for teachers and other educators through various state agencies and local school systems.

Included in PeachStar's lineup are *GED Connection* and *Workplace Essential Skills*, both produced by KET as part of the PBS LiteracyLink project.

Cooperation with the state library system resulted in seminars focusing on the availability of *GED Connection* and *Workplace Essential Skills*, and ways of using the two series. Each local program provides student support and supplementary print materials. Facilitators and adult learners also are referred to the LiteracyLinkSM site (www.pbs.org/literacy), where they can work with online exercises for both series, and take GED practice tests. LiteracyLink is "really valuable—there is no cost to the learner," says Patrice Weaver, Project Manager for GPB. "That's one reason why we're excited to work with the libraries" and increase awareness that *GED Connection* and *Workplace Essential Skills* are available to Georgians.



Historically, the network had offered *GED ON TV*, also produced by KET, "so when the two new series came out, we were excited and in a unique position to deliver them. We didn't consider any others (educational series) because of our (positive) relationship with KET and with other PBS stations," Weaver says.

Maine

The Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation (MPBC) has formed a partnership with the Maine departments of Education and Labor, according to Kim Lipp, MPBC Special Projects Director.

The partnership outreach—CAREER AND LEARNING CONNECTIONS—grew from a series of discussions with Education and Labor to identify new ways to reach more people who need their services. Maine is a rural state with geographically widespread and sometimes isolated populations, explains Rhonda Morin, MPBC Media Coordinator. "We knew we *could* get to those homes."

MPBC had heard about *GED Connection* and *Workplace Essential Skills* through KET promotional information and looked at preview packages.



"We didn't want to *replace* services of the centers, but rather find tools that could enhance Department of Education and Department of Labor services, and this seemed like a good fit," Lipp says. "We brought (the two series) to department representatives and they were excited about the content."

Daily broadcasts of both series began on January 7, 2002. Through those broadcasts, "we can enhance what Education is doing with instructor-led Adult Education services, and what Labor is doing in its 23 CareerCentersSM throughout the state," Lipp notes. "We can raise awareness" of CareerCenter services and Adult Education Services, and (Education and Labor) can use the broadcasts as teaching aids.

Viewers call MPBC's 800 number and receive a packet including contact information for CareerCenter and Adult Education Services sites. For those who do not live near a site, instructors or counselors are available by phone or e-mail.

Calls to MPBC, as well as calls or walk-in visits at Education and Labor centers are being tracked. Ongoing analysis will allow the three partners to adjust procedures as needed.

In April, PBS instructors will train Education and Labor representatives on using the series tapes, and complimentary workbooks and online components; and the department representatives will train each other on CareerCenters and Adult Education Services. "It's a great opportunity (for state employees) to bond and learn how they can support each other," Morin notes.

New Jersey

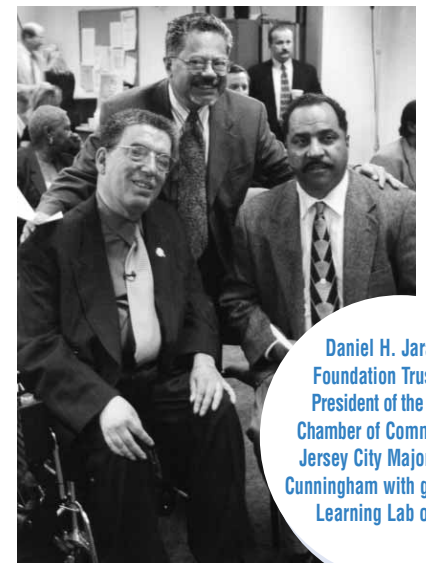
New Jersey's adult learners enjoy all of the advantages of community-based learning centers and digital TV educational programming. Through cooperative efforts of NJN Public Television (NJN), the New Jersey Department of Labor (DOL) and the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE), learners are able to pursue everything from literacy and basic math to GED and ESL studies and workplace readiness skills enhancement.



Elizabeth G. Christopherson, NJN Executive Director and three graduates of the NJ Workplace Literacy Program at the Newark Housing Authority.

"Education is at the heart of our mission," says NJN Executive Director and CEO Elizabeth Christopherson, "and we are committed to using our resources to address adult literacy."

The needs are almost as varied as the population: the high schooler or the displaced worker who needs to hone workplace skills; the learner moving from welfare to work, the skilled employee who needs a GED in order to qualify for promotion, and many more. NJN's outreach is designed to foster, in a variety of ways, the opportunity for every learner to succeed.



Daniel H. Jara, NJN Foundation Trustee and President of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Jersey City Mayor Glenn D. Cunningham with guests at the Learning Lab opening.

Learning opportunities include:

- Fourteen community-based learning sites, where learners study with *Workplace Essential Skills*, *GED Connection* and other video materials at individual computers, selecting the episodes they wish to view or review, and working at their own pace. Each center has video and multimedia software stored on a server, and individuals can access the material at individual computer stations. Some centers choose to use dubs supplied through NJN, others access via special channels, thanks to digital technology. Each center has facilitators/ instructors to assist learners.
- NJN also broadcasts *GED Connection*, *Workplace Essential Skills*, *Math Basics*, *Crossroads Café*, and other educational programs for use at home or in instructor-led classroom settings.
- Another component of NJN's Workplace Literacy Program includes industry-specific and community-specific programming produced by NJN. For example, the daily series *Jobcast* is digitally televised and web cast. The show features job-hunting tips, stories of successful job searches, employment opportunities, master classes and more. The daily show can be used by individuals or by classes as a basis for group discussion. Once a month, NJN presents a monthly call-in edition of *Jobcast* to answer such questions as what clothing and other resources might be needed for a job interview.

ation Materials Available

"We customize according to the needs of the individual and the needs of the community," Christopherson adds. When you see a proud young mother moving from welfare to work, or one of hundreds of other individual success stories, that makes the NJN staff feel very proud. Success stories are "very moving," she says.

To learn more about NJN capabilities and services, visit www.njn.net/workforce.

Rhode Island

WSBE Channel 36 serves southeastern New England from its base in Providence, R.I., and broadcasts both *GED Connection* and *Workplace Essential Skills*.

Many learners use the *GED Connection* telecasts as the centerpiece of a home-study program. Testing is done at various sites by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

Workplace Essential Skills is seen as a vehicle for "creating interest" in the learner/viewer, according to LeRoy Czaskos, WSBE Director of Educational Services. Inquirers are directed to the State Department of Education or local agencies using the series and its complementary print and online materials.

Educational pages on WSBE's web site (www.wsbe.org/Education/index.html) give specific information about fees; names, addresses and phone numbers of appropriate agencies; and references to the PBS LiteracyLink™ site and KET's 800 number. Because people access the web page from many parts of the nation, WSBE also seeks out local programs in other states, when appropriate, to ensure that the inquirer will find educational assistance close to home.

In addition to the web site, Czaskos and his colleagues spread the educational word in person at shopping mall "Education Expos"; exhibits at teacher conferences, and meetings at local schools.

State statistics on those achieving the GED are not broken down to identify learners studying via TV vs. those in other programs; but Czaskos is eager to get feedback indicating the success of WSBE efforts:

"People will write and thank us (saying things like), if it hadn't been on TV, I wouldn't have gotten the GED certificate, or the college credit, etc." Such messages reinforce WSBE's dedication and its belief that:

"Behind Every GED Certificate Is A Story Of Courage And Perseverance."

Idaho

Idaho Public Television (IdahoPTV) is airing both *GED Connection* and *Workplace Essential Skills*, according to Director of Learning Services Gens Johnson.



Staffers from the five-station public television network have worked with correctional education teachers, showing how both video series could be used in class settings. Similarly, the network is training instructors in Adult Basic Education centers around the state, in partnership with the State of Idaho Professional Technical Division.

Surveys later this spring will take a closer look at how teachers are using both series in a variety of settings, and what results they achieve.

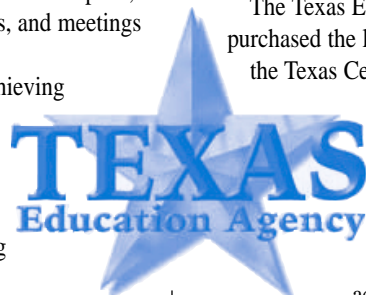
The network web site, www.idahoptv.org, offers information for teachers on various educational video materials and how these materials can fit into individual curricula. For adult learners, there is information on getting a job or entering college; and on various telecourses, including *GED Connection* and *Workplace Essential Skills*.

Texas

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) purchased the lease and worked with the Texas Center for Adult Literacy and

Learning to provide tapes of *GED Connection* to any non-profit local programs or Community Based Organizations (CBOs) requesting them, according to Dr. Shelia

Rosenberg with TEA's Adult & Community Education Division.




"*GED Connection* was being talked about, and we gave Dr. Rosenberg a heads up," says Harriet V. Smith, Materials/Research Coordinator with the Center, based at Texas A&M University.

The two agencies thought that a lease would be "a good deal for resources for the new (GED) test." Many local adult education programs are small and use volunteer teachers, "so we're always looking for good materials. (Once we had the tapes) we wanted to make the materials available to the most programs at the least cost." In addition to small local programs, large adult education co-ops, correctional programs, Even Start and others have requested the tapes, Smith notes.

The Center is the State Literacy Resource and usually loans materials. In this case, tapes were provided for the cost of duplication.

Some programs broadcast their tapes through closed systems; others obtain multiple sets for each learning center. "People find (the series) very helpful," Smith notes.

TEA also is facilitating GED 2002 training for trainers of teachers throughout the state, focusing on instructional strategies; and has purchased calculators for various local programs, Dr. Rosenberg adds. *GED Connection* is seen as a useful supplement to classroom teaching. 

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New workplace-readiness series from PBS LiteracyLink®

NewCities Foundation

On February 16, 2001, the Kentucky League of Cities announced the launch of NewCities Foundation, an innovative organization with key goals of building prosperity, helping organize community revitalization and taking real action in achieving a high quality of life and work in our cities and towns.

With this goal in mind, NewCities and Kentucky Educational Television (KET) partnered to create CitySmart, a program designed to raise the level of education and workforce skills throughout Kentucky cities.

KET created *Workplace Essential Skills* as part of the PBS LiteracyLink project through a grant from the US Department of Education Star Schools Program. The series includes 25 videotapes supplemented by workbooks, and an interactive web site, www.pbs.org/literacy. The program is designed to help adults achieve career goals and succeed on the job.

Participation Requirements

- Cities must agree to encourage all employees to participate.
- Cities must allow for up to a year for all employees to participate.
- Cities must provide necessary time during the regular workweek for employees to participate.
- Cities must provide a Team Leader from each division to be trained on-site by KET.
- Cities must purchase the necessary tapes and workbooks and provide the necessary technical equipment to conduct the program.
- Cities must agree to develop, with the help of NewCities, a recognition and rewards program
- Cities must make an effort to promote the project within their community and region

NewCities will serve as the coordinator between KET and the participating city and will advise the city throughout the entire project. The Foundation will help establish benchmarks for measuring success and will provide promotional materials for the participants, community and media. NewCities will also give special recognition to each participating city and employee at the Kentucky League of Cities Convention held annually in September.

Classes Encourage Camaraderie and Greater Understanding for City Employees

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"We thought we'd have five or six participants," he recalls; "but we had 15 (out of a total of 60). Public works, administration and the police were represented. Within a month, a couple more joined. When our police department saw the results, they started (sessions) and 15 officers are participating."

To date, 27 of the 60 city employees have been involved, and all will be recognized at a special dinner this spring.


"They're communicating better; there is a new camaraderie," Collins says. "It's amazing how much better they understand each other's jobs. That's a big plus for us. (The courses) made our city employees a more cohesive group."

"We're considering offering the classes next year, as well," he adds. Considering all the benefits, "this is a win-win situation for everyone."

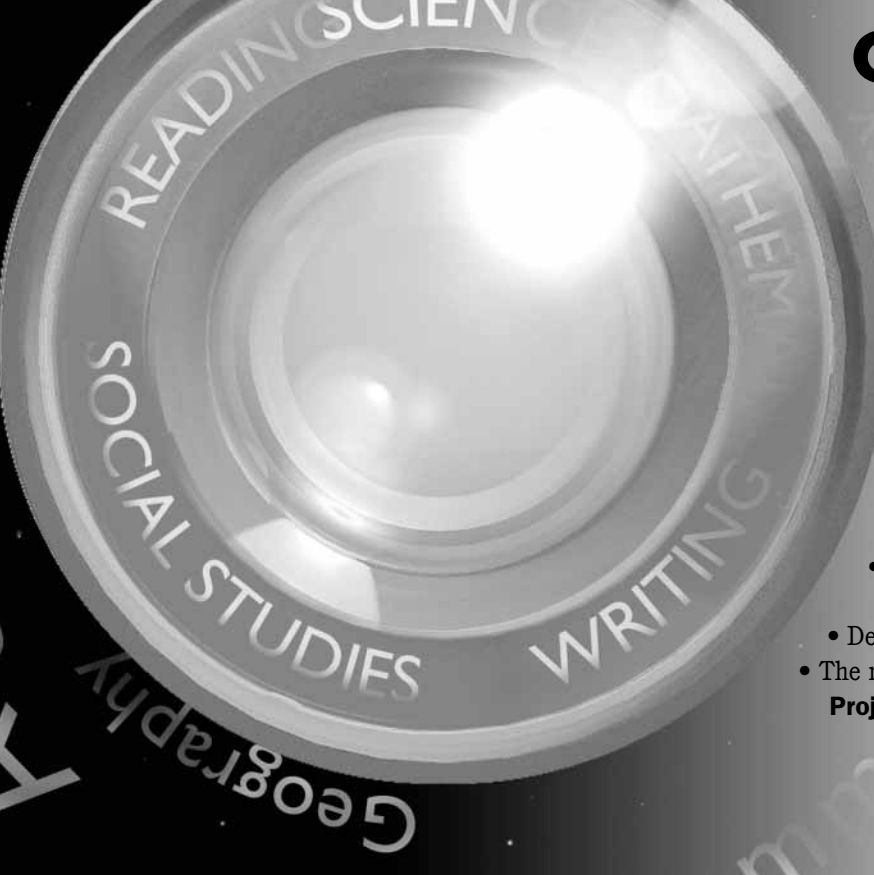
"We wanted to get Morehead's ideas and experiences to help other communities use this program," says Dr. Jacqueline Korengel, Director, Training and Workforce Development at KET. "We're trying to learn from them." The type of success that Morehead experienced can encourage other cities, large organizations and businesses to

offer programs for their own employee groups. "Eventually, that improves the skills of the whole community."

A city can construct attractive buildings, Lovely adds; but to become a cohesive entity, "we need people involved, and it starts right in the heart of the city." People

benefiting from this type of program have a stake in their cities; a stake in their future. 

NewCities Chair Virginia Fox, Mayor Robin Cooper of Paintsville, NewCities President Sylvia Lovely, Dean David Mohney of the University of Kentucky College of Architecture and Mayor David Armstrong of Louisville helped launch NewCities on Feb. 16.



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VUB: Helping Veterans Develop Personal Potential

Members of America's armed forces often delay their education in order to serve their fellow citizens. When they come home, they may need support to identify and achieve educational goals.

Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) provides that support.

"After they have participated for at least a semester, they may be ready to enter post-secondary education and succeed, but they may also continue to improve their skills for a full year," according to Nell Engeler, a VUB Academic Counselor at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Not every veteran seeks a four-year college degree, she adds; but whether VUB learners go on to a community college; a technical school, or a four-year college—all are *successes* when they achieve their goal.

"He said so many ideas opened up to him through education"

Not Typical Students

"Veterans are not typical students," adds Vickie Richardson, a VUB English teacher. "They already have something special in them, because they were in the military. (And) things the average veteran has been through can be a real help. For example, they have taken orders for years—there is a real sense of self-motivation. A class assignment is to be *done*; no complaining."

But veterans also are adults who need to know why particular studies will help them.

If such questions involve literature, Richardson points out that literature reveals creative, effective ways of using words. "We all strive to be good communicators; it is a necessary life skill." In studying literature, students can observe different methods of communicating ideas, feelings and experiences, and thereby enhance their own skills.

Moreover, "literature has to do with life and analyzing. I want them to get to the point where they will question others' opinions. Literature is an opinion. Just because (a famous author) said it doesn't make it so." Students might feel that no one would value their ideas compared with those of a famous author, she notes; but "we're all ordinary people living extraordinary lives. I want to get them to question, to think freely,

so when they get to a university, they're not intimidated. Our veterans come with so much *life* experience," as opposed to extensive knowledge in a particular field. "I want them to see how special they are."

When the work gets tough, she also reminds them that they've already demonstrated their endurance and perseverance. "Yes, it's hard. But you can do hard things."

Eligibility Criteria

For the Arkansas VUB program and 44 others in the nation, all funded by the U.S. Department of Education, several eligibility criteria apply. Among them are low income, indicating lack of opportunity; and/or first generation potential college graduate, Engeler notes.

The family without a history of post-secondary education may not hold learning in high esteem, Engeler explains. The learner may think "just getting a job and working hard is enough." He/she may perceive that post-secondary education is unreachable; may not know about scholarships or how to apply for them; how to navigate a college campus, or whom to contact. VUB can help.

The first step is a three-hour assessment of:

- **academic needs:** "We use the ASSET, a standardized test that measure levels of achievement in writing, reading and numerical skills; and a Learning Style Inventory that shows their preference for either visual, auditory, tactile or kinesthetic learning. These materials help determine where we need to take them to be ready to take an entrance exam at the school of their choice," Engeler says. Today, the armed services require a GED certificate or high school diploma for entrance; but veterans from the early 1970s or the Vietnam era may come to VUB with neither. VUB links such veterans with adult education centers close to their homes and coordinates with the centers until GED certificates are earned. "Then the veteran returns to VUB classes to further prepare for post-secondary education," she notes.

- **personal situations:** "We want to understand their personal situation—to see if they're in a place to *concentrate* on school," Engeler explains. "What's standing in their way? It's not their brain power." VUB works with community agencies to help the single mother with a rebellious teen; the man who needs a job while going to school; the recruit who is homeless, etc.

- **career goals:** "We use the Myers Briggs Personality Type Indicator," Engeler says. "They learn more about themselves: what their preferences are, the way they take in information and make decisions." Recruits' interests also are explored, all with a view to helping them set viable career goals. "Some know exactly what they want to do," Engeler notes. "But I ask them to talk with professors and other professionals in that field, see what it's like to get a degree in that field of study and what kind of job potential is available."

Once a goal is written, Engeler and the veteran devise a set of steps to reach it. "Then, we help them take those steps—with simple encouragement, help in applying for federal financial aid and admission, and/or searching for scholarship opportunities." Not all veterans have the G.I. Bill, she notes; so VUB helps analyze each financial situation and refers to the appropriate agency, such as a free credit counseling service.

For most, action steps include brushing up on English, math, science and foreign languages. Courses are arranged in 12-week blocks. The requirement for English and math is six hours per week for each subject.

This college-style schedule helps veterans see what the routine is like. "Someone might think, 'I can work full-time and go to school for 12 hours.' They may not know what it's like. But by the time they complete 12 weeks, they're getting the idea," Engeler says.

Engeler and her colleagues schedule classes for each semester, arrange for classrooms, hire teachers and "plug in" workshops on such topics as how to apply to a post-secondary institution; taking standardized tests or entrance exams; dealing with test anxiety, and others.

Sometimes, veterans drop out owing to the time commitment or personal issues.

"I never give up," Engeler says. "I'll call and ask how it's going; send notes in the mail. I encourage them to remember their goals—part of the reason for contacting VUB was to further their education with more career potential in the future."

Life-Changing Results

The work is satisfying. Engeler recalls one veteran from a small town who had suffered a devastating divorce. Through VUB, he reached his goal: a degree in criminal justice. "He said so many ideas opened up to him through education," she notes. He was grateful

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Shipping News... from KET

It's not about Kevin Spacey or life in

Newfoundland; but for


adult education programs on a budget, the shipping news from KET may be nearly as enticing. During the month of May, KET will offer **free shipping** on any order of GED Connection™, Workplace Essential Skills, or GED en Español materials that includes 25 sets of workbooks or more.

Orders must come directly through KET and must be accompanied by payment or a purchase order between May 1 and May 31. Please call KET at (800) 354-9067 for more information.

[Editor's note: We couldn't resist playing off the title of the new film, "Shipping News," based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Annie Proulx. We hope you did or will enjoy both the book and the movie. We also hope you'll enjoy our special offer.]

Special Accommodations Help GED candidates Demonstrate Knowledge, Skills
continued from page 2

“Often, a candidate already has records; he or she may have been diagnosed with ADHD in school, for example. In that case, the school records can be submitted with the form,” Macaluso says. People who have never been diagnosed will need physical and/or psychological testing to identify the problem; and documentation on the health professional’s letterhead. Forms should be submitted to the appropriate GED Chief Examiner in the student’s home area at least one month before the scheduled testing date.


GED administrators don’t make diagnoses, Macaluso stresses. Rather, they review the documentation, and confirm that the candidate has the potential to perform successfully on the test with accommodations in place. They also confirm that the accommodation requested is appropriate for the disability in question. 

To learn more about special accommodations, visit the American Council on Education web site at www.acenet.edu/calec/ged/disability-accom-TT.html, or visit the GED Testing Service web site at www.gedtest.org.

VUB: Helping Veterans Develop Personal Potential
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for the “pure education”; not just the foundation for a better job, but “the opening of the mind.”

Richardson recalls two students in a homeless shelter. “They had dreams,” she says, “and found their way to us. Now, both are in the University of Arkansas.” Another student, a divorced single mother struggling to make ends meet, has now graduated with a degree in social work.

Richardson, Engeler and their VUB colleagues are proud to be part of such a worthwhile program. “But the veterans are the ones who do it,” Engeler stresses. “We can throw them the rope, but they have to grab it. We see a real metamorphosis—from veteran to student to career success.” 

For more information or to locate a VUB program in your area, visit the web site at www.NAVUBPP.org. Engeler’s assessment tools include the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator (Katharine C. Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., ©1993 by Peter B. Myers and Katharine D. Myers), and the Learning Style Inventory, Jeffrey R. Barsche, Ed.D., 1996.

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