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# FIELD NOTES

by and for the Massachusetts  
Adult Education Community

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cómo Empecé a Formar Parte de ABE y Por Qué Me Quedé Allí <i>Isilma Morales</i> .....	3
How I Got Into ABE and Why I Stay There <i>Isilma Morales</i> .....	3
Adult Ed by Way of Store 24 <i>Janet Isserlis</i> .....	4
From Architecture to ABE <i>Bob Bickerton</i> .....	4
ABE by Way of Aix-en-Provence <i>Mina Reddy</i> .....	5
From Heilongjiang Province to Boston's Chinatown <i>Shixian Sheng</i> .....	6
How I Got Here <i>Jeri Bayer</i> .....	6
"I Am the Product of an Adult Literacy Program" <i>Ernest Best</i> .....	7
Adult Ed As a Lifelong Learning Career... <i>Sally Gabb</i> .....	8
I Never Wanted to Be a Teacher, But My Car Engine Caught on Fire <i>Joan Reissman</i> .....	9
Teacher, Interrupted <i>Alice Zujewski</i> .....	10
Piano Tuning, Poetry, and ABE <i>Deborah Schwartz</i> .....	11
Mocha Chip and Math Class <i>Kenny Tamarkin</i> .....	12
Volunteer Tutor to Program Coordinator <i>Nancy Sheridan</i> .....	12
I Don't Want to Do This Anymore <i>Richard Goldberg</i> .....	13
Yahoo! Yahoo! I Have a Job! <i>Beverly Gonsalves</i> .....	14
Thirty Years in the Field <i>William Stickney</i> .....	15
R-E-S-P-E-C-T <i>Wendy Mongeau</i> .....	16
New England ABE-to-College Transition Project <i>Connie Patton</i> .....	17
Looking for Something Different <i>Katy Roberts</i> .....	19

*Special Summer  
Issue: How I Got  
Into the Field of  
ABE and Why I  
Stay There*



*How many people do you know who planned to work in adult basic education? How many people do you talk to in your everyday life who even understand what adult basic education means? Our field is multidisciplinary. It draws educators from varied backgrounds—the arts, sciences, math, education, poetry, music, linguistics. Teachers come to ABE classrooms from Peace Corps gigs in Liberia, from the Civil Rights Movement in the South, from K-12 classrooms in Fall River. Their majors in college range from astrophysics to zoology. And they bring with them passion, conviction, commitment, and creativity. How do they find themselves working in adult basic education? And why do they stay?*

*The stories in this issue of Field Notes offer a glimpse into the paths people have traveled to work in our field. Please read on.*

# FOREWORD

*Some of us arrive in ABE by accident, some by luck, and a few by planned deliberation. Our cars burn down in the middle of nowhere and we need work, we are stranded in foreign countries, we have babies and need part-time positions. What we have in common is the revelation that working in adult basic education programs and communities is probably the most invigorating work we have done. We make connections with each other and our students. We struggle together to get and keep funding. We advocate for immigrants' and workers' rights. And even though some of us may not have trained to become literacy or ESL teachers, we have found ways to prepare ourselves to do this work, and do it well.*

*For example, even though my own entry into ABE was rather unconventional (I literally hitchhiked my way in, but that's another story), I was able to connect my background in writing, poetry, and composition theory into teaching English as a second language. Like many of us who found our way into ABE in curious ways, I joined professional organizations like TESOL, attended and presented at national conferences, took courses, read the professional literature, and shared with colleagues. All of these things helped (and still help) me to develop as an educator and filled in my gaps in areas like language acquisition, sociolinguistics, participatory practice, and the variety of methodologies available to create meaningful classroom practice.*

*Teachers in our state have been lucky. Over the last ten years, Massachusetts has been in the foreground in professionalizing the field of adult basic education. Adult and Community Learning Services at the Massachusetts Department of Education has made professional development and practitioner support a major priority. They have earmarked substantial funding for SABES, the System for Adult Basic Education Support, and the five regional resource centers across the state have strengthened the infrastructure through which teachers can become stronger and better prepared practitioners. From workshops on methodology to teacher research projects, SABES has provided a mechanism for teachers to build on their own skills and interests while becoming more refined in their classroom practice. All of this work translates into more effective education for our students—people who come to our programs for ESOL, GED, family literacy, external diplomas, and the other services we provide. This nonformal system works well: it welcomes practitioners and administrators from various backgrounds and offers them continual, responsive professional development along the way.*

## **Field Notes Mission Statement and Editorial Policy**

### **Mission**

*Field Notes* is an adult basic education (ABE) quarterly, theme-based newsletter. It is designed to share innovative and reliable practices, resources, and information relating to ABE. We attempt to publish a range of voices about important educational issues, and we are especially interested in publishing new writers, writers of color, and writers who represent the full range of diversity of learners and practitioners in the field.

*Field Notes* is also a place to provide support and encouragement to new and experienced adult basic education practitioners (ABE, ESOL, GED, ADP, Family Literacy, Corrections, Workplace Education, and others) in the process of writing about their ideas and practice. Editorial support is always provided to any writer who requests it. Teachers, administrators, counselors, volunteers, and support staff are welcome to write for *Field Notes*.

### **Our Funder**

*Field Notes* is published by the System for Adult Basic Educational Support (SABES) and funded by Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS), Massachusetts Department of Education. The Central Resource Center (CRC) of SABES is located at 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210.

### **Our Editorial Policy**

Unsolicited manuscripts to *Field Notes* are welcome. If you have an idea for an article or wish to submit a letter to the editor, contact Lenore Balliro, editor, by phone at 617-482-9485, by email at <lballiro2000@yahoo.com>, or by mail at 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. Submission deadlines for upcoming issues are published in each issue of *Field Notes*.

Opinions expressed in *Field Notes* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editor, SABES, or its funders. We do reserve the right to decline publication. We will not publish material that is sexist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory.

### **Our Reprint Policy**

Articles published in *Field Notes* may be reprinted in any publication as long as they are credited to the author and *Field Notes*.

Editor: Lenore Balliro  
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# Cómo Empecé a Formar Parte de ABE y Por Qué Me Quedé Allí

Por ISILMA MORALES

La enseñanza fue la profesión de preferencia en mi vida. Tengo las credenciales de profesora de educación media y superior; pero me especialicé en la enseñanza de Español y de Inglés como segundo idioma.

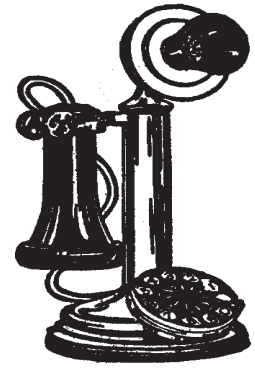
En Boston, obtuve una posición de profesora de GED en una agencia de la comunidad. Eso era tan diferente de lo que yo había enseñado por más de 28 años en mi tierra natal. Fue una experiencia diferente pero muy estimulante: Venir de un lugar donde la palabra minoría no tiene el mismo significado como se entiende en este país y en donde los jóvenes privilegiados a los que enseñé

tenían todos los medios para obtener el éxito, a diferencia de un lugar en donde los jóvenes atraviesan por tantos problemas para salir adelante, mi nuevo trabajo tomó un giro de 360 grados.

Ayudar a los estudiantes a obtener el GED, no es solamente conocer las materias que se han de enseñar y las técnicas de enseñanza que se necesitan para transmitir conocimientos, sino la entera comprensión de las profundas necesidades socio económicas y psicológicas de los participantes. Para mí, además de ayudarlos con el material de estudio, la enseñanza se volvió más en un aprendizaje para encontrar maneras de motivar a los participantes a quedarse en el

programa, ayudarlos a reforzar su auto-estima, su deseo de volverse independientes económicamente, en fin, a triunfar. En ese afán, terminé identificándome con los participantes con los que me sentí afectivamente ligada.

Ahora trabajo para la Massachusetts Adult Literacy Hotline que me da la oportunidad de servir a aquéllos que buscan afanosamente programas para comenzar o continuar preparándose y me siento satisfecha de poder darles la información que necesitan para encontrar oportunidades educativas en sus comunidades. Me hace sentir bien.



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## How I Got Into ABE and Why I Stay There

By ISILMA MORALES

Teaching has been the career of choice of my life. I have credentials as a K-12 bilingual teacher, who specialized in teaching Spanish to nonnative learners and ESL to Spanish speakers.

In Boston, I got a GED teaching position in Jamaica Plain. That was all very different from what I had been doing for more than 28 years back in my native country. Quite a different experience: coming from a place where the concept of minority has not much meaning and where the place I worked the learners were young and privileged who had all the means to succeed, to

a place where young people were struggling to make it, felt like a 360 degree turn.

Teaching the GED did not only require knowing your subject and teaching techniques but also a thorough understanding of the socio-economic and deep human psychological needs of the participants. Besides helping learners with their subjects, teaching became more finding ways on how to motivate them to gain confidence, self esteem, desire to become more economically independent, in other words, to succeed. In doing that, I identified myself with the people I served, affectionally tied to them.

Working for the Adult Literacy Hotline gives me the opportunity to be in touch with those who want to start or continue learning. More and more young people are seeking literacy programs and more volunteers are willing to join. The satisfaction I get from giving them the information they need to find literacy resources available and educational opportunities in their communities is gratifying. It makes me feel good.

*Isilma Morales is the hotline coordinator at the SABES Central Resource Center. She can be reached at <imorales@worlded.org>.*



## Adult Ed by Way of Store 24

By JANET ISSERLIS

Adult education came to me in 1980 while I was working as a cashier at Store 24 in Providence. Bill Shuey, director of Project Persona, a program that taught ESOL and cultural orientation to new arrivals to the U.S., bought his newspaper there every morning during my shift. Aside from my aspirations as a cashier, I was also pursuing a degree at the Rhode Island School of Design, thinking about teaching art and theatre. One thing led to another; within three weeks of graduation I began work as a volunteer at Persona. By fall, I was at Persona as a part-time employee. Between 1980 and 1992 I held a variety of jobs there—teacher, coordinator, curriculum

developer, researcher. I finally left in 1992 to go work in Vancouver, British Columbia.

I was blessed at the time I began by colleagues who were dedicated to the work and by funding that enabled the project to run five days a week, from morning to afternoon. (Part of the funding stream was enacted by the Refugee Resettlement Act of 1980).

The first class I taught was on reproductive health. I drew a huge outline of a woman's body, covering the reproductive organs with a paper that dropped away to reveal the reproductive organs underneath. Who could decode a graphic like that? No one, but they let me stay on anyway, and aside from periodic returns to

the food service industry, (as a caterers' drone) I've been working in adult education ever since.

*Janet Isserlis is the director of Literacy Resources Rhode Island. She can be reached at <[janet\\_isslerlis@brown.edu](mailto:janet_isslerlis@brown.edu)>.*

*Editor's note: Janet, who received a graduate degree from Brown in literacy studies, was also a recent National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) fellow. Her work on women, literacy, and violence can be seen at <<http://www.brown.edu/screen.html>>.*

## From Architecture to ABE

By BOB BICKERTON

I was an undergraduate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) majoring in architecture when I got a work-study job at a place called the Education Warehouse in Cambridge. I was hired by Hanna (then Arlene) Fingeret, who some of you may know as an extraordinarily passionate and creative adult educator who's written prolifically on topics near and dear to the hearts of many of us. What you may not know is that she was previously an aerospace major, also at MIT! Having come from a blue-collar family with a lot of time "invested" in the streets of NYC, I didn't fit the profile of the

typical MIT student. As a result, my interests often gravitated to what was and wasn't working for people who



were poor and working class, which helped also lead to a heavy involvement in community organizing. After MIT, the combination of my joy with teaching in ABE/literacy (I found myself working 40+ hours/

week in my 20 hour part-time job), along with what I was doing as an organizer, made it clear that this was the career for me. After a stint working part time at three ABE programs simultaneously, I finally lucked out and landed a full-time job at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge. Although I've had bill collectors chasing after me for many of the past 31 years in this field, I wouldn't change a thing.

*Bob Bickerton is the director of Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) at the Department of Education. He can be reached at <[rbickerton@doe.mass.edu](mailto:rbickerton@doe.mass.edu)>.*

# ABE By Way of Aix-en-Provence

By MINA REDDY

We were in a small unheated room with rough white walls, no windows, and a single bare light bulb hanging from the ceiling. A plank of wood on trestles served as a table and narrower boards were unsteadily balanced on blocks to serve as benches. It was a literacy class for North African migrant workers in Aix-en-Provence in Southern France organized by a group of French leftist students. Although I never joined their political organization, they accepted me as volunteer in that class. We hunched around the table together, each working with one Tunisian man, trying to teach them to read in French from a children's book.

It was 1970 and I was a college student at the time, spending my third year in France. My major was comparative literature and I had no idea what I would do when I graduated. While I was in France, I was required only to enroll at the uni-

versity and to write a long paper on a topic of my choosing. I decided to write about immigrant workers in France. Possibly this subject was of interest to me because my own parents had come to the United States from two different countries and I had traveled to England and France to study. I had never felt any national identity myself, and I developed an interest in issues of migration and identity.

I learned a lot about the position of immigrant workers in Europe that year from my readings, from my volunteer tutoring, from volunteer work I did with immigrant children with a Catholic organization, and by meeting a number of immigrant workers and students in Aix. I was shocked at the conditions in which immigrants in France lived and worked and at the lives most of them led separated from their families. I have continued to be interested in the sense of belonging

or not belonging: moving from one nation to another or moving from one class position to another.

That year helped me decide my vocation in life. After I graduated, I went on to get a degree in teaching and found out how much there was to learn about teaching reading! I realized how much better I could have done in France if I had had some training. I did some more volunteer work with adults in Cambridge and my decision to stay in adult education was confirmed. However, it took me three years of working in public schools before I had enough money saved to take the leap to insecure part-time employment. My first ABE teaching job paid only \$3.50 an hour.

I stay in ABE because of my love of teaching, my interest in issues of identity, of equity, and of power and powerlessness, and also because it is a way to work with such a rich variety of people—practitioners and students. Everyone has a story to share. Classes are a mingling of people from so many backgrounds, and they help us see the possibilities for intercultural understanding. Working in ABE is the contribution I feel I can make to building respect and opportunities for all kinds of people.

*Mina Reddy is the director of the SABES Central Resource Center. She has worked as an ABE teacher, a counselor, and an administrator for 26 years. She can be reached at <mreddy@worlded.org>.*



## Upcoming Issues of *Field Notes*

### **Fall 2002: Science in the ABE/ESOL Classroom**

We are looking for lesson plans, activities, resource suggestions.

Call by: June 1  
Submit by: June 15

### **Winter 2003: ABE Licensure**

Call by: August 15  
Submit by: September 1

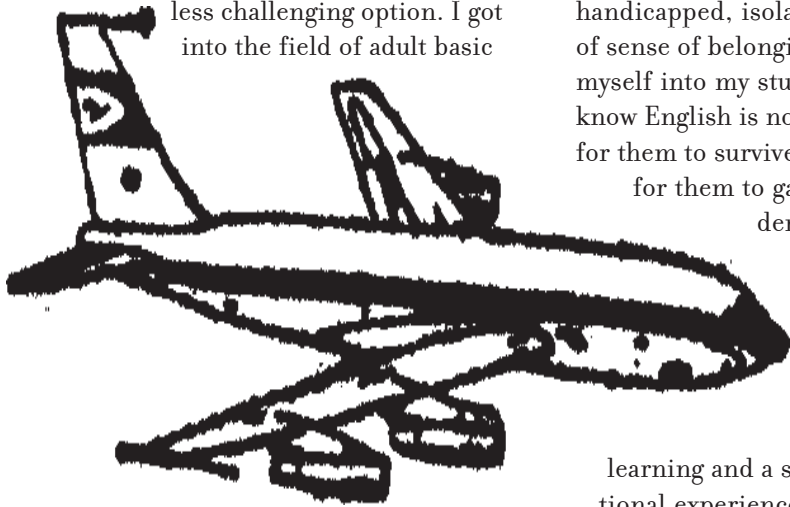
### **Spring 2003: ABE in Prisons**

Call by: November 15  
Submit by: December 1

# From Heilongjiang Province to Boston's Chinatown

By SHIXIAN SHENG

I had been teaching ESL since 1982 in China. In 1998, when I decided to settle down in the US, finding a job as an ESL instructor seemed to me not only a natural, but also a less challenging option. I got into the field of adult basic



education at AACA (Asian American Civic Association) right away. Since then I have been teaching for the refugee program, citizenship program, adult ESL program, and health and sanitation program. Right now I am teaching for Power One program, which is a combination of basic ESL and job skills training. My students are laid-off workers from an electronics plant.

To be honest, being a new settler myself, I needed a stable job for survival. Like a very experienced doctor, I can diagnose what my students need to learn and to improve right away. I can help them with their pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, as well as daily conversa-

tion. I have confidence in my knowledge to teach newly arrived Chinese immigrants.

On the other hand, like almost every new immigrant, I have experienced culture shock—feeling handicapped, isolated, and the loss of sense of belonging. So I can put myself into my students' shoes. I know English is not only the means for them to survive but also the key for them to gain self-confidence. My class is

not just a place for the students to learn English. It's a combination of

learning and a social and emotional experience for them. By helping the students to adapt to a new culture, a new society, and a new life in the US, I have found back my sense of belonging.

*Shixian Sheng, formerly a professor at the English department in Qiqihar Teacher's College (now Qiqihar University) teaches at the Asian American Civic Association and can be reached at <shixians@yahoo.com>.*



## How I Got Here

By Jeri Bayer

Through the front door of language, my indisputable wealth.

And the side door of presumption: I should be able to give it

like packets of food to the hungry; grams of syntax and meanings.

I followed the river of others' hardships that empties

into the lonely basin of stories without tenses, stories of what was left.

I did not use a map: my lexicon was enough, with all its sated nouns,

to escort me through the alleys where they lived:

Cambodian farmer, who knew the taste of bark. Ethiopian bride,

Stunned and regal. Haitian grandmother, singing lullabies.

Speak with us, they said, in their own tongues. And listen.

*Jeri Bayer is curriculum and assessment coordinator at Northeast SABES. She is also the coauthor of the new GED social studies book for McGraw-Hill/Contemporary. She can be reached at <jeribayer@aol.com>.*

# “I Am the Product of an Adult Literacy Program”

BY ERNEST BEST

I used to work for a workers’ rights organization that sought construction jobs for women and minorities in Boston. After years of struggle, the organization made significant progress in getting jobs lined up for the poorest residents of the city. Here was a chance for the organization to make a serious dent in improving the quality of life for those with the most need. We told the community about employment opportunities that could change their lives. The response was tremendous. Applicants lined up from our second floor offices out onto the sidewalk. The thing is, a large number of the people in line had a difficult time with the application and could not complete it. Others in line could not even sign their name.

Unfortunately, we could not place these people in those positions, because a construction site is a very dangerous place; in good conscience we could not send people onto a job site with signs everywhere saying things like, “Danger 20,000 Volts, KEEP OUT!” We would literally be responsible for

those lives. On a smaller scale, and on a daily basis, this situation repeated itself. That is the point that I said that I needed to be involved in the field of adult literacy. Here we had jobs where some were paying anywhere from \$36 an hour and up,

give solutions to, those most in need in our society, having education as the focus.

Adult literacy has been a vehicle for change in my life—personally, socially, and professionally. I am a product of an adult literacy program—the Jamaica Plain Community Center in Boston. My story shows the power

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*My story shows the power of adult literacy to make profound change in the lives of individuals . . .*

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and we couldn’t even *give* them away!

Subsequently, at an event for adult literacy, I saw the executive director of the Boston Adult Literacy Fund (BALF), Dr. Joanne Arnaud. She asked me to be a part of her organization, and soon after, we created the African-American Men’s Literacy Project. This project is designed to address the problems of, and

of adult literacy to make profound change in the lives of individuals, as well as our society. Thanks to the Boston Adult Literacy Fund, I was able to go on to college to help add to that positive change in my life. My story also shows that one can enter this field of adult literacy in the most unconventional ways. That is one of the strengths of our field, and it is an avenue for diversity, which is truly needed in our field.

## Adult Literacy Hotline

The Massachusetts Adult Literacy Hotline provides referrals to programs that offer one-on-one tutoring, small-group or classroom instruction to adult learners. Callers will receive information about basic reading, math, adult basic education, English language training, GED preparation, or testing sites. The hotline can help adult learners and volunteer literacy tutors locate the most convenient program and GED testing sites across the state.



*Ernest Best is the cofounder and project manager of the African-American Men’s Literacy Project in Boston. He is also the executive director of the Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Literacy (MassAAL). He can be reached at <ernest@alri.org>.*

# Adult Ed As Lifelong Learning Career Choice: Or How I Found an Alternative to Nude Modeling, Through Which My Real Education Began

BY SALLY GABB

Don't get me wrong. Learning has always been my thing. I grew up in a household where "learn something new every day" was emblazoned in our cereal dishes. Mom made sure that dinner table conversation was so much like school I sometimes raised my hand to go to the bathroom. But—be a teacher??? Me??? NEVER!! My heroines were Dorothy Dix and Lois Lane (although I never had a thing for Superman ...).

After high school, as I looked toward a career in journalism, I also joined the brigades of youth in revolt. Educated in nonviolent protest by the Civil Rights movement, marching against the war in Vietnam, I benefited from a unique hands-on education learning realities of race, class, wealth, poverty and war. I began to learn what my nice white middle-class schooling didn't teach me and hungered for more.

## Girl Reporter

I was still creating a path for "Sally-Girl Reporter" when I once again focused on education—specifically unequal education for children of color. My journalism thesis addressed reading, writing, and racism in New York public schools. At my first real reporter job, in York, Pennsylvania, I had the education and social issues beat. Some-

how that schooling thing was pulling me in.

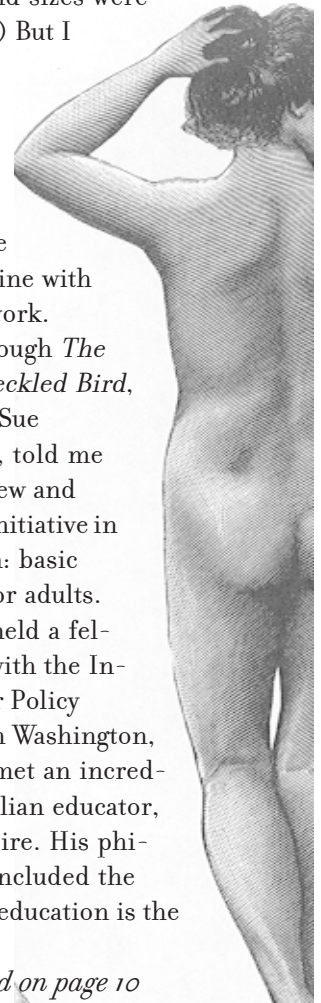
In Atlanta, Georgia, on a fellowship given for change agents in education, I thought my purpose was to find further scoops for social issues reporting, especially as Atlanta public schools were experiencing the pain and strain of desegregation. But it was 1968, and I yearned for a more active voice in the issues of the day, and dove off my "establishment journalism" career path when I found an amazing independent publication, *The Great Speckled Bird*.

## Education and Civil Rights

As staff member of this weekly underground paper, I began reporting real stories of desegregation and civil rights activities in Georgia. I sat in classrooms where black children were seeing a white teacher for the first time. I attended meetings where black teachers talked of isolation as the first teachers of color in an all-white school. And I heard of issues among parents. Many white parents didn't want their children in school with black children whose parents "couldn't even read the report card." Some black parents told of white teachers who "treated us like children." Others told of fear, because they "didn't have much schoolin' in the country."

*The Bird* was a vibrant and energized vehicle for reporting real stories, but it wasn't exactly well supported by local advertisers. At best we earned \$50 a week. We found many "alternative" ways to pay rent in the commune. Among the best for "girls" was modeling in the buff at the Art Institute. (All shapes and sizes were welcome.) But I did think there might be other sources of income more in line with my real work.

Through *The Great Speckled Bird*, a friend, Sue Thrasher, told me about a new and exciting initiative in education: basic literacy for adults. Sue had held a fellowship with the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, and had met an incredible Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire. His philosophy included the idea that education is the



*Continued on page 10*



# I Never Wanted To Be a Teacher, But My Car Engine Caught On Fire . . .

By JOAN REISSMAN

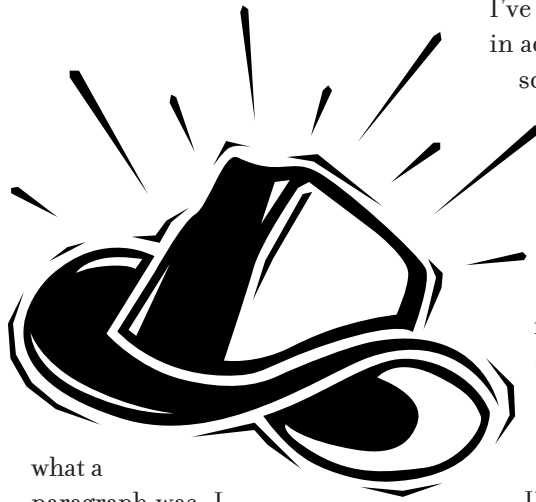
I never wanted to be a teacher. My father always made fun of the profession—he said teachers were a pompous lot. Yet, when I actually started teaching, I found it was rewarding. Like many others in our field, I think I fell into the adult education profession, yet my story is more unusual than most.

I was traveling around the country at a leisurely pace. I was living the classic hippie lifestyle: traveling in a Volkswagen van with two dogs, a guy, and most of my worldly possessions. Our plan was to spend months in various parts of the country and stay longer if we liked the area. As we were entering Austin, Texas, our engine caught on fire. We pulled over into the closest place, which happened to be the Godfather's Lounge, and there, I, along with the rest of the neighborhood, watched the car as flames engulfed it. I made good use of our Mardi Gras beads, as I used them to prevent the dogs from jumping back into the burning car. I didn't lose everything, but I didn't have much left.

The decision to stay in Austin had been made for me. With little money and an empty shell for a car, I wasn't moving in the near future. I had been unemployed for several months, so I was eligible for a government-sponsored employment program. Maybe it was fate, but the local community college had a job opening for an adult education

teacher, and they were interested in me immediately.

When I first started teaching, I was very naïve. I remember arguing with a middle-aged woman because she told me that she didn't know



what a paragraph was. I thought that she was just being contrary, but I later realized that I was the one who was being foolish. Overall, I enjoyed working with a diverse group. In the beginning, I worked with an older population (many were older than I) in a competency-based high school diploma program. They were eager to learn. Since education was a choice instead of parental order, these

students realized the value of education. I enjoyed working with students who had never imagined the possibility of academic success.

Of course, I should mention that was over twenty years ago and I'm still teaching. Over the years I've done so many different things in adult education: alternative high school diploma, ESL, GED, and e-learning. I don't feel as if I've had the same job. I still derive satisfaction from convincing people that they can turn their lives around. I find teaching in adult education is a constant process of persuasion and negotiation.

I've probably helped close to a thousand people obtain their GED credentials, but I'm still excited when they receive that piece of paper. Even though I, like many others in the field, didn't plan on a career in adult education, working as a teacher has convinced me that my perceived misfortune was actually a happy accident.

*Joan Reissman is a math instructor and associate program director at JFY-Boston. She can be reached at <JReissman@JFYnet.org>.*

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March 2002 Issue 10

The Change Agent is a newspaper for adult learners and teachers focusing on social justice issues. Find out more about this spectacular resource online at [www.nelrc.org](http://www.nelrc.org)

## Adult Ed As Lifelong . . .

*Continued from page 8*

way "to create democracy." As one peasant quoted by Freire said: "I want to learn to read to change the world." These words changed my world. Shortly after learning about Freire and his work, I learned of opportunities in Atlanta to teach adult basic education on a part-time basis. Eureka! I could retire from my unclothed posing, and become a "teacher!"

In 1971 I was hired to teach a pre-GED class in my own inner-city Atlanta neighborhood, an area just beginning to desegregate. I can always picture that first evening at the Moreland Ave. Elementary School. The eight or nine adults greeted me with nervous but eager smiles. There was Margaret, a library aide who wanted her GED. Ivory, who had dropped out of school in eighth grade. Her mother had died and she had to go to work to help support the family. She now wanted to help her daughter go to college. Brad, a maintenance man for Atlanta public schools who was an oral historian on the Civil War, but couldn't read at the first grade level.

This class of African-American and white adults became much more than a paycheck, much more than an alternative to modeling in the "altogether." They were my best teachers ever! This class began an adventure in learning that has nourished me for over 30 years. Me? A teacher? You better believe it. It's the best beat I ever had. And the story ain't over yet.

*Sally Gabb is the coordinator of SABES Southeast. She can be reached at <sgabb@bristol.mass.edu>*

## Teacher, Interrupted

BY ALICE ZUJEWSKI

I knew early on in my young life that I wanted to teach and I also knew I wanted to teach at the secondary level. Upon graduating from college, I did just that—my first teaching assignment was in a local middle school.

Into my second year, I found myself pregnant and decided to stop teaching and become a stay-at-home Mom. It was during that time, in the early seventies, that a neighbor suggested I take a course that would enable me to teach immigrants who were preparing to take the US citizenship test. That was my first experience working with adults whose second language was English. It was probably the most fulfilling teaching experience I had ever encountered. But raising three children required me to work full-time and for the next twenty years my teaching experience ranged from kindergarten to adults.

It was not until 1996 that I again had the opportunity to work with Polish immigrants with very

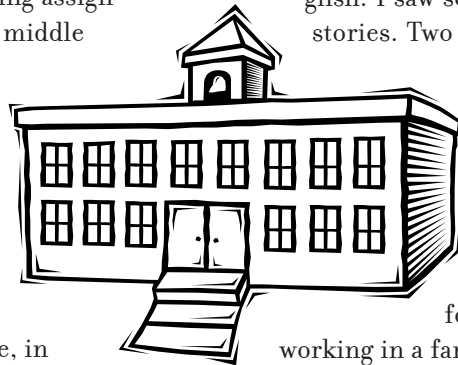
limited English language. I experienced such satisfaction working with these adults who, along with all their other responsibilities, eagerly came to classes to improve their English. I saw several success stories. Two students enrolled

in college and I am happy to say are working in lucrative industries. Last September I once again found myself

working in a family literacy program,

Realizing that each person's life is lived in a social setting, I strive to increase student awareness of societal issues and problems that will help them to become effective members and workers in our American society. I feel I echo the sentiments of others who teach adult basic education when I say it is an enriching cultural experience like no other.

*Alice Zujewski teaches at the Family Literacy Program in Haverhill. She can be reached at <alictz@hotmail.com>.*



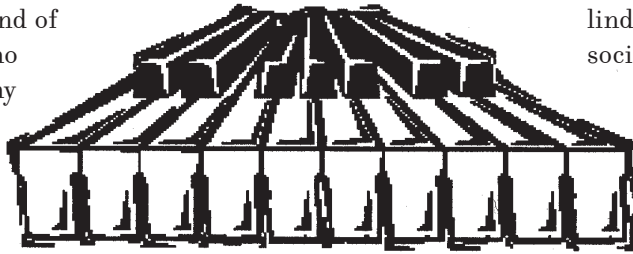
# Piano Tuning, Poetry, and ABE

BY DEBORAH SCHWARTZ

The “careers” that I had chosen and that had chosen me—writing poetry and doing community organizing—were not careers that would pay the rent. So, in 1985, after obtaining an undergraduate degree in American Studies, I moved to Boston to enroll in a one-year piano tuning certificate program at the North Bennet Street School in the North End of Boston. Still, during the piano tuning course, and then to my dismay, after it, I was not eking out much of a living. Besides, once I understood the theory of tuning through harmonics, the perfect pitch of an “A” beating at 440 and tuning imperfect fifths and fourths into one perfect little octave, I was bored. I had other callings that I was just beginning to listen to.

I had put my name into the Boston public school substitute teaching list and lo and behold, the phone rang one morning at 6:00 AM exactly. They wanted me to teach writing and literature to a class

of 11th graders at the Jamaica Plain High School as a substitute teacher. I loved it and wanted a more stable teaching career. I found a full-time teaching/advocacy position at City Roots on Mission Hill and one thing led to another. Slowly, the piano tuning dissolved and the writing and teaching took root.



Eventually, I finished an MFA writing program at Goddard College in Vermont where I could also become certified in teaching high-school English, start a novel that is just now coming to completion, and continue to teach literacy, writing, and English at community colleges and adult education programs throughout Boston and the North Shore. I got a car, which became my teaching office. I even remember

driving students home and “conferencing” in it as I learned how to negotiate the Tobin Bridge in rush-hour and not talk so much with my hands.

Fifteen years later my CV looks like a patchwork quilt—coordinating and teaching in a family literacy program at the Archdale Housing Development in Roslindale; teaching math, English, and social studies to teenage men at the DYS secure treatment facility in my neighborhood; teaching ESOL here and there, consulting to ABE programs; and years as adjunct English faculty at Roxbury Community

College. I have loved how the field has allowed me to bring together my leftist, social change/feminist change politics, my love and commitment to the daring act of writing and making art, and the intellectual pursuits of pedagogy and policy.

Since 1999, I’ve been coordinating a home-buying readiness curricula and technical assistance project at the Adult Literacy Resource Institute. This job supports what I like best: room for teachers and others to reflect on what makes good practice and how we can be part of real learning for real people. I get to work with teachers, students, program coordinators, affordable housing activists and counselors to co-create curricula and refine training approaches. So far, so good. We’ll see what’s next.

*Deborah Schwartz is the coordinator of the Fannie Mae Foundation/ALRI Homebuying Readiness Project at the Adult Literacy Resource Institute. She can be reached at <deborah@alri.org>.*

## Web Sites for ESOL Self-Study

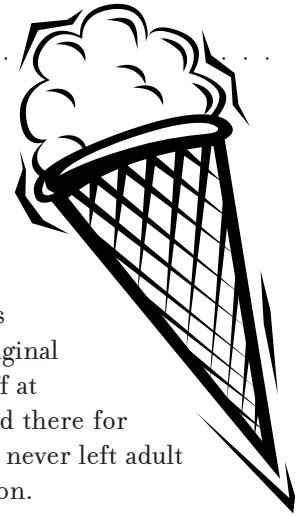
Suggested by Lynne Weintraub

### **ESL Language Learning Links ([user.gru.net/richardx/index.html](http://user.gru.net/richardx/index.html))**

Here you can find an Internet link for anything you want to learn. This is probably the most complete collection of ESL self-study sites you can find anywhere.

### **The Sounds of English ([www.soundsofEnglish.org](http://www.soundsofEnglish.org))**

This site offers pronunciation help. It explains how each sound is made and offers audio and video examples and exercises.



## Mocha Chip and Math Class

By KENNY TAMARKIN

In the winter of 1972, I was an MA student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. I took a course in which a master's and a doctoral student would team up to do a research project. My partner, Robby Fried, wanted to do a research project at the Cambridge Community Learning Center (CLC). We went to a meeting there and met a pretty skeptical reception. One of the CLC staff asked, "What can you do for us?" I responded, "I can teach math." Sally Waldron, a CLC math teacher at the time, then asked when I could start. A few weeks later I was teaching math as a volunteer two nights a week, sharing students

with Margie Jacobs, who taught the other four GED subjects. A few months after graduation, I got a part-time job teaching math two nights a week at the CLC, while my two other jobs were teaching day care in the morning, and making ice cream at Steve's Ice Cream.

A few months after that, Rita deLeo, the then-state director of adult basic education in Massachusetts, was given a grant to start an adult learning center in Somerville. She approached Somerville teaching staff, trying to convince them to work in this new program. My girlfriend, later my first wife, an elementary school librarian, overheard Rita and got me an interview.

I was hired as one of the original full-time staff at SCALE, stayed there for 19 years, and never left adult basic education.

*Kenny Tamarkin, who does not like the term "computer field technologist," is the technology coordinator at Northeast SABES. After leaving SCALE, he worked as a GED teacher at the Lawrence Workers Assistance Center and at Malden Mills. He is the author of Number Power 6, now in its third printing from Contemporary Books. He can be reached at <KTamarkin@necc.mass.edu>.*

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## Volunteer Tutor to Program Coordinator

By NANCY SHERIDAN

Before working in adult basic education, I had worked for many years in the financial services industry. I returned to school after my first child was born to retrain for a field that I thought would be more suitable to me—adult education—in some capacity.

My first experience in ABE was as volunteer tutor at the local public library in Taunton. After I completed my degree in adult education, I thought that at least this would be valuable experience to put on my resume. I also had performed very little community service up to that point, so was happy to be volunteering my services

while gaining some experience. After about a year of tutoring various ABE/ESOL students and coming to value the importance and need of ABE and volunteerism, I was hired to start a volunteer adult literacy program of my very own, Literacy Volunteers of Stoughton. What a creative opportunity that was!

About a year after starting this program, I was fortunate to help start the Stoughton ABE program and ultimately became the program coordinator there as well. Stimulated and intrigued by the many facets of the field, I have since began teaching ESOL in yet another ABE program (Brockton Adult Learning Center).

So, what's kept me here in the field? First and foremost, it's the satisfaction I get from helping people (who genuinely appreciate it) with basic survival skills. Second, the creative opportunities available in the field keep me interested. Last, I've always felt that the opportunity to know such a diverse and high-caliber group of people is a "fringe benefit" of the job.

*Nancy Sheridan coordinates the Stoughton ABE program. She can be reached at <sheridan@gis.net>*

# I Don't Want To Do This Anymore

BY RICHARD GOLDBERG

I can still remember that afternoon in November 1989 when I looked up from my typewriter and said, "I don't want to do this anymore." At that time, I had been a producer in the news department of a Boston television station, one of three stations where I would spend almost 19 years of my life. Two years before this revelation I started teaching broadcast journalism as an adjunct at two local colleges. After just

one week, I was hooked. There was something about the give and take of a classroom that was intellectually stimulating and very satisfying, and it gave me something I was not getting at my current job. At one of the schools, it was also my first exposure to people who did not speak English as their first language. There were three or four in each class, and I had no idea how to teach them.

Over the next three years, I probably networked with more than 100 people to learn more about the field of ESOL/ABE. I attended workshops where I was an outsider and couldn't always follow the conversation, and I read a book on language learning theory that I did not really understand. A short time later, I became a volunteer tutor and eventually got a part-time teaching job at a dislocated workers center while continuing to work in TV. In September 1992, I became a full-time ABE teacher, and three months later landed a job at the Asian American Civic Association in Boston's Chinatown, where I have been a teacher and coordinator of an ABE transitional program that prepares immigrant adults for colleges, job training programs, alternative high school diploma programs, and employment. The results are very tangible. Earlier this year, I sent out about fifty Chinese New Year cards to former students. Their responses by cards and e-mails tell me I have made a difference. A job in an accounting firm or the office of a major hospital, a graduation from a university in June, an expected transfer to a four-year school in September, a 3.6 GPA after the first semester at a two-year college. These are the reasons I choose to stay in this field.

*Richard Goldberg is coordinator of the transitional ABE program at AACA in Chinatown. He can be reached at <rgoldberg@juno.com>*

## Mark Your Calendar



### June 17-19, 2002

National Educational Computing Conference (NECC), 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual: *Nexus in Texas* Location: San Antonio, TX  
Contact: NECC, 800-280-6218  
Web: [www.confreg.uoregon.edu/necc2002](http://www.confreg.uoregon.edu/necc2002)

### June 20-23, 2002

American Association of Higher Education (AAHE), Assessment Conference: *Assessment: A Shared Commitment*  
Location: Boston, MA Contact: AAHE, 202-293-6440, x794  
Web: [www.aahe.org/assessment/2002](http://www.aahe.org/assessment/2002)

### June 24-29, 2002

Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE), ED-MEDIA 2002: *World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia & Telecommunications* Location: Denver, CO  
Contact: AACE, [conf@ace.org](mailto:conf@ace.org) Web: [www.aace.org/conf/edmedia](http://www.aace.org/conf/edmedia)

### June 27-29, 2002

Centre for Literacy of Quebec, Summer Institute: *Math for Learning, Math for Life: Adult Numeracy and Basic Skills* Location: Montreal, Quebec  
Contact: Linda Shohet, 514-931-8731, x1415  
Web: [www.nald.ca/litcent.htm](http://www.nald.ca/litcent.htm)

# Yahoo! Yahoo! I Have a Job!

By BEVERLY GONSALVES

After being away from Massachusetts for 12 years, I decided to return. Like most people relocating, I needed a job, so I began to seek employment in teaching. After sending out numerous resumes and applications, and receiving no positive response, I decided to “cold call” every school district that I could until someone would hire me. Off I went from Fall River to Taunton, and every school district in between—yet the response was, “Sorry, we’re not hiring.” When I got to Taunton, very discouraged, I said to the principal, “I’ve applied to so many schools and no employment, there must be someone who will hire me; I am bilingual.” He then asked, “What language do you speak?” I told him that I speak the Cape Verdean language of *Crioulo*. He said, “Go to Brockton, there are lots of Cape Verdeans there.” He gave me the address of the Adult Learning Center (ALC) at the Brockton High School, and off I went. By this time I’m thinking, “Is this another rejection that I have to face?” I drove to Brockton and parked across the street from the high school, and finally after 30 minutes of debating with myself if I should make the approach, get ready for another rejection, or just go for it, I decided to go in.

## Job Offer!

I spoke with the secretary, who then introduced me to the director of the ALC, Linda Braun. We discussed teaching, the ALC, and she then told me, “This must be an omen because I just happen to need

another teacher. Would you be interested in filling out an application?” After filling out the application, I returned home (with just enough gas to get back home and what was left of my bank account—two dollars. By the time I arrived home, I’d received a call from Linda, offering me the job. Once I hung up the phone, I threw papers up in the air and yelled, “Yahoo! Yahoo! I have a job.”

## Reasons for Staying

When I see learners entering the classroom for the first time, not knowing a word of English, then progress to a higher level with self-confidence, self-assurance, joy, peace, laughter, more knowledge, wisdom, strength as a team leader, team player, and/or possess the thirst to learn more . . .

When I see learners not taking their breaks so that they can ask me questions, read books or just walk around the classroom to associate learned vocabulary with pictures, posters, and photographs, . . . When I hear learners say to me, “I took a bus by myself; I talked to my child’s teacher; I went to the mall and bought something without anyone talking for me . . .”

These are the reasons I stay with ABE: to give all I can to others so that they might learn and help this country to become a better place.

*Beverly Gonsalves teaches at the New Bedford Adult Learning Center. She can be reached at <TeechaESOL@aol.com>.*

## Websites for Listening and Pronunciation Practice

By Lynne Weintraub

Students who can’t get into classes, are homebound, or are waitlisted can still practice their English at home if they have a computer. The following is a list of sites that do a good job of employing audio and/or video technology for language learning. Tutors may also find this list useful for use with their learners.

### [esl.about.com/mbody.htm](http://esl.about.com/mbody.htm)

Homework Help’s English as 2<sup>nd</sup> Language pages have all sorts of practice for English students, including listening, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, writing, and TOEFL. Some of the lessons include audio recordings, featuring speakers of both British and American English.

### [www.englishlistening.com/](http://www.englishlistening.com/)

The English Listening Lounge offers short audio recordings of native English speakers telling about their experiences and ideas. You can read a transcript of each monolog, and you have a choice of several different language levels and topics. If you really like the site, you can buy a membership for \$20/month and have access to hundreds of additional recordings.

### [www.englishbaby.com/](http://www.englishbaby.com/)

English Baby and their partner site, Real English Zone, offer audio recordings of fun, authentic conversations on contemporary topics (popular culture, sports, travel, etc.) between college-age speakers. They are challenging because they include lots of idioms, slang, reductions, and cultural references—just like most ordinary conversations between native English speakers.

# Thirty Years in the Field: Reflections

BY WILLIAM STICKNEY

**I**n the fall of 1971, I needed a part-time job. My wife was pregnant with our oldest son and had resigned her teaching position the previous spring in anticipation of full-time motherhood. I wanted to supplement my salary as a reading teacher at one of the two local high schools. A staff member of the Department of Education told me about a new community project working with adults who had not graduated from high school. I knew nothing about ABE, but hoped my experience teaching reading and English would enable me to help. We started as Project LEAP (Learning Experiences for Adult Performance).

I stayed because I found teaching and advocating for adults very gratifying; it was always changing as new needs and students came. I soon realized that I enjoyed it more than my full-time job. As the project filled a need in the community, and the opportunity to work full-time became available when the project expanded, I seized it. This was in 1976—fairly early on in the development of the ABE system in Massachusetts.

It was an exciting time. After much lobbying, the school system, somewhat reluctantly, agreed to

sponsor the project. I was able to hire eight part-time staff members, and we moved to a storefront in downtown Pittsfield. We officially became the Pittsfield Adult Learning Center.

My staff and I were better intentioned than we were experts, but we seized every opportunity to im-

We have since expanded our program and offerings, including GED and a special program to serve adults with learning disabilities.

Though it has been a constant challenge, I feel grateful and privileged to have been able to spend most of my teaching career working with adults. Adult educators do not

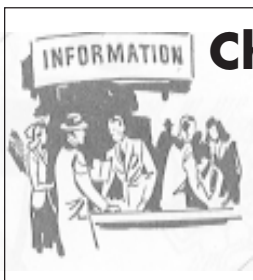
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*First there were Portuguese speakers from Angola and Mozambique, then came the Cambodian and Vietnamese populations, followed by refugees from the Soviet Union . . .*

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prove our knowledge and our ability to teach adults with varying educational needs. We added an ESL program as the immigrant population began to grow and change. First there were Portuguese speakers from Angola and Mozambique, then came the Cambodian and Vietnamese populations, followed by refugees from the Soviet Union, and most recently, a growing community of Spanish and Chinese speakers.

always get the respect they deserve from other educators, but this does not stop it from being exciting and important. Adult students have not always been given the opportunity to improve their basic education, but the last 25 years have been very positive. The money for ABE has increased manyfold and programs have become more available and more professional. I have never regretted my choice to be an adult educator.



**Check out [www.SABES.org](http://www.SABES.org)**

- ◆ Publications
- ◆ Resources
- ◆ ABE Licensure Updates
- ◆ Literacy Links

*William Stickney is the director of adult basic education for the Pittsfield Public Schools. He can be reached by email at <[wstickney@pittsfield.net](mailto:wstickney@pittsfield.net)>.*



# R-E-S-P-E-C-T!!!

BY WENDY MONGEAU

During my sixth year of elementary school teaching, I took a part-time evening job teaching adult ESL. The opportunity interested me because I had been a literacy tutor with Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts for a couple of years prior and had really enjoyed that experience. The ESL job opened my eyes to a realm of the education world that I had never known.

Coming from an elementary school teaching background, I've heard the comments about how I'm so lucky to get the summers off, and how "cushy" it is to be a teacher (little do they know . . .). But by and large, I have always been met with a great deal of respect in the past for my occupation/calling as a teacher. Most people with whom I've spoken view teachers as intelligent, organized, and humanitarian. They give us credit for providing an essential service to society.

## Rich History of ABE

It seems to me, however, that ABE teachers are viewed in a different light from K-12 teachers. ABE, although a newer field than K-12 and college education, is not brand new. For instance, in the past, southern churches held literacy classes for slaves and freed slaves; unions conducted ABE classes for their members, as did the Communist party. In 1942, GED programs were instituted in order to meet the needs of American GIs returning from WWII, who were drafted before they could complete high school. ABE has served varied

populations of adults for decades since, providing instruction in English literacy, technology skills for displaced workers, and preparing others to attain a GED or high school diploma, to name just a few applications. It has changed many lives for the better, both on the individual and family levels.

Perhaps some think that once through the American K-12 public educational system should be enough. In some people's minds it boils down to spending more tax dollars on people that they feel should be adequately educated by the time they reach the age of 18. Without having a teacher's perspective on the situation, it's easy to see how people could feel this way. ABE teachers work with adults on a daily basis who had life circumstances that forced them to drop out of school before their time, adult immigrants who are trying to build successful, productive lives for themselves and their families, and/or adults with learning disabilities who were not well-served by the K-12 system and "fell through the cracks." But without this perspective, and without any personal contact with an adult in such a situation, who could perceive the vital importance of ABE?

## Educating the Public

Perhaps the solution lies in educating the public about the importance of ABE and the changed lives that have resulted in communities all over Massachu-

setts. A recent example of such (unintended) publicity was the battle waged against the proposed ABE budget cuts. Higher visibility for the field and its contributions to society would certainly turn the tide of popular opinion regarding ABE. But this, again, takes money. Furthermore, we are too occupied with the business of doing our jobs to take the time to toot our own horns.

Nonetheless, educating the public can be accomplished one person at a time. If you are confronted with criticism for your profession, here are some facts that you can mention:

(1) I teach people who have been failed, in some cases, by the traditional K-12 system. Before the widespread attention to learning disabilities, students were often labeled as "slow," "stupid," or "lazy," and no one understood or accommodated their needs.

(2) Adult education has ramifications for children. It is a research-based fact that a child's educational success is directly related to the educational attainment and involvement of his/her mother.

(3) Crime levels decrease in communities when educational levels increase. I am providing a service that benefits society at large.

(4) I am helping to build a more productive workforce. It benefits the economy when adults are taught the literacy, computer, and job-related skills they need in order to reach their full potential. This way, all of society benefits, not just the students themselves.

*Wendy Mongeau teaches ABE, ESOL, and computer classes at the New Bedford Adult Learning Center. She can be reached at <wmongeau@msn.com>.*



# New England ABE-to-College Transition Project

By CONNIE PATTON

Adult education programs are searching for ways to help students acquire the necessary skills to be successful college students. In New England we are fortunate to have the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the New England Literacy Resource Center (NELRC) to assist us in the worthy goal of transitioning students from adult education to college.

## NELRC

The NELRC is a partnership of New England State Literacy Resource Centers, adult literacy practitioners, and policymakers. Each of the six New England states makes financial contributions to this partnership and each state has four representatives on the NELRC governing board: the state ABE director, the state staff development director, and two practitioners. NELRC brings added value to the New England adult literacy communities by implementing practitioner-based projects that promote inquiry and innovation and generation of knowledge that improve practice. Projects such as Adult Multiple Intelligences (AMI) Study, Civic Participation, and the *Change Agent* are just a few of NELRC's projects. (See <[www.nelrc.org](http://www.nelrc.org)>).

## Background

The ABE-to-College Transition Project was conceived and designed by the NELRC at World Education. The NELRC provides professional development and techni-

cal assistance to the transition programs and manages the project. The Nellie Mae Education Foundation generously funds the programs. There are 21 transition programs in this project, with funding per program averaging \$35,000. Current programs include three in Connecticut, nine in Massachusetts, one in Vermont, one in New Hampshire, one in Rhode Island, and six in Maine. These transition programs operate as part of adult basic education programs in diverse settings: community-based organizations, public schools, community colleges, and prisons. Regardless of the setting, each transition program provides free instruction to adult learners in basic academic skills of reading, writing, math and computer skills. Students learn study skills, receive educational and career counseling, and assistance in enrolling in higher education. Students who have successfully enrolled in college are mentored to encourage them to persist in college. Eligible students are adults who have never attended college. The program is aimed at adult education graduates, but students who have graduated from high school five or more years ago are also eligible.

Each program has at least at least one college partner, but many have more than one. The program's director, instructor, or counselor establishes relationships with representatives of a local college's financial aid, admissions, student

support and developmental studies departments. These partnerships enable the programs to introduce their ABE students to college life and available services.

## Program Goals

Programs are expected to serve a minimum of 30 students a year in two-to-three-week cycles. The goal is to have 60% of the students complete the course. Seventy-five percent of those completing the course should enroll in post secondary education. The exciting news is that the statistics for 2001 show that the original five New England transition programs met all goals with a total of 78 students completing the course (60%) and 63 (81%) entering college.

A web site for the Transition Project is being created this year. It will include specific classroom lessons, recruiting ideas, tips, and techniques for college counseling, mentoring ideas, and course outlines for College Academic Skills, PC Skills, and College Survival Skills. Exemplary practices are being collected by the NELRC in these four areas: Program Planning, Educational Counseling, Curriculum and Instruction, Collaboration with the Colleges. The web site will also

*Continued on page 18*



**New England ABE . . .**

*Continued from page 17*

have a forum for programs to discuss what works and what doesn't.

Marshwood Adult & Community Education, serving the communities of Eliot and South Berwick, Maine, is excited about being a regional college transition site, serving students from both Maine and New Hampshire. Marshwood already collaborates with adult education programs in Kittery, Noble, and York, so this is an extension of that collaboration. We were aware of the large numbers of students graduating with GEDs and adult diplomas locally, and though we have offered counseling, college planning nights, and individual college prep classes, we knew we needed to do more. Most of our students had indicated a desire to go on to college, yet the number of transcript requests seemed to indicate they had not taken that essential next step. Implementing this ABE-to-college program forced me as a program director to move college collaboration from my "should do" to my "must do" list. We want to make sure our students are competitive in gaining entrance to a variety of post-secondary programs.

Clearly, we all must do more. Whether it's an ABE-to-college transition program, career counseling, data collection, or forming partnerships between local colleges and adult education programs, we must find ways to provide students the support they need to successfully transition to college.

*Connie Patton is the director of Marshwood Adult and Community Education. She can be reached at <capatton@maine.rr.com>.*

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Washington State Board for Community and  
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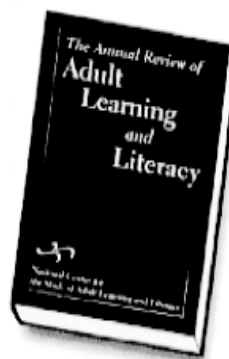
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Questions? More information? Call Jessica Mortensen at 617-482-9485, ext. 535.

# Looking for Something Different

BY KATY ROBERTS

I always liked the idea of teaching, and knew I could do it, but I dreaded the traditional overcrowded schoolroom of my youth, full of disruption and chaos. So I went through training to volunteer as an adult literacy tutor.

My first match as a literacy tutor, Matthew, was in fact literate, but he wasn't able to sound out words he didn't recognize. His goal was to go to cooking school, but he was at risk for not graduating from high school. We picked some interesting books to read together and I helped him tackle new words. Sometimes he didn't show up for

his father that he now loved to read, genuinely enjoyed it. While I was glad for Matthew, I realized his father had benefited at least as much in seeing his son finish high school and gain the confidence to achieve his goals. My work had extended beyond my students, connecting me to his family as well.

Today I work in adult basic education at a job training organization. When I started this job, I had second thoughts right away. My first weeks in the classroom were a struggle. I taught business communication in a small room with 12 people seated around a table,

now able to connect and get down to the business of learning.

Adult learners have clear goals—at minimum, to finish something they left behind. Teaching these students gives me a sense of connection to their communities and families as well.

I've worked with people from at least 15 other countries, giving me fascinating insight into other cultures and how they assimilate into the US. Yet my experience working in this field with students who grew up in America has been the most significant for me. Americans often seemed to be most disconnected with those who have lived here for generations but grown up in different worlds. Having a middle-class background, I have been able to connect, through my work, with Americans who've grown up in poverty and are trying to give their children more hope. I now appreciate the depth of the challenges faced by people who still struggle.

A few years into this career, I had a child of my own. Now that I have managed to balance my own work and family, I realize that parenthood has renewed my passion for this field. Being a parent has added a wonderful dimension to my connection with all students, particularly those with families of their own.

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*Adult learners have clear goals—at minimum, to finish something they left behind.*

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meetings, but I reminded myself that he was 15, after all. When I called his house, I often got his father, who was the one who assured me that this was helping, that Matthew was enjoying reading for the first time. After a few months, Matthew started missing more appointments, until our meetings trickled to a stop. He didn't return my calls. I moved on with my life, figured I'd probably helped somewhat, but not sure how much.

Yet my meetings had connected me to someone else: Matthew's father. He called me a few months later to tell me that Matthew had been accepted to a top cooking school. Matthew had told

women ranging from young single mothers to recent immigrants from China. The younger students acted like the high school kids that had kept me away from traditional teaching: talking constantly when I was trying to go over material, seeming to pay me no mind. When I approached my coworker and mentor in tears, she told me that I had to do something right away. I confronted the group the next day, and to my surprise, the "talkers" didn't resent me or turn a cold shoulder. These were adults, and once they knew I was in control and serious, they too took their work seriously. I felt an immediate respect from every student. We were

**Massachusetts Budget Crisis: Who Hurts? Who Pays? (Teacher's Guide)**

[www.sabes.org/resources/fy03budgetguide.htm](http://www.sabes.org/resources/fy03budgetguide.htm)

Drawing from materials produced by United for a Fair Economy, this resource provides a good gloss on our current tax structure and related inequities, with several interwoven classroom-based activities. The necessary companion piece is the *Participant Handout Packet* (a 20-page PDF document).



*Working Writers V*

*Working Writers V* represents the work of students in the Worker Education Program sponsored by the Service Employees International Union Local 285. Over 100 pieces of writing are included. This excellent resource can be used for authentic reading, writing, and discussion activities in a variety of adult basic education settings. To order a copy, contact Carlos Gonzalez at 617-541-6841 to arrange payment.



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