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The OLR C News

Project IDEAL: Update and Highlights for the 2nd year

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Canton City ABE
Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)
Franklinton Learning Center
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Mid-Ohio/ACES
Ohio Hi-Point JVS
Six District Compact ABE (Kent)

The LATEST

The seven Project IDEAL pilot programs have completed their second year of implementation and are very enthusiastic about the pilot project and distance possibilities in the ABE classroom. Project IDEAL in Ohio is a pilot project that is providing an opportunity for seven selected ABE sites to develop and expand services beyond the classroom through distance education, using GED Connection online instruction, videos, and workbooks. As of May 2004, the pilot sites had collectively recruited 283 adult learners and 280 had completed orientation. The increase in participation is significant, compared to the 100 adult learners served in 2003. The annual report for fiscal year 2003-2004 will be available in October, 2004.

OAACE/COABE

On Sunday, April 25, 2004, all pilot participants attended the Project IDEAL Ohio breakfast meeting that was held at the Hyatt Regency, Columbus, to discuss current issues and concerns as it relates to the project. In addition, many of University of Michigan's Project IDEAL team members including Leslie Petty, Associate Director, Shannon Young, Research Associate/Program Manager, Debra Shafer, Training Projects Coordinator, Deb Walker, Trainer Support, and Donna Walter, Data Management, joined the Ohio partici-

pants. As always, their participation and leadership provided a great opportunity for Ohio participants to directly address issues and concerns with the national group.

In addition, Ella Bogard, Franklinton Learning Center, Sharon Halter, Ohio-Hi Point Career Center, Joyce Taylor, Six District Educational Compact ABE in Kent, and Kimberly S. McCoy, Ohio Literacy Resource Center, conducted a presentation titled: Chapter 2: What Ohio Has Learned About Distance Instruction in ABE. The three ABE administrators did a wonderful job with sharing their successes and challenges during year one, and providing current information about their experiences with distance instruction in their local programs.

FUTURE PLANS AND NEXT STEPS

On Friday, June 11, 2004, pilot participants met with the Distance Learning Coordinator and members from the Project IDEAL Advisory Committee to discuss successes and challenges with the program. Unfortunately, retention still seems to be a problem with distance learners, but the pilot programs are very hopeful and optimistic about the capabilities of distance instruction. The Seven ABE pilot sites will start recruiting and conducting orientation for the third year in September 2004, utilizing the GED Connection curriculum. However, more than likely, each of the pilot programs will also be utilizing a pre-GED curriculum (yet to be determined) in order to increase the likelihood of learners' success rates when working in a distance environment.

If you are interested in learning more about the Project IDEAL national consortium, please visit the Web site available at <http://www.projectideal.org>. For more information about Project IDEAL in Ohio please visit their Web site located at <http://literacy.kent.edu/ideal> and/or contact Kimberly S. McCoy, Distance Learning Coordinator, via phone at (800) 765.2897 ext. 20757 or (330) 672.0757 or via e-mail at kmccoy@literacy.kent.edu.