

The OLRC News

Beginnings VI Celebrates Authors and Artists

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Beginnings VI Author, John Berling shares his writing at the OLRC's 6th Annual Writers' Conference.

This year's 6th Annual Ohio Writers' Conference, in honor of ABLÉ students and their exemplary writing achievements, was held at the Wyndham Dublin Hotel in Columbus on May 16th. In the spirit of Ohio's Bicentennial, the conference celebrated the rich culture and history of our state with guest speakers who highlighted the significance of sharing personal stories, memories, and reflections that help document Ohio's past and present.

Storyteller Lyn Ford, who has become a cherished heartbeat of the annual conference, kicked off the event with engaging renditions that captured the essence of the day – preserving history. Francis Kazemek, author of *Enriching Our Lives: Poetry Lessons for Adult Literacy Teachers and Tutors* and *Exploring Our Lives: A Writing*

Handbook for Senior Adults, keynoted the session with poignant thoughts about the significance of writing about everyday experiences and objects in our lives – the crux of history. And Judy Hendershot, author of *In Coal Country* and *Up the Tracks to Grandma's*, along with Helen Perry, retired teacher and literacy volunteer, engaged the audience in hands-on experiences in which the participants reflected on stories of their own.

Following a morning filled with journeys about the importance of personal history and a buffet luncheon, the ABLÉ students were greeted and congratulated by Jeff Gove of the Ohio Department of Education. Next, the awards ceremony, the highlight of the day, honored the students with certificates and copies of the book, *Beginnings VI*, in which they are published authors. A special feature of this year's book was the inclusion of artwork submitted by adults with developmental disabilities from the Youngstown ABLÉ Literacy Workplace site, MASCO. These students received framed copies of their artwork as awards. The afternoon concluded with an open-mike session that, once again, brought tears to everyone's eyes as nearly all of the students read portions of their writing. This year the OLRC provided Kleenex to wipe those tears.

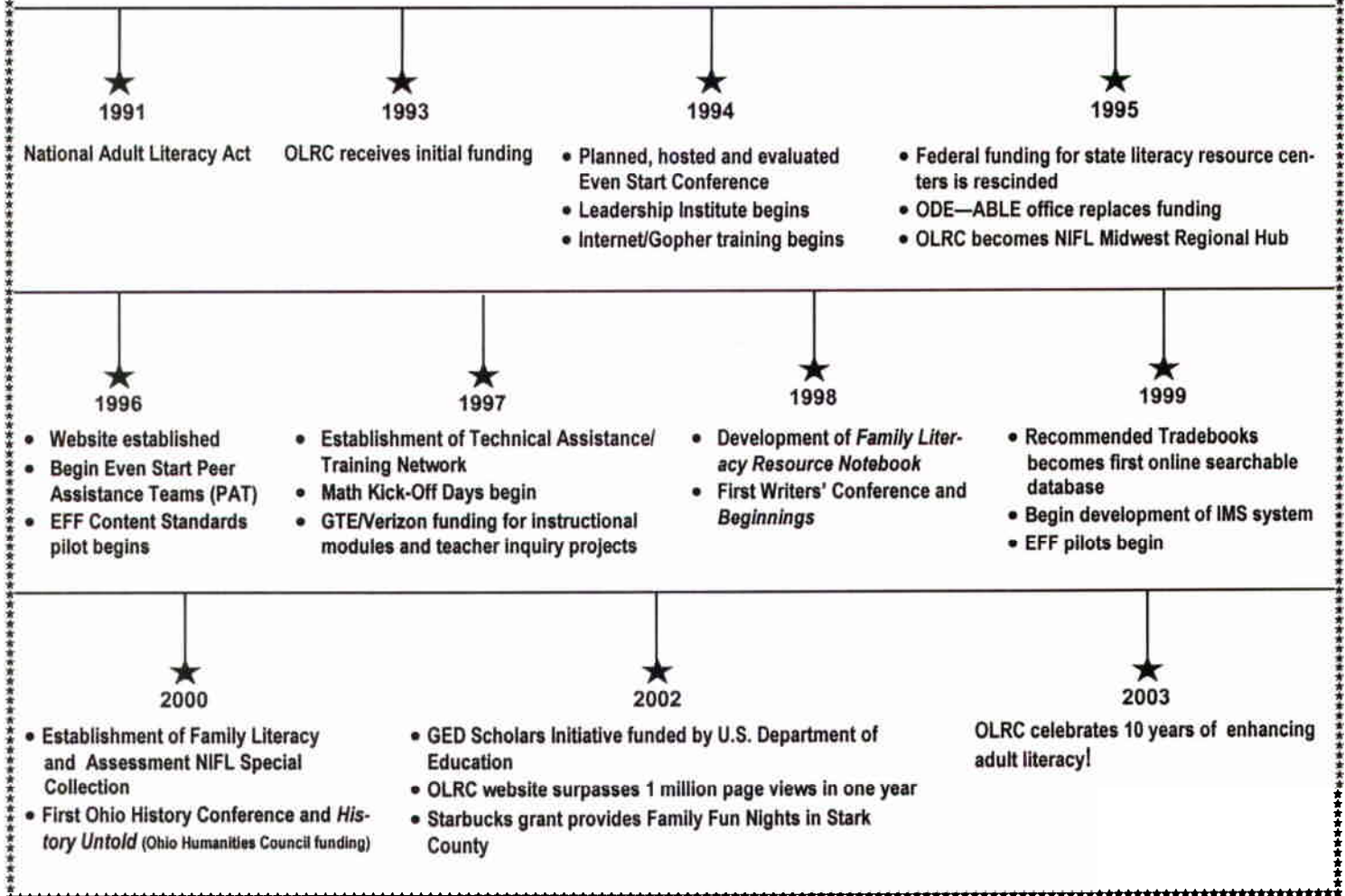
Thanks to the teachers and their talented students, this year's conference was a success! The OLRC is proud to host such an event that truly honors so many of Ohio's ABLÉ students as writers.

We invite ABLÉ students to submit writings for next year's conference. A panel of judges reviews the writings and winning authors, their teachers, and a guest are invited to attend the conference. In addition, authors are invited to submit artwork for next year's book, *Beginnings VII*. Look for submission applications this coming fall. Next year's conference will be on May 21, 2004 in Columbus.



Beginnings VI cover art submitted by Eddie Solch

Ohio Literacy Resource Center — A Timeline of Progress



Writers' Conference 2004

May 21, 2004
Wyndham Dublin Hotel
Columbus, OH

Deadline for Written Submissions is
February 6, 2004

Deadline for Artwork is September 30, 2003

Artwork will be judged on originality, and how the piece best captures the spirit of *Beginnings*. Pencil, ink, marker, or crayon creations must be submitted on an 8 1/2 x 11" white sheet of paper to the Ohio Literacy Resource Center, Attn: Beginnings ART, Research 1—1100 Summit St., Kent State University, P.O. Box 5190, Kent Ohio 44240. No computer-generated art, faxed, or emailed submissions will be accepted.

All artwork becomes the property of the OLRC.
Artwork will not be returned.



Join the OLRC
as we celebrate 10 years of
Enhancing Adult Literacy

November 7, 2003
4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Kent State University

More details to come!!



Third National Even Start Evaluation: A Quick Overview

In spring 2003 the federal government released results of the third national Even Start [ES] evaluation, conducted by Abt Associates, Inc. and Fu Associates, Inc. A brief synopsis of the study and its findings is provided below. More information, both an Executive Summary and the full report, is available at http://www.ed.gov/pubs/evenstart_third.

The evaluation included information from two complementary studies: The Even Start Performance Information Reporting System, which provided annual data about the universe of ES programs, and an experimental study of ES effectiveness. The latter was developed by seeking volunteers from 115 (of 750) ES programs that fit the researchers' selection criteria. Eighteen programs volunteered to participate. To establish experimental and control groups, researchers randomly assigned new families in these programs to ES (2/3, a total of 309 families) or asked them not to join ES for a year (1/3, a total of 154 families). The resulting groups:

- had more Latino/a people in urban areas than the overall population of ES families;
- was very under-educated (about half had less than a 9th grade education, and 85% had no high school diplomas. In comparison, only 28% of parents in Head Start families lack high school diplomas); and
- was very poor (41% below federal poverty level, compared to 13% of Head Start families).

Researchers tracked ES participation. On average, families stayed in ES for 10 months and took advantage of 20% -- 65% of available instruction. Average adult education participation was 5 hours/week; average early childhood education (ECE) participation was 6-8 hours/week. Families participated in parent education and/or parent and child together programs (PACT) for an average of 1.5 hours/week.

Researchers used the *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale* to observe in ECE classrooms. Environments were found to be literacy-rich. Instructionally, however, children learned discrete skills (e.g., ABCs, numbers) rather than participating in activities designed to enhance their language development and reasoning ability.

Parents and children in both experimental (those attending ES) and control groups were pre- and posttested in English (unless a person was "distressed," in which case testing was conducted in Spanish). Achievement results for ES families were as follows:

For adults: *Woodcock-Johnson* comprehension skills, 1 percentile point gain (from 1 to 2); basic reading skills, 3 percentile point gain (from 5 to 8), neither significantly different from control group.

For children: *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test* standard score gain of 4 (from 73 to 77), not significantly different from control group. Children's scores were positively related to their ES participation. (Adults' scores were not related to participation.)

Researchers offer several implications from this study for ES program improvement:

- **Programs need to work on retention.** This may involve minimizing conflicting requirements associated with welfare reform. Opportunity to learn must be strengthened.

- Programs need to use "quality of instruction" as the driving force in program development. It's not enough to simply have a program component. Rather excellence and adherence to research-based program qualities should be the criteria for program development.
- Government agencies need to reestablish "acceptable" outcomes. Adults in ES families are very under-educated, and GED completion may not be an attainable outcome for many.
- Government agencies need to shift requirements (as stipulated in required program elements) away from administrative aspects of programs. Instead, the quality and intensity of instruction should be the focus.

Pilots Evaluate MH/LL Project

Friday, June 13th was a lucky day for the teams from the six Madison Heights/Lifelines pilot programs who gathered at the Whetstone Library in Columbus to share experiences. Pilot programs and directors included Compact ABLE-Kent (Joyce Taylor), Garfield Heights Community Center (Paula McCullough), Maplewood Career Center-Ravenna (Odessa Pinkard), Kettering City Schools (Cindy Smith), Northwest ABLE (Charlie Flaig), and Galia-Jackson-Vinton Joint Vocational School District (Lili Roush). Everyone participated in an evaluation of the successful project and helped plan for an expanded use of the materials next fall.

After a welcome by Denise Pottmeyer, the attendees evaluated the use of the two new video series that were developed by Intelcom, the same organization that created *Crossroads Café* and *On Common Ground*. The series, which includes 20 30-minute videos, student worktexts, reproducible masters, and a teacher's resource book, helps adult learners practice their basic skills of reading, writing, math, and critical thinking while exercising their problem-solving skills on the family issues presented in the videos and doing related learning activities with their children. Small groups shared their successes and challenges and then compared them with data from final reports.

The videos, which were viewed in class and on home visits, were very popular. The print materials were used in a wide variety of ways, sometimes emphasizing ABLE skills and sometimes focusing on parent education. Although the videos occasionally provoked emotional responses to the problems depicted in them, energetic, meaningful discussions and enthusiastic writing followed. Programs wished that they had had more time to implement more of the materials and involve more people. After lunch, programs showed portions of the videotapes they took of their classes using the materials.

Programs interested in using Madison Heights/Lifelines videos and print materials next fall are encouraged to attend two sessions at the Early Childhood Education Conference on November 13-15 in Columbus. A pre-conference 4-hour session will view videos and examine print resources. In a continuation session on Friday, attendees will hear a panel from the pilot programs share their experiences.

Resources and Reviews

Fass, S. & Garner, B. (2000). *Beyond the GED: Making Conscious Choices About the GED and Your Future*. Washington, DC: NCSALL.

This workbook describes the paths one can take after passing the GED. The labor market is discussed as one option. Within this first unit, the following topics are introduced: the kinds of jobs are available, what's happening to the jobs that do exist, and wages. The second unit focuses on pursuing higher education. This unit explores the economic impact of higher education and the connection between education and earnings. Learners can explore their own reasons for attending or not attending college. The third unit examines the connection between the GED and the decision to stay in or drop out of school. Learners will also gain practice understanding research findings. This workbook is a good first step for GED graduates to begin planning their future.

For more information on NCSALL publications, visit their website at <http://ncsall.gse.harvard.edu/teach>.

Gordon, E., & Gordon, E. (2003). *Literacy in America: Historic Journey and Contemporary Solutions*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

This book is the result of ten years of research on how literacy developed and was maintained in the United States.

It begins with a brief overview of how literacy has been defined through history and how it has been measured. The rest of the book describes the development of literacy from the settling of the United States up to the present time. Primary source materials trace the history of literacy with a focus on the development of literacy outside the realm of formal schooling. In each section of the book there is attention to the literacy development of women. A chapter is devoted to the literacy development of Native Americans and another on African American literacy development. A major theme throughout the book is the role families played in the education of their children. The conclusion includes suggestions for revitalizing this home-school connection in literacy development. This will appeal to a broad audience. It gives a comprehensive historical look at the development of literacy in America.

Thompkins, A.C., & Binder, K.S. (2003). A comparison of the factors affecting reading performance of functionally illiterate adults and children matched by reading level. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 38, 236-258.

Because of the small amount of research on adult new readers, adult literacy teachers are often encouraged to use research about children as a guide for working with their adult learners. A new study suggests that this advice is only partially appropriate.

Amanda C. Thompkins and Katherine S. Binder compared the performance of 60 "functionally illiterate" adults, (the majority of whom spoke English as their first language) with the performance of 99 children on a variety of measures thought

to contribute to early reading success. Adults and children with similar reading ability were matched for comparison. Factors related to phonological awareness, phonics, spelling (orthographic ability), word reading (real and nonsense words), and short-term memory were explored.

An analysis was done to determine which of the factors influenced adults' TABE-7 scores. Only spelling (orally and in writing, both words and nonwords) and word identification (selecting the word that matched a picture) were found to predict TABE scores significantly. The researchers also found that short-term memory had no relationship to reading performance.

The comparison of adult and child readers showed that

- the two groups were similar in phonological awareness ability, except for middle portions of words (adults performed better);
- adults were better at spelling real words but worse at spelling nonwords than children; and
- both groups had more success with words (compared to nonwords), but the difference in performance was greater for adults than for children.

The researchers speculate that these advantages for adult new readers may be the result of "adults' accumulated general world knowledge and experience with language" (p. 254). Recommendations for adult literacy programs focus on helping adults build phonological decoding skills and "at the same time encourage discussion about what strategies we use to recognize words and the ways to use them" (p. 254).

So what does this mean for adult literacy teachers? Some specific suggestions from OLRC staff based on this article include:

- find out about your beginning readers' decoding ability and invented spelling levels
- build on adults' real-world knowledge to help them develop generalizations that will apply to reading and writing other words (such as word sorts or making words)
- assess the phonological awareness of your beginning readers and provide instruction if necessary.

In general, it may be helpful to look at descriptions of child beginning readers to gain insight into adult beginning readers. Keep in mind that there are exceptions and use information based on adult beginning readers when it is available.

(1997). *Stress Management*. South Deerfield, MA: Channing L. Bete Co., Inc.

This handbook for low level readers is designed to help the reader understand stress – what causes it and how to manage it. It includes dozens of useful tips, as well as space for the reader to write responses about their stressors and ideas for reducing stress. It points out that friends and family members can be a tremendous help to relieve stress.

This booklet is distributed by: Grass Roots Press, 888-303-3213, fax 780-413-6582, <http://www.literacyservices.com> or call 800-628-7733 to contact Channing L. Bete Co., Inc. directly.

(2000). *Loving Discipline for Children Ages 1 through 5*. South Deerfield, MA: Channing L. Bete Co., Inc.

Learning what behaviors are appropriate for children at varying ages is essential information for all new parents. Designed for low level readers, this booklet is useful for parents who have children age 1 through 5. Parents can learn what behaviors to expect for their child's age. This knowledge will help parents in encouraging their child to learn and in guiding their child toward safe and appropriate behaviors. Parents will also find out about the difference between discipline and punishment and how to teach their child good behavior in a loving way. The self reflections mentioned in the booklet are also valuable for positive parenting.

This booklet is distributed by: Grass Roots Press, 888-303-3213, fax 780/413-6582, <http://www.literacyservices.com> or call 1-800-628-7733 to contact Channing L. Bete Co., Inc. directly.

MATH RESOURCES

Manly, M. (2003). *The GED Math Problem Solver: A Breakthrough Approach to GED Math Preparation (2nd Ed.)*. Chicago, IL: Contemporary McGraw Hill.

Myrna Manly was a GED test editor and consultant. She has updated this problem solving book to correlate to the GED 2002 test. While the format and much material remains the same, some features are quite different.

The *GED Math Problem Solver* integrates problem-solving and reasoning strategies with mathematical skills using problems encountered in everyday life. This text builds understanding of mathematical relationships by focusing on problem-solving skills; developing estimation and mental math strategies; and integrating algebra, geometry, and data analysis with arithmetic.

The book includes:

- 25 lessons combining instruction, practice, and review
- Complete answer key, including solutions
- Cumulative review and GED practice at the end of each lesson
- Test-taking lessons and practice
- Exercises using data and graphs collected in the appendix
- Calculator exploration using the Casio fx-260
- Full-length GED Mathematics practice test

Many more charts and graphs are incorporated into the book due to the increased number on the new GED test. In addition, the appendix contains data files that include a variety of statistics in different forms. Health, nutrition, and fitness, travel and transportation, GED states, sports and entertainment, sci-

ence and geography, and consumer and citizen are all areas covered in the data section. Measurement equivalents and other ways to compute are included in the mathematics portion of the appendix. There are also the GED formula page and calculator directions.

The text offers much practice in GED-type problems and includes multiple choice and open answers with gridded answer keys. After each chapter are two sections: check your understanding and GED practice.

This book is one that provides a novel approach to adult education and is a valuable resource for all adult education teachers.

Manly, Myrna (2003). *The GED Math Problem Solver: Teacher's Guide (2nd Ed.)*. Contemporary McGraw Hill

The *GED Math Problem Solver Teacher's Guide* is the companion to *The GED Math Problem Solver* student book and takes an innovative approach to integrated mathematics and its real-life applications. This guide contains classroom activities promoting group interaction, hands-on learning, critical thinking, estimation, and mental math.

The book includes:

- Background information to provide insight into each student lesson
- Recommendations for presentation of math concepts
- Extension activities to deepen students' understanding
- Detailed explanation and extension of reasoning activity, calculator exploration, and using data exercises in the student texts
- Convenient handouts and transparency masters for classroom activities

Each book is \$14.69. However, if a school system, college, or correctional facility purchases the books, they are only \$11.50 plus shipping and handling. Information can be obtained at: http://shop.mhcontemporary.com/cgi-bin/contemp/scan/sp=mhc_resultslist.html/va=showimage=/fi=products/tf=related,%20title/sf=related/su=yes/sc=2002gedmathprob.



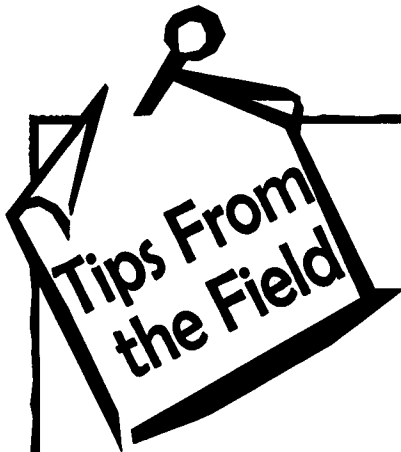
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LINCS Showcases Teaching Resources

Many of the *LINCS* eleven special collections contain teaching resources that are so good these resources are kept in their own place. This place is the Showcase, found by clicking on the "showcase" button located on the gray sidebar of the *LINCS* Special Collections pages. All sites in the special collections are approved for quality by a panel of experts in the field. The Showcase sites are the best of these sites. Showcase sites are changed periodically and are found in the following Special Collections: assessment, corrections, English as a second language, family literacy, health literacy, science and numeracy, and technology training. These excellent resources range from a study on the effects of education on prison recidivism to a site on earthquakes. To find all the *LINCS* Special Collections go to www.midwestlincs.org and click on the Collections button on the top of the page. Choose the desired collection and click on Showcase.



This is the first in a series of tips for teachers from teachers. The following tips on recruitment and retention came from ideas shared during the roundtable sessions at the Early Childhood Education Conference this past fall. If you have ideas you would like to share, please contact Dianna Baycich at dbaycich@literacy.kent.edu.

Topic: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Important points:

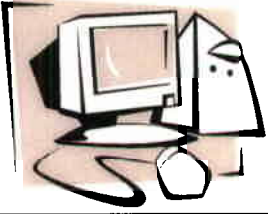
- Services must be relevant to students
- Instruction must match the learning styles of students
- The program must meet the needs of students
- The goals of the program must be realistic for students
- All staff should treat all students with respect

Materials and strategies used:

- Materials used for recruitment include: flyers, word of mouth, local papers and local news.
- Materials used to help retention: surveys given to the adults to see why they started – a challenge is to find out why they stopped attending.
- Survey to find out what inhibits the students from coming to class.
- Follow-up with students who miss class
- Helping adults with time management
- Giving small rewards for success in PACT, for attendance, in parenting classes, etc.
- Having people volunteer at local elementary schools, for example, serve coffee and donuts
- Help students prioritize how to use time
- Focus on student strengths
- Develop a consistent relationship with students
- Involve students in operation of program – get students involved – have them do meaningful things
- Help solve some basic needs before students can concentrate on learning
- Must decide if quality or quantity is more important
- Sometimes support services are the major need
- Take a look at program design

Agencies that are helping:

- Jobs & Family Services
- Rehabilitation services
- Health department
- Local family and children councils
- Head Start & Early Head Start
- Local schools
- Public library
- The wellness program at the children's hospital. The most successful referrals were from the pediatricians through the children's hospital.
- Monthly meetings of the local agencies and services



Summer 2003

The OLRC News

Tech Talk

Project IDEAL Updates and Highlights

Kimberly McCoy
Distance Learning Coordinator



Sharon Halter, Kimberly S. McCoy,
and Ella Bogard COABE in Portland, OR

started recruiting learners to participate in the Distance Learning pilot project in January 2003, and they are collectively serving 100 students. In addition to their teaching and administrative duties, each pilot participant has been maintaining various logs that pertain to teacher and administrator time, basic student demographic information, and a student seat time around the GED Connection curriculum. The data will be used to look at a number of key issues around distance instruction in the ABLE classroom, such as teacher's and administrator's time and cost, recruiting, retention and assessment. Currently, Ohio is working with 13 teachers and 7 administrators in these ABLE programs.

OAACE

This past April at the Ohio Association for Adult and Continuing Education Conference (OAACE), teachers and administrators from each of the pilot sites, gathered to discuss issues with Denise Pottmeyer, ABLE State Director, Cynthia Zengler, ODE Consultant, Karen Scheid, ODE Consultant, Kimberly S. McCoy, Ohio Literacy Resource Center (OLRC), Andrew Venclauskas, Northeast ABLE Resource Center, Diane Ninke, Northwest ABLE Resource Center, and Robert Mentzer, Ohio Literacy Network. The meeting provided an opportunity for pilot sites to share lessons learned to date, as well as discuss issues and concerns about the project with the committee members.

Also, during OAACE, Ella Bogard and Jerusha McClendon, Franklinton Learning Center, Lori Oliver, Canton

City Schools, Sharon Halter, Ohio-Hi Point Career Center, and Joyce Taylor, Six District Educational Compact ABLE in Kent presented a session about how they have established, developed and implemented a distance-learning environment in their ABLE programs to participants.

Another major highlight at OAACE was two of Project IDEAL's participants Sharon Halter, Ohio-Hi Point Career Center, and Nancy Schwab, Hamilton City Schools, being honored for their efforts in Adult Education. Sharon received the **Administrator of the Year Award** and Nancy received the **Teacher of the Year Award**. Congratulations again on a job well done!

COABE

Ella Bogard, Franklinton Learning Center, Sharon Halter, Ohio-Hi Point Career Center, and Kimberly S. McCoy, OLRC, presented Project IDEAL: A Distance Learning Pilot Project in Ohio, at this year's Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) conference in Portland, OR. Kimberly provided a brief overview of the project in Ohio as well as the University of Michigan, Project IDEAL duties and responsibilities. Sharon and Ella each provided information detailing how they have created and maintained a distance-learning environment in their programs. In addition, both administrators shared what they have learned to date about distance learning in the ABLE classroom.

FUTURE PLANS AND NEXT STEPS

Kim McCoy, Distance Learning Coordinator is in the process of scheduling on-site visits to meet with the IDEAL programs. In addition, the Project IDEAL Advisory Committee met in June at the OLRC to discuss future plans and next steps. Also, a one-day wrap session is scheduled for August 1st at Kent State University for the Project IDEAL pilot sites. Keep an eye on the Project IDEAL Website located at <http://literacy.kent.edu/ideal> for information on future plans and next steps or contact, Kimberly S. McCoy, Project IDEAL Coordinator via e-mail at kmccoy@literacy.kent.edu or phone at (800) 765-2897 ext. 20757 or (330) 672-0757.



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