

## Nevada educators continue to prove performance

Congratulations to the thirty-three adult educators who earned Nevada's outcome-based ABE Certificate of Performance during the past year:

- ★ **CALL:** Carolyn Neighbors
- ★ **CSN:** Tracy Allen, Marissa Araquistain, Cindy Carr, Della Coronado, Amy Fenton, Ryan Gourley, Thomas Scott, Mark Simmons, Lakeisha Young
- ★ **CMC:** Marcelo Bernal, Carolyn Pizor, Linda Lee Rauenbuehler
- ★ **GBC:** Harold Hibbert, Rebecca Mullikin
- ★ **NNLC:** Leticia Zenea
- ★ **TMCC:** Stepany Ayvazian, Robert Balderrama, Linli Hall, Gail Hettich, James Howard, Alma Kiker, Paul Krefting, Balbaine Mengu, Rochelle Mueller, James M. Mueller, Nantapa Posrinak, Luca Steiner, Gargi Vig, Dawn Wiegel
- ★ **WNC:** Jeanne L. Bruce, John Childress, Angela (Shield) Andrade

Additional kudos to the seven instructors who renewed their Certificates, continuing to show exemplary student outcomes and participation in meaningful professional development during the preceding three years:

- ★ **CMC:** John Kunkle, Thomas Luscher
- ★ **GBC:** Susan Bettles, Louise Tousignant
- ★ **TMCC:** Joan Howard, Paula Kizis, Silvia Rodriguez

### Many ways to renew

Adult educators now have many ways to earn the two professional development credits required for renewing the ABE Certificate of Performance. They include:

- Professional Learning Communities and workshops and offered through Nevada State Leadership
- Continuing education and college/university coursework
- Online/Web-based courses with significant facilitator support
- Development and presentation of a high quality, meaningful workshop to a local program
- Independent study (investigate instructional issues of a particular concern, collect information, and report on processes and results)

For more information on the nation's only outcome-based recognition program, contact Ken Zutter, 775/687-7291, [kzutter@doe.nv.gov](mailto:kzutter@doe.nv.gov) or visit <http://www.literacynet.org/nvabecp/>.

## Wikis for teachers and students

*Source: Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal, Spring 2009*

A wiki is a set of Web pages that can be edited easily by anyone who has permission.

PBworks (<http://pbworks.com>) offers wiki service that is free at a basic level. Wikispaces (<http://www.wikispaces.com/>) is free for educators.

With either, teachers can create secure, private wikis for their classes. Students could use a wiki or PBworks space to develop a class vocabulary list, write and edit a class or program newspaper, or do a "virtual visit" with another class (anywhere), where

students in each class could write about their own community and share questions and answers about each others' communities.

Wikispaces and PBworks have easy-to-use, MSWord-like editing interfaces. Students can easily edit pages. As with all wikis, it is not a good idea to have students all go to the same wiki page at the same time in a lab setting. It creates confusion if more than one person is editing a page at the same time.

# Professional wisdom: What is it and how can you get more of it?

*Adapted from "Professional Wisdom: Just What Is It? How Do I Access It and How Do I Judge It?"  
By Federico Salas-Isnardi, Texas Adult & Family Literacy Quarterly, April 2009*



Adult educators constantly seek the best ways to teach and have been encouraged (sometimes mandated!) to use scientifically-based research as a basis for practice. As defined by the U.S. DOE, **scientifically based research** is rigorous, systematic, objective, empirical, and peer-reviewed. It also relies on multiple measurements and observations, and is preferably conducted through experimental or quasi-experimental methods.

This type of research in adult education is sparse, so the field often turns to **evidence-based practice**, which is the integration of professional wisdom with the best available empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction.

**Professional wisdom** is the judgment that individuals acquire through their experience, including the "effective identification and incorporation of local circumstances into instruction." Professional wisdom also includes the field's consensus views on issues of importance.

Each of us acquires different experiences throughout the course of our professional lives. In addition, each of us may have a different perspective or understanding of the same experience based on our own personal views, philosophy, and knowledge. That is why our personal judgment alone cannot constitute professional wisdom. We must arrive at a consensus based upon the careful consideration of the views of many professionals and respected colleagues. This consensus view takes into account local circumstances to adapt instruction to specific contexts.

In a 2007 online discussion of professional wisdom ([www.wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Professional\\_Wisdom](http://www.wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Professional_Wisdom)), Dr. John Comings, former director of the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, addressed consensus, suggesting that professional wisdom should be judged by a peer review process in much the same way as research is reviewed. He maintains that a jury of peers evaluating professional wisdom should include practitioners and researchers. **He suggests that the best way to share professional wisdom among colleagues is through online resources** that not only allow access to the wisdom shared but also include a review by peers and a synthesis of the research and wisdom.

Science is organized knowledge. Wisdom is organized life. —Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804)

Here is a starter list of such electronic resources for sharing and accessing professional wisdom

- ✓ ALE (Adult Literacy Education) Wiki  
Created by Dr. David Rosen and maintained by a number of professionals who actively contribute content and expertise, the ALE Wiki is a significant source of professional wisdom. Anyone can access the Wiki, but in order to add your own content or edit topics, you must create an account, log in, and introduce yourself to the community. These steps keep people who are not professionals in the field from adding irrelevant material. Evidence-based education, professional wisdom, ESOL, GED research, and Corrections Education are five of the more than 30 topics you can access from <http://wiki.literacytent.org>.
- ✓ CAELA (Center for Adult English Language Acquisition)  
The CAELA Network ([www.cal.org/caela](http://www.cal.org/caela)), a project of the Center for Applied Linguistics, is funded by the U.S. Education Department. The Center's website includes resources for ESL practitioners and researchers including bibliographies, books, briefs, reports, and a searchable database of ESL resources. The research section includes a wealth of statistical information on ESL measures that should be very helpful to anyone doing research.
- ✓ CALPRO (California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project)  
One of the premier professional development projects in the nation, CALPRO ([www.calpro-online.org/](http://www.calpro-online.org/)) offers a wealth of resources — including publications, research digests, and resource guides — to teachers and other professionals.
- ✓ NIFL's listservs  
The National Institute for Literacy hosts ten rich, robust discussion lists on topics such as health literacy, learning disabilities, technology and literacy, etc. Visit [www.nifl.gov](http://www.nifl.gov), then click on "discussion lists" to join a list.

## NAE News — Pierce joins Board



Alan D. Pierce has joined the Board of Directors, providing representation for institutional programs. Alan keeps very busy at Lovelock Correctional Center, where he teaches math and U.S. history to the general population, plus business English, creative writing, and constitutional history to students working on advanced degrees through WNC. He also oversees the GED Tests and NSHSPE (Nevada State High School Proficiency Exams) for segregated students and coordinates the education program for them as well.

From 1984-2005, Alan taught all subjects to incarcerated youth at the maximum-security Lane County Juvenile Justice Center in Eugene, OR. He received his B.A. in political science/education from Washington State University, his M.S. in curriculum and instruction from the University of Oregon, and a special education endorsement from Lewis and Clark State College in Portland.

Alan leads his colleagues as well as his students: He was an institution representative for the Union Education Association and has served in various Executive Board positions for the Lane County Education Association. He currently serves as building representative for the Pershing County Classroom Teachers Association and also holds membership in the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association, the Correctional Education Association, the National Education Association, and the Nevada State Education Association.

“I believe education is one of most vital programs offered in prison,” said Alan, “as it gives students the opportunity to succeed, which ultimately benefits all of us. I joined the Board because I’d like to be involved with other adult educators to enhance and improve services for the prison population and for all those in need of adult education.”

## Listserv netiquette

*Adapted from guidelines provided by the National Institute for Literacy, [www.nifl.gov](http://www.nifl.gov)*

We all gain from dialogue conducted in a spirit of inquiry, curiosity, and mutual respect, whether it be face-to-face or online, crossing thousands of miles. Here are some of the more common practices professional adult educators follow when using listservs:

- You may wish to introduce yourself to other list members when posting to the list for the first time.
- The header information is not displayed on all mail systems; therefore, including your name, contact information, and program or affiliation at the end of your message will better allow others to respond to your message.
- Be concise. Messages more than two screens in length are difficult for some participants to read. Messages that are short and “to the point” move the discussion along at a lively pace.
- Before you send a reply, consider whether it should go to everyone on the list or just to the person posting the message. If you think your reply will be of general interest, then send it to the list; if not, be careful to reply only to the message originator. When replying to an individual, make sure that person's email address is the only one appearing in the "To" box.
- When you are replying to a posted message, it helps readers if you quote the part of the message (usually not the whole message) that you are replying to. All list readers will then respond to your message in the proper context. If the message thread gets too long, remove the older postings at the beginning of the thread.
- If you are responding to a posting but want to change the topic of a discussion thread, remember to change the subject line in the email to give members information about the new direction in the conversation.
- Email messages typed in all capitals are considered shouting and in discussion forums are considered rude, so please be considerate. To emphasize text, you might want to use *\*emphasis\** or *\_emphasis\_* instead of all capitals.
- Comments made in jest on a mailing list may not always appear that way to other readers. Sarcasm rarely works on the Internet and is often misunderstood. Please be careful using humor on the lists.

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## Key conferences for 2009-2010

**What:** CATESOL LA Regional Conference, October 24, Los Angeles, CA  
**Contact:** <http://www.catesol.org/regional.html>

**What:** "Effective Transitions in Adult Education," National College Transition Network, November 16 – 17, Providence, RI  
**Contact:** [www.collegetransition.org](http://www.collegetransition.org)

**What:** COABE/ProLiteracy Joint Conference, March 15-19, 2010, Chicago, IL  
**Contact:** [www.coabe.org](http://www.coabe.org)

**What:** 44<sup>th</sup> Annual TESOL Convention and Exhibit, March 24-27, Boston, MA  
**Contact:** [http://www.tesol.org/s\\_tesol/convention2010/](http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/convention2010/)

**What:** Mountain Plains Adult Ed. Association (MPAEA) 2010 Conference, April 21-24, Phoenix, AZ  
**Contact:** [www.mpaea.org](http://www.mpaea.org)

**What:** CATESOL 2010 Annual State Conference, April 22-25, Santa Clara, CA.  
**Contact:** <http://www.catesol2010.org/>

