

Students, colleagues, business laud Tabb-Martin



Veteran GED preparation teacher Noreen Tabb-Martin recently received CSN's Distinguished Part-Time Faculty of the Year Award, given annually in recognition of excellence in teaching and service.

"Noreen brings enthusiasm, experience and understanding to every class she teaches," said ABE program director Cynthia Pierrott. "She applies her knowledge of curriculum and adult learner needs to her classes, tailoring her delivery of material to be covered to each class. She has helped countless students take and pass the GED exam; many of these students have moved on to post-secondary education and career development training."

Rebecca Metty-Burns, director of the Workforce & Economic Development Division, cited Noreen's dedication, professionalism, willingness to start classes at new locations, and — most importantly — her effect on students. Referencing unsolicited emails and

feedback, Rebecca said, "In a program filled with excellent and devoted instructors, she stands out. Her students gain far more than the knowledge to pass the GED. They gain self-confidence, self-worth, and a vision to reach for the next goal after attaining their GED."

Noreen also helps the College build and maintain positive relationships with business and industry leaders in Clark County. Chris Cappas, a vice president at Harrah's, wrote in support of Noreen's nomination for the award: "When I first walked into her class at CSN, I was immediately engaged and though I only intended on staying in the classroom for about 15 minutes, I ended up staying the full hour. ... After that morning, I was completely sold on having CSN teach classes at our site and I was even more thrilled to learn that Noreen would be the morning instructor for our initial rollout. ... She doesn't wait for the training team to act upon a request; she just does what is needed and looks out for everyone. I found that it didn't take long for the class to fall in love with her. They were coming in at least thirty minutes before class began or staying afterward for additional help. She has a very unique gift."

Noreen is a certified Irlen Scotopic Sensitivity Screener for the State of Nevada and a trainer for the Learning to Achieve (LD) program. She has presented at national conferences and trains other instructors at the regional level.

She is such a caring individual and is so committed to the success of every student that they can't help but feel like they are the most important person in the room. There are a lot of teachers, but few are as passionate and likable as Noreen.

— Chris Cappas, Vice President of
Employment & Training, Las Vegas
Region, Harrah's Entertainment, Inc.

The gap between knowing and doing is only bridged by the human heart.

If we are willing to open our hearts to what's really going on, we will find the energy to become active again. We will find the will and courage to do something. This is true of our individual lives, in our communities and organizations, and in our nation-states.

— Margaret Wheatley, *Turning to One Another*, 2002

Walking the blog

Thanks to Marian Thacher, Director of OTAN (California's Outreach and Technical Assistance Network), for sharing this information via a recent online discussion.

Blogs were one of the first ways that made it easy to publish on the web — no HTML, no server needed, no Web address to purchase — just type and then click to publish. Teachers were some of the first to take advantage of this opportunity because an audience is an important part of learning to write, and suddenly we were able to give our students an international audience. Teachers are still using blogs to build online community with students and to publish assignments and students' writings.

At <http://webTwoPointOhInAdultEd.wikispaces.com/Blogs> you can find several short articles about educational blogging and how to use it. You can also view some examples of adult education blogs. Here are some classroom blogs that stand out, with Marian's comments:

- <http://arlingtonhillsjobs.blogspot.com/>: I like to show this blog for beginning ESL students from Minnesota because it's a nice use of low-literacy activities and it takes advantage of the ability to post photos. This teacher has her students post their assignments as comments to her blog post. The students didn't need to register or login, so their posts are anonymous, but she has them add their names at the top of the comments.
- <http://elidinamarca.blogspot.com/>: An intermediate ESL teacher in Oceanside, CA posts slideshows created by her students to illustrate various grammar points, such as "used to." The slideshows are narrated by the authors.
- <http://tayloresl.wordpress.com/>. Here is a blog by an advanced ESL teacher in Buffalo, NY. She uses her blog to post assignments, with students responding in the comments, and to post a recap of her lessons for those who miss class. Her audience is her students; the objectives are to build community and share student writing; her strategy is to make her lessons and her students' writings easily accessible. She uses a blog to accomplish all this.
- <http://voicesfromloysville.blogspot.com/>. I like to promote this blog from a teacher in a juvenile correction facility, even though she is no longer teaching, because it's such a great example of using technology to give voice to those whose voices aren't often heard. I loved reading the students' writings, and I always tried to leave a comment so that they would know someone out there is hearing them. The students didn't have Internet access, but the teacher would print out the posts and comments and bring them to class. Also, she's a great writing teacher and you can get some ideas from checking out her assignments.

Report validates efficacy of online methods for low-level learners

The National Institute for Literacy's October 2008 report, [*Investigating the Language and Literacy Skills Required for Independent Online Learning*](#), takes a panoramic look at participation in online learning by adults with low literacy and low levels of English proficiency.

The analysis triangulated from multiple data sources — large-scale studies, research literature, and experts and practitioners in the field — to reveal some of the access, implementation, and design issues for the target populations and their online learning habits.

Together, these data suggest that learners at even the lowest levels of literacy and language proficiency can engage with online learning content. It is the interaction among learners' skills, the online environments they encounter, and the supports available that are key to learners' success with online environments. Supports — in the form of an online avatar, distance coach, tech support hotline, drop-in facilitator, or tutor — are critical to helping learners strike and maintain a balance and be successful.

Self-directed skills valued in lifelong learners can be nurtured by providing facilitated access to online, independent learning environments. The studies converge on the findings that engagement with these environments fostered the skills associated with successful self-directed learning.

Online environments serve the common adult goal of improving workforce readiness, provide authentic communication channels that tap into adults' family and community involvement, and supply an opportunity to engage in self-study and informal learning.

We have confirmation that we are headed in the right direction with the inclusion of online technologies for the instruction and engagement of adult learners, even those with the most limited skills and language proficiencies.

Lifelong learning online

Online professional development has expanded during the past year, with more sites regularly offering more courses — some have registration fees, many are free!

For teachers new to adult education

-  At <http://www.c-pal.net/course/index.html> are links to five free, short, self-paced courses for adult literacy instructors new to the field. The site is sponsored by OVAE (Office of Vocational and Adult Education).
-  ESL FastTrack is an in-depth, facilitated 8-week course for novice ESL teachers. Experienced instructors who have not had formal training report it's very useful to them, also. The \$335 registration fee includes a textbook. The next course starts October 19; visit www.cpcc.edu/, search for "fasttrack".

Especially for ESL teachers

-  Heinle/Cengage (<http://eltadvantage.heinle.com/>) offers self-paced courses with moderated discussion boards on a variety of topics for teachers of English Language learners. Courses last six weeks, take about 24-30 hours to complete, and cost \$99 each.
-  [Pearson Longman's Teacher Development Interactive](#) offers four modules (fundamentals of ELT, reading, listening, and speaking). The courses deliver a strong foundation in teaching methodology for new teachers and teachers looking for a refresher, as well. Each module is hosted by an expert and costs \$122.

Specific topics for all

-  ProfessionalStudiesAE.org, a collaboration between ProLiteracy and World Education, offers a wide variety of free, self-paced courses. The organization also schedules in-depth, facilitated courses throughout the year. Prices vary from \$179 - \$249. Scheduled for fall:
 - Introduction to College Transition Math Oct 11-Dec 13
 - Differentiated Instruction Oct 12-Dec 13
 - College Readiness for Adults: Beyond Academic Preparation! Oct 14 – Dec 8
 - Teaching Reasoning and Problem Solving Strategies Nov 1-Dec 17Check the Web site for additional offerings.
-  The National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs hosts monthly Webinars for a nominal fee. Visit www.naasln.org for current offerings.
-  Florida TechNet, a grant-funded project that provides technology assistance and training to adult and community education providers, has generously opened its online courses to adult educators throughout the country. Visit www.floridatechnet.org/moodle to access free, self-paced modules on teaching reading, ESOL, health literacy for English language learners, various GED topics, and workplace readiness skills.
-  [Thinkfinity's Literacy Network](#) offers nearly 50 free, self-paced courses to support educators and volunteers working with adult learners. Courses are searchable by audience (teacher/tutor, manager, parent, and volunteer) at <http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/TLN/courses>.

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Immigrant facts and stats

Thanks to Brad Deeds for this link to "a good one-stop Web site with factual tidbits on the political and economic power of immigrants in Nevada." Some examples of what you'll find at

www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/new-americans-silver-state:

- Roughly one in five Nevadans are immigrants; 37% of them are naturalized U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote.
- More than twenty-seven percent of foreign-born persons who were naturalized U.S. citizens in 2008 had a bachelor's or higher degree, compared to 13.2% of noncitizens. At the same time, only 22.6% of naturalized citizens lacked a high-school diploma, compared to 46.5% of noncitizens.
- Latinos (both foreign-born and native-born) account for more than \$14 billion in consumer purchasing power, Asians \$6.1 billion.

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Southern NV CATESOL Conference October 8-9 “Say Yes To Success: Pathways to Global Education” CSN West Charleston campus

Join your fellow teachers and ELL educators at this day-and-a-half conference to share and discover new ideas for helping English Language Learners achieve academic success. Registration fee is \$50 for CATESOL members, \$75 for non-members. Graduate credit is an additional \$45. Some highlights of the event:

- Extensive selection of workshops for K-12, post-secondary, and adult education teachers beginning Friday at 4:00 p.m. and Saturday at 8:00 a.m.
- Full complimentary dinner with multicultural entertainment Friday night on the patio, followed by plenary speaker Dr. Laura Lyke.
- Complimentary continental breakfast Saturday morning.
- Keynote by Brian Pollock, McGraw Hill School Education Group, Saturday afternoon.
- Opportunity to earn one graduate-level credit from Southern Utah University, meeting the TESL endorsement requirements for Methods and Materials, Lane Change for CCSD, and license renewal for the State of Nevada.

More information:

- Web site: <http://www.snvcatesol.org>
- Registration: Jodi Ruback
jodi.ruback@csn.edu, 702/651-4164
- Conference/membership: Sylvia Villalva
svillalva@interact.ccsd.net, 702/885-2115

Free multilevel workshop in Winnemucca October 22

Participants will learn at least three different strategies for teaching multilevel classes and practice several tools and resources that will help them teach multilevel classes with confidence. Presented by Tünde Csepelyi.

RSVP to Sally Schumacher by October 15: sallys@gwmail.gbcnv.edu, 775/623-1811