

**Mutual of America lauds Catholic Charities**

*From left: Denise Hogan, Nita Russell-Latham, Joann Hussey-Lindsay, Robbie Fink, Aurora Cadenas, and Joan Logue.*

Catholic Charities Migration & Refugee Services was recently recognized as a 2010 Merit Finalist for the National Mutual of America Community Partnership Award. The Las Vegas organization received the award for helping refugees become productive members of the community through assistance with food, shelter, clothing, and education for up to five years after they arrive in southern Nevada. For those refugees who do not have family in the area, Catholic Charities becomes that family, coordinating and overseeing community resources through its wide network of programs and services.

Mutual of America donated \$15,000 to the program and held an awards luncheon at Aria Hotel and Casino for Catholic Charities and its community partners.

The ESL program served more than 900 students during the 2009-10 academic year. Seventy-eight percent of those pre- and post-tested completed at least one educational level and nearly two-thirds obtained a job. "We only have four full-time and two part-time teachers, but they and our support staff do an amazing job," said Second Language School Manager Nita Russell-Latham. "It's gratifying to see a national organization recognize the work we and our partners do."

**Key conferences through 2011**

- √ Adult Learner Leadership Conference, October 9-11, Sacramento, CA. [www.valueusa.org](http://www.valueusa.org)
- √ National Career Pathways Network (NCPN) Conference, Oct 12-14, Orlando, FL. <https://www.ncpn.info/2011-ncpn-conf.php>
- √ CATESOL San Diego Regional conference, Oct 15, San Diego, CA. <http://nvae.us/36>
- √ CATESOL Los Angeles Regional Conference, Oct 22, Cypress, CA. [www.catesol.org/laregional](http://www.catesol.org/laregional)
- √ AAACE Conference, Oct 30-Nov 4, Indianapolis, IN. [www.aaace.org](http://www.aaace.org)
- √ ProLiteracy's United States Conference on Adult Literacy™ (USCAL), November 2-5, Houston, TX. [info@proliteracy.org](mailto:info@proliteracy.org); 888/528-2224
- √ Southern Nevada CATESOL Conference, Nov 4-5 (tentative), Las Vegas, NV. [snvcatesol@gmail.com](mailto:snvcatesol@gmail.com)
- √ Effective Transitions in Adult Education (Nat'l College Transition Network), November 14-15, Providence, RI. [www.collegetransition.org](http://www.collegetransition.org)



## Free, research-based LD training available online

### Local expertise

Several Nevadans have agreed to serve as resources to other adult educators on LD issues. Their expertise includes Learning to Achieve, Lindamood-Bell, Washington 13, and Cooper C-Sip.

Eleven educators are Certified Screeners for Irlen Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome.

Contact info at <http://nvedu.org/ldsupport>.

The purpose of *Learning to Achieve*, initially launched by the National Institute for Literacy, is to build state capacity to increase the achievement of students with learning disabilities. It includes an integrated set of research-based resources, professional development materials, and a weeklong Train-the-Trainer Institute — all geared to increasing teacher effectiveness in providing services to adults with learning disabilities. Four self-paced modules are now available online at no charge at <http://mp.cls.utk.edu>.

*Learning to Achieve: A Professional's Guide to Educating Adults with Learning Disabilities* is a 30–60 minute module providing an overview of the 138-page [online guide](#). The guide is a stand-alone resource for professionals who haven't taken the Learning to Achieve training. The six chapters reinforce and extend the content of the training modules. The chapters cover relevant characteristics of adults with learning disabilities, matched with descriptions and examples of practical intervention strategies.

Each of the other three modules takes 60-120 minutes to complete:

- *English Language Learners* identifies testing and instructional accommodation for individuals with learning disabilities.
- *Accommodations* describes testing and instructional accommodations.
- *Neuroscience* addresses the neurobiology of learning and its application to learning disabilities.

## Effective teacher development: What does the research show?

Research on the effectiveness of professional development is relatively rare. According to a meta-analysis of 1,300 studies, only nine were rigorous enough to meet the requirements (included a control group and the administration of pre- and post-assessments to evaluate the impact of the professional development on student achievement) of a comprehensive report.

Nonetheless, the methodologically strong studies that are available suggest that well designed professional development can influence teacher practice and student performance, according to [Professional Learning in the Learning Profession: A Status Report on Teacher Development in the United States and Abroad](#) (National Staff Development Council and School Redesign Network at Stanford University, February 2009). The research base also illustrates the shortcomings of the occasional, one-shot workshops that many school systems tend to provide and suggests some general guidelines for the design of effective professional development programs.

While causal relationships are not fully established, the literature does point to some basic principles for designing effective professional learning. Professional development should:

- be intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice;
- focus on student learning and address the teaching of specific curriculum content;
- align with school improvement priorities and goals; and
- build strong working relationships among teachers.

The 36-page report is at <http://nvae.us/34>. Future reports are planned.



Visit Nevada's new Adult Education Web site: <http://www.nevadaadulteducation.org>

## Back to the 3 R's

LINCS' [Basic Skills Collection](#) focuses on resources that can help improve instruction in reading, writing, math and numeracy, and health literacy. Some recent additions:

- [More Than Reshuffling](#) provides important information for GED and college transitions teachers and directors. It describes the math program for City University of New York freshmen who failed multiple placement exams. The paper includes sections on program structure, how expansion of the math curriculum was accomplished, enrollment and retention information, assessment of student learning, comparison of CTI math teaching and learning with standards and common remedial math reform efforts in community colleges, and institutional and other conditions that need to be in place to make this sort of pedagogical change. This resource is a companion paper to [More Than Rules](#), which should be read first.
- Two companion resources are now available on the topic of writing:
  - [Literacy and Numeracy for Adults: Write to Communicate](#) contains assessments and resources for educators and learners. It covers what adult writers should know and be able to do at each of six proficiency levels.
  - [Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy and Numeracy](#) provides the theoretical and research base behind the Write to Communicate resource. Both are products of the New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission.

**Connect with colleagues!** LINCS' Discussion Lists and Webinars are also rich sources of information:

- In May 2011, Dr. Stephen Reder hosted a guest discussion on the [Reading and Writing Skills Discussion List](#). The topic was Understanding Adult Literacy Growth With Various Measures and Time Scales. The discussion is compiled at <http://nvae.us/2r>.
- In June, Brooke Istas, moderator of the [Math and Numeracy Discussion List](#), led a Webinar on *Preparing Students for College-Level Math*. Topics included math anxiety, math journals, goal setting, college placement exams, and math labs. The webinar is archived at <http://nvae.us/2q>.

The LINCS Multimedia Center at <http://lincs.ed.gov/webcasts/webcasts.html> archives many Webcasts relevant to adult education. Available now are:

- Getting Reading Results in the Classroom: What Research Tells Us
- Achieving Student Success: Transitions to Post-secondary Education
- Advancing Health Literacy: Meeting the Needs of Adult Learners
- From Assessment to Practice: Research-Based Approaches to Teaching Reading to Adults
  - Part 1: Specific Instructional Strategies for Word Analysis and Comprehension
  - Part 2: Specific Instructional Strategies for Fluency and Vocabulary
- Findings from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy Research
  - Research on the Economic Impact of the GED Diploma Panel Discussion
  - Persistence Among Adult Education Students Panel
  - Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS) Panel Streaming Video
- National Assessment of Adult Literacy

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Visit <http://lincs.ed.gov/lincs>, where you can search for specific titles. To subscribe to a discussion list, click on professional development, then on discussion lists.

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### Who's There?

Three people were trying to get into Heaven. St. Peter asked the first, "Who's there?"

"It's me, Albert Jones," a voice replied.

St. Peter let him in and Peter asked the second one the same question, "Who's there?"

"It's me, Charlie Smith."

St. Peter let him in, too. Then he asked the third one, "Who's there?"

"It is I. Verla Mara," answered the third.

"Oh, great," muttered St. Peter. "Another one of those English teachers."

This professional development project is a leadership activity funded by a grant from the Nevada State Department of Education, Workforce Investment Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy). There is no discrimination or denial of participation on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion or religious creed, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, or disability.

## YouTube alternatives

[YouTube](#) hosts some excellent educational content, however many teachers cannot access it in their classrooms. Adult educators have come to the rescue with these alternatives:

Richard Byrnes' award-winning Free Technology for Teachers Blog ([www.freetech4teachers.com](http://www.freetech4teachers.com)) lists 47 alternatives to YouTube for use in the classroom (<http://nvae.us/33>).

Awesome Stories <http://www.awesomestories.com/> provides thousands of educational videos transferred from YouTube. The video database, which is searchable and includes clip descriptions, is at <http://www.awesomestories.com/videos>.

Approximately 30 of the main stories on the site are narrated so students can hear a story while reading it; they are listed at <http://www.awesomestories.com/narrations>.

## Access MLoTS directly

The Media Library of Teaching Skills for adult learning and literacy ([www.mlots.org](http://www.mlots.org)) is a free, online, digital library of short videos of adult education teachers and their classes or tutorials, intended for use in professional development. Each video is an example of a state-approved content standard, research-based practice, preferred approach, or specific teaching method or skill. In some cases these are examples in practice of a particular state's approved curriculum frameworks or content standards.

Recently added: a new Adult Secondary Education/GED classroom video, "Writing: the Five Paragraph Essay," with Clinton Massachusetts GED teacher Brenna Kane and some of her GED students. Also available are classroom videos on other Adult Secondary Education topics, ESOL/ESL, family literacy, numeracy, reading, and writing — more than 70 in all!

Note: These videos may not show with some versions of Internet Explorer. The site has links to downloads for Safari, Firefox, and Chrome.

**Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.**

**—Will Rogers, US humorist & showman (1879 - 1935)**