

## A Note of Thanks



From  
Nancy  
Williams

I recognized soon after quitting school in lieu of becoming a wife and mother, that life as an adult requires greater English, math and science skills than I had at the time. The GED program offered a class schedule that allowed me to work and run a home while acquiring basic skills. The instructors were patient, encouraging and created an enjoyable learning environment. I achieved the GED credential in 1978 [in Russellville], continued to raise my family, work and once again realized further education was needed to provide financial stability for my family in a quickly advancing world. The GED credential was required to enroll at the local university. The skills, confidence and encouragement from GED program instructors gave me the courage to attempt a college education. I was awarded a Bachelor's of Science degree in mechanical engineering in 1996. The GED program opened doors to higher education, a career, changed my self-identity, redefined my life's goals and dreams and changed the quality of life for my children and myself.

Thanks very much for making this valuable program your life's work.

## Russellville Adult Education Reaching Students

"Trying to understand our student's world and what is going on in their world" is the educational philosophy of Pat Collins, Russellville Adult Education Center Director. As a seasoned director, Collins tries to accommodate her students within reason. "We have to remember that some of our students work twelve-hour shifts and we don't want them to miss their much-needed wages."

With a staff of four full-time and four part-time teachers, six paraprofessionals, two alternate GED examiners, and Collins serving as both center director and GED chief examiner, the center has classes in GED, ABE, Asset/ACT preparation, Basic Skills for ASVAB, and Distance Learning classes. Locations include the main campus in Russellville, a WAGE program at the One-Stop in Russellville, the Pope County Detention Center, the Freedom House Drug and Rehab Center, and adult education satellites in Dardanelle and Danville.

Collins uses her creative skills to develop a variety of innovative programs to recruit students to the programs. One of the most effective projects over the years has been, "Get Your GED in a Weekend" which has evolved into three weekends and includes TABE testing, official practice testing, remediation, and GED testing. In the fall of 2010, twelve GED candidates took the official GED tests as part of the weekend project. Other creative marketing activities have included banners at places such as Firestone and Sonic, flyers at tobacco stores, laundromats, and grocery stores.

"I am proud of the way our staff works to accommodate the students. Without their dedication and commitment, our center goals wouldn't be accomplished," Collins states. "We work weekends, nights, whatever it takes to help our students succeed!"



Above/below:  
Pat Collins,  
Director.



Inset: Suzanne  
Ames assists in  
program  
administration.



The Arkansas Department of Career Education funds the Adult Education Division. The Adult Education Division provides programs and services statewide.

## 2011-12 Program Budgets Reviewed

Adult Education state staff members are concluding the process of reviewing budget proposals for programs in the state. All Arkansas Adult Education centers and Literacy Councils receiving federal funds are responsible for budgeting and managing allowable costs within their programs. Individualized budget sessions facilitate the best possible use of limited funds in the upcoming fiscal year.



Above (l-r) Bridget Bullard, Becky Linsky, Marie Ott, and James Smith work on the 2011-12 budget for the National Park Community College Adult Education Program.

## Conway Adult Education WAGE Program



*Vickie Zajac (left) was a "dislocated worker" who sought guidance and education at Conway Adult Education Center after the distribution center where she worked was closed. She now owns her own business and has a license for realty in Arkansas.*

Michelle Horton, assessment and marketing coordinator at Conway Adult Education Center (CAEC), said the center's GED program for those who drop out of their high schools is but a small part of the more than 2,000 individuals seeking to better themselves. According to administrators, 435 are students of CAEC's Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy, or WAGE program.

The enrollment of WAGE represents many who seek skills after losing their occupation at middle age and beyond. Ruth Ann Williams, CAEC director, recalled a student who lost employment at the age of 55. "These are people who have been in manufacturing jobs – who when they obtained the jobs – didn't need diplomas or computer skills," Williams said. "Now they don't have a job and in this community, a diploma and those skills are a requirement."

In the center's WAGE program, a person may learn basic computer training, be assisted in completing a resume for potential employment, or receive state-recognized certifications that Williams said many national companies accept as proof of an employment requisite.

Conway Adult Education partners with Hewlett-Packard, Tokusen, Southwestern Energy, Kimberly Clark, Caterpillar and numerous other national and international companies.

--The Cabin (Conway, Arkansas)

Read the complete story at

<http://thecabin.net/news/local/2011-03-27/conway-adult-education-provides-more-ged>

## ACE AND PEARSON COLLABORATE: Enhanced GED Testing Program Will Validate Career- and College-Readiness

**Washington D.C. (March 15, 2011)** — The American Council on Education (ACE) and Pearson announced the creation of a ground-breaking new business that will drive the future direction, design, and delivery of the GED® testing program. Building on the goals of the GED 21st Century Initiative, the two partners will combine their collective expertise and resources to develop a new GED Test aligned with Common Core State Standards that will assure colleges, universities and prospective employers that adults who have passed the GED Tests are prepared to compete and succeed in a global economy.

The GED Test is used by all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, U.S. insular areas, Canadian provinces and territories, the U.S. military, and federal correctional institutions for the purpose of awarding a high school graduation equivalency credential. Nearly 800,000 GED Tests are taken each year, and in 2009, more than 470,000 individuals were awarded their high school credential.

The new business, modeled to represent a public-private partnership, will retain the GED Testing Service name. The new GED Testing Service will build on its past experience in adult and continuing education by harnessing the considerable resources of Pearson, the world's largest education and testing company, with the nearly 70-year history of ACE to expand access to the GED Test, ensure its quality and integrity, and adapt the GED Test to 21st century testing practices. The three primary components of the GED 21st Century Initiative will include:

- A new, more rigorous GED Test aligned with Common Core State Standards designed to ensure career- and college-readiness;
- A national test preparation program featuring an expanding array of innovative and personalized learning resources; and,
- A transition network that connects GED test-takers to career and postsecondary educational opportunities.

"This bold, far-sighted and innovative partnership will provide a new, fresh approach toward solving an old and pernicious problem—the incredible waste of human talent represented by the millions of Americans who lack a high-school diploma," said ACE President Molly Corbett Broad. "Collaborating with a global leader in education and testing to launch a new GED Testing Service will allow us to achieve the goals of ACE's college-ready GED initiative in the fastest and most efficient manner possible. The resources provided through this partnership will dramatically extend access to the GED credential for American adults and ensure the future quality of the GED Test. This partnership will also enable ACE to focus our efforts on learning pathways and policies that support adult learners."

"More than 39 million adult Americans lack high school credentials and that number continues to grow at an alarming rate. Earning \$7,000 less each year than those with high school credentials, these adults and their families will endure a lifetime of hardship. The lost lifetime earnings for the drop-outs from the class of 2007 alone, add up to a \$329 billion hole in the US economy," said Randy Trask, senior vice president at Pearson. "We recognize that the government and concerned foundations cannot address this problem alone, and we believe that creating this unique partnership is the first step in transforming our national efforts to give adults a second chance at earning their high school credential and pursuing further education or earning a sustaining wage."

"The rich heritage and knowledge from GED Testing Service and ACE combined with Pearson's resources and marketplace expertise in education is a powerful combination that is sure to benefit millions of test-takers," said GED Testing Service Executive Director and ACE Vice President Nicole Chestang. "We are confident this new partnership will greatly enhance our offerings. In the meantime, as the new GED Test is developed, current GED testing operations will continue, and states will receive full, unfettered access to services and test delivery."

