

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT  
JAMIE McCOOL

Lincoln  
County  
Adult  
Education Center

*Jamie McCool went to public school until the fifth grade and then home schooled. Jamie has Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, a neurological disease which causes tremors and affects speech and motor skills. It also causes nervous reactions to many situations and has made life difficult for Jamie at times.*

*Just more than two years ago, Jamie enrolled at Lincoln County Adult Education Center, and in 2009 she earned a GED diploma. She aspires to go to college and become certified to open a daycare center.*

*Jamie says she was treated "great" at the Adult Education Center and appreciates the time and effort the staff spent with her. The staff is very proud of Jamie and what she has accomplished.*



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

Lincoln County Adult Education -  
In the Business of Second  
Chances

The Lincoln County Adult Education Center recently moved to a location that is proving to be much more accessible for students. Now located in a shopping center on Hwy 425 in Star City, the center is more noticeable to potential students and provides a spacious, clean, and conducive climate.

Pridgett Wynn, adult education center director, is excited about the recent move and feels that enrollment will increase. "Both last week and this week we had five new students which is certainly an increase in what we used to see," says Wynn. She further stated that "We are nurturers. We treat some of our students like our kids. We can't run our center like a business because there are so many unique situations. They have to feel like we want them here."

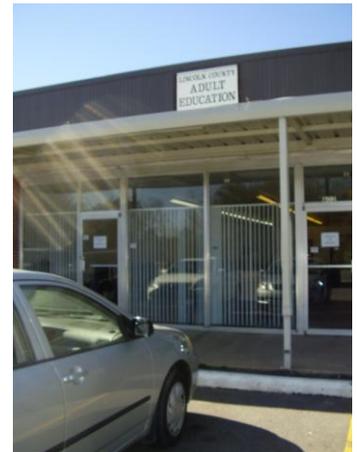
One woman who lost her job after working in a factory for many years, enrolled in the center, worked on computer and other basic skills. She went to the Workforce Center, studied the job market, and is now a student at SEARK majoring in phlebotomy. Another student who had become a mother at age fourteen and was addicted to drugs is now thirty years old. With help from the Lincoln County Adult Education Center, she is redirecting her life and recently took the GED Tests.

Staffed by a full-time teacher, Susan Knight; a part-time para-professional, Renee Wynn; and Malinda McEntire, secretary and alternate GED examiner, the center boasts of numerous success stories. "We're in the business of second chances," Knight stated.



Above: Malinda McEntire, Pridgett Wynn, Susan Knight, and Renee Wynn

Below: New facility for Lincoln County Adult Education Center



## ESL Basics Workshops Held

Despite terrible weather conditions, the "ESL Basics" workshops were well attended in January and February. About 20 teachers and tutors from across the state came to the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center in Little Rock for three days to learn the basics of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL).

The participants learned to identify factors that affect language learning; assess students' needs; select appropriate teaching materials; use various grouping strategies; design effective lesson plans; and create ESL listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. The workshops were conducted by Dr. Philip Less, ESL Coordinator for the Adult Education Division.

## Volunteer Service Reported by Arkansas Literacy Councils, Inc.

Arkansas Literacy Councils, Inc., has compiled statistics for the Department of Volunteerism for inclusion in its report on the number of volunteers serving in a broad swath of Arkansas agencies and organizations. The reporting organizations include cities, nonprofits, corporations, and other service providers.

- For the calendar year 2009 (January-December), 5,777 volunteers served in 46 literacy councils and gave 137,242 hours of instruction and preparation.
- Another 2,380 volunteers served as administrative and program volunteers for a total of 38,954 hours donated.
- 471 volunteers served as council board members for 39,501 hours donated
- A total of 8,628 volunteers gave 215,697 hours of service in calendar year 2009.

According to Independent Sector, the current value per volunteer hour is \$20.25; using that multiplier gives 4,367,864 dollars' worth of service to increase adult literacy in Arkansas.

Even with the incredible amount of time and service given by volunteers, Marie Bruno (ALC Executive Director) says "literacy councils can always use more volunteers to help our learners master basic skills and ESL skills."



## WAGE Program Success

### A Story from Russellville

Nickloaus (Nick) McEntire relocated from Benton to Russellville in August 2009 because he had been verbally promised a job. Unfortunately, once he moved, the company decided not to fill the job vacancy. He filed for unemployment benefits but was denied. A representative at the local Workforce Center referred him to the WAGE™ Center. WAGE—Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy—is a work readiness program designed to ensure that unemployed and underemployed Arkansans have the skills necessary to be successful in the workplace.

Nick enrolled in class at the Russellville Adult Education WAGE Center in September. He took the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) test and scored 12.9 (twelfth grade, ninth month) in reading, math, and language. He needed no remediation in the three areas before beginning to work toward earning his certificates. He earned the Employability certificate on September 16th, the Clerical on September 24th and the Industrial on October 5th. Nick also earned the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). Such rapid completion of certificates by a student is highly unusual.

Armed with his WAGE certificates, Nick was employed by Express Services, a local employment agency; he was placed at Terra Renewal where he does data entry. Nick's goal for 2010 is to enroll at Arkansas Tech University for the spring semester. His future dreams are to either one day open an electronics store or a recording studio for musicians. When asked whether he would recommend the WAGE program to others he said "Yes. The WAGE staff are great people who know what they are doing." In other words, he stated, "they were on it" and assisted him whenever he had questions.

The Russellville WAGE Center has been located in the Arkansas Workforce Center for the past 10 years. Since July 1, 2009, a total of eighty-eight certificates have been issued to students. Students can earn certificates at the following locations in Pope County: Russellville Center, Freedom House and Pope County Detention Center. There are also centers located in Danville and Dardanelle serving Yell County.

## Arkansas GED Testing Program Visited by National Staff

The Arkansas GED Testing Program was visited by national GED Testing Service® (GEDTS) Procurement & Document Solutions section staff members, Brian Jenkins, Director, and Kati Niemi, Assistant Director. Janice Hanlon, GED Administrator, showcased two of the state's test sites: Ouachita Technical College in Malvern and National Park Community College in Hot Springs.

The visit was an opportunity for GEDTS to gather ideas to share with other states and discuss how changes in national initiatives—such as computerized testing—could affect local programs and test takers. GEDTS staff members were also interested in suggestions for improvements on the national level.



Above: Brian Jenkins, Janice Hanlon and Kati Niemi