

**GRADUATION EXERCISES
HELD STATEWIDE**

Adult Education Centers statewide hold graduation exercises for individuals completing the requirements to earn a General Educational Development (GED) diploma (*Arkansas High School Diploma*).

One such exercise was held for graduates from Fort Smith Adult Education on May 11, 2009. More than 100 of the 314 individuals passing the GED Test in the 2008-2009 school year participated.

Below: Jim Smith recognizes Fort Smith graduates earning a score of 600 or greater.



Many adults who take the GED Tests are preparing to enter a technical institute/college, a community college, university, or the workforce.

Earning a GED diploma indicates an individual has the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in the global economy.



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

**GOVERNOR SPEAKS AT
ARKANSAS CORRECTIONAL SCHOOL
GRADUATION**

Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe delivered the address at the 36th Annual Graduation Ceremony at the Arkansas Correctional School (ACS). More than 850 individuals earned their GED® credential through ACS in 2008-2009; approximately 370 attended the ceremony. Additionally, three individuals earned an associate degree through Riverside Vocational Technical School.

Governor Beebe's message to the graduates was one of encouragement. For those student inmates investing in the future by getting an education the chance of returning to prison after release is far less likely. The Governor said that earning a GED credential or college degree gives individuals an advantage when seeking employment. Governor Beebe also stressed the importance of having family support and self-determination to be successful. He shared personal experiences as inspiration and motivation for the inmates to continue to better themselves. "Everyone deserves a second chance," said Beebe, "but you have to earn it."

Dr. Charles Allen, Chief Administrative Officer of the Corrections School System, said of the speech, "The Governor's examples are excellent reminders of the benefits of positive actions. His comments show that he has a deep understanding of the needs of our students, and this is important to them. My only regret is that all 850 students of the class of 2009 were not able to hear Governor Beebe's wonderful address."

Within the Arkansas Department of Correction school attendance is mandatory for inmates who have not completed high school. Inmates from all eleven major units of the corrections system were involved in the graduation ceremony. In the past 35 years the Arkansas Correctional School has awarded 18,863 students their GED credential—the *Arkansas High School Diploma*.

Dr. Bill Glover, Assistant Superintendent of the ACS, summarized the 2009 graduation exercise by saying, "This year's graduation represented a turning point in our students' lives. Three hundred seventy of our 850 graduates were able to attend, and they were honored that Governor Beebe took the time to deliver the commencement address."

Governor Mike Beebe speaks at Arkansas Correctional School Graduation May 20, 2009.



Top Right: Student inmates participate in graduation exercise.



Bottom Right: Governor Beebe presents award for highest GED scorer attending the Arkansas Correctional School graduation ceremony.

**Perseverance Pays for Graduate**

Sammie Campbell's job at an Ozark city utilities department did not require a high school or GED diploma; but he repeatedly missed promotions because he didn't have one.

Sammie didn't feel comfortable in his environment when his small school district merged into a larger one. In those days he didn't like school.

Though he always wanted to earn his GED diploma, he lacked the motivation to do it until he enrolled in the Arkansas Technical University, Ozark Campus Adult Education program last fall. He worked a full time job and attended classes three nights a week from September through January.

Earlier this year Sammie took and passed the GED Tests. He credits his success to the support he received from his family and Adult Education instructors. According to Sammie, "sticking to it" was the hard part, but his hard work and perseverance have now paid.



Administrators' Meeting

Adult Education Administrators and Literacy Council Directors/Coordinators held their bi-annual meeting on May 5-6, 2009, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Little Rock.

Organized by the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center, the meeting focused on issues and topics related to managing Adult Education facilities and services including distance learning, national reporting system updates, and funding issues. Wynn Montgomery of WynnMill Solutions, LLC (Atlanta, Georgia) presented sessions on time management and the benefits of using humor in the workplace.



Above: Administrators from Adult Education Centers and Literacy Councils.

A special presentation was made on behalf of the Arkansas Association of Adult and Continuing Education to Representative Jim Medley. James H. Smith, Jr., Adult Education Deputy Director, and William L. "Bill" Walker, Director of the Department of Workforce Education, presented the "Tipping Point Award" to Representative Medley in appreciation for his work and support for Adult Education during the 2009 legislative session.



Above (l-r): Jim Medley, James Smith, and William L. "Bill" Walker.

Adult Education and GED Testing Centers Damaged by Fire and Tornado

The Adult Education Center at Rich Mountain Community College in Mena was damaged by a tornado on April 9. The center has temporarily relocated to 818 Main Street while repairs are being made at the college campus. The staff, teachers, and Julie Black, Adult Education Center Director, are working to diligently to make sure area students' needs continue to be met through the center.



Rich Mountain Community College Adult Education Center Director, Julie Black, at the center's temporary site.



On the morning of April 16 a fire began in the North Central Career's computer lab located on the Leslie Campus. Firefighters were able to contain the fire to one wing of the building. The area where the GED Tests were administered was smoke damaged, and other parts of the building suffered heat and smoke damage.



Fire damage at North Central Career Center (Leslie Campus).

Referring to the Adult Education classroom facility, Adult Education Coordinator Gayla Feist said, "our building was fortunately not damaged, and we are very grateful." Testing services and classes are still available in Leslie. The Searcy County School District plans to have restoration from the fire damage completed for the 2009-10 school year.

Moon Hong: English as a Second Language Student at Rich Mountain Community College

Moon Hong is an English as a Second Language (ESL) student at Rich Mountain Community College in Mena. Coming to the United States from Korea in 1971, Moon has been formally studying English since June of 2008.



Debi Barnett and Moon Hong

Debi Barnett, GED and ESL Instructor at Rich Mountain, uses journaling as one of many learning tools for Moon and other ESL students. The writing exercises help as students learn the mechanics and apply them. Plus, the journal entries record student progress over time.

Tutoring is often offered one-on-one. Both student and teacher see the individual instruction as beneficial. Moon describes Barnett as a "good teacher"; and Barnett says that Moon "does a great job."



Visit <http://dwe.arkansas.gov/adult.html> for links to previous issues of the Adult Education Newsletter.