

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EFFECTIVE TRANSITIONS IN ADULT EDUCATION
Providence, RI, November 8-9, 2007
Conference Impressions

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Terry Hamovitch, Lakewood City Schools, terry.hamovitch@lakewood.k12.oh.us, has also provided a summary at the end of this document that details her reflections on the conference. In addition, the handouts from the sessions she attended have been included.

This marks the first year of the National Conference on Effective Transitions in Adult Education. Previously, New England practitioners held a regional annual conference to share practices in transitioning adults to college. The conference hosted more than 300 participants representing over 30 states. Eight of those participants were from Ohio.

The two-day event consisted of plenary sessions and a variety of workshop sessions. The following table gives an overview of the conference schedule:

Thursday, November 8	Friday, November 9
Conference Opening	Workshop Session II
Keynote Presentation	Workshop Session III
Workshop Session I	Networking Luncheon
Career Pathways Panel Discussion	Workshop Session IV*

*Due to travel conflicts, most of those contributing to this document were unable to attend Workshop Session IV.

This document is designed to give those not attending a snapshot of the conference, along with anecdotal information from some of the Ohio participants. The document is organized around the session name, session description, presenter information, a list of handouts, and the attendees' impression. The sessions appear in the following order:

- **Keynote:** Designing Effective College Transitions for English Language Learners (plenary session)
- **Career Pathways Panel Discussion** (plenary session)
- **Workshop Session I:**
 - Bridges, Ladders, and Webs: From Basic Skills to Careers (attended by Jody Angelone)
 - More than the Main Idea: From GED to College Reading (attended by Adrienne Glandon)
 - Raising Adult's Career Awareness: Collaborating with One-Stop Career Centers (attended by Donna Albanese)

- **Workshop Session II:**
 - NCTN (National College Transitions Network) Policy Forum: Promising Policies and promising Problems in Adult Transition (attended by Donna Albanese and Adrienne Glandon)
 - Poster sessions (participants were to pick three of the eight offered): The Admissions and Orientation Process in Rural College Transition Project, College for a Day: Opening the Door to College for ABE Students, and In-house Mentoring for Transitions Students (attended by Jody Angelone)

- **Workshop Session III:**
 - Collaborating in a Process: Strengths and Challenges (attended by Jody Angelone)
 - Taking Career Pathways to the Next Level (attended by Donna Albanese and Adrienne Glandon)

Session handouts have been scanned and are listed on the last page.

Keynote Presentation: *Designing Effective College Transitions for English Language Learners*

Session Description: Dr. Crandall has worked in many areas of adult ESL including teaching, research, curriculum development, program evaluation, standards development, and teacher training. She is the co-principal investigator on a project for the Council for the Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL), working collaboratively with researchers at five (5) community colleges to identify exemplary adult ESL instructional and professional development practices. The report of that research, *Passing the Torch* (with F. Chisman, available <http://www.caalusa.org>), identifies a number of models of effective transitions to additional academic or vocational education for adult English language learners.

Presenter information: Dr JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall is Professor of Education and Director of the Doctoral Program in Language, Literacy, and Culture at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). Prior to joining the faculty at UMBC in 1992, she was Vice President of the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in Washington, DC, where she established and directed the National Clearinghouse on Adult ESL Literacy (NCLE) and several adult refugee and immigrant information dissemination and technical assistance projects.

The **handout** for this presentation was the PowerPoint presented in a plain text format.

Session Impressions:

Donna Albanese: ESL programs can implement basic practices from the findings of this research. For example, (1) in a migrant program, provide more intense instruction during times when the migrants' workloads are not so busy, (2) integrate ESL students into ABE math classes, (3) integrate workforce preparation and computer classes with ESL classes (an end result was that students' earnings increased with this approach). The main point in this research is that **intensity matters**. Adults enrolled in ESL classes 10 plus hours a week generally make greater learning gains and are much more likely to participate in education/training programs than those in less intensive programs.

Adrienne Glandon: I typically think of ESL transitions in terms of transitioning to ABE not to postsecondary and/or workplace. Dr. Crandall's presentation helped to remind me that postsecondary transitions are not limited to ABE students but apply to ESL students as well. She gave a very good overview of the research findings. The report and Dr. Crandall's subsequent presentation addressed the barriers ESL students faced and the various strategies implemented by the five community colleges in the study. She discussed the models at the community colleges, which to some degree could be implemented by programs in Ohio for both ESL and ABE students. Programs may find the report referenced in the session description to be very beneficial.

Career Pathways Panel: *Effective Transitions Through Career Pathways*

Session Description: Adults often find career pathways very compelling because they combine interesting, contextualized learning with career advancement. This panel discussion, with a question and answer period, is designed to give participants an opportunity to hear about a

national program, the Breaking Through Initiative (<http://www.breakingthroughcc.org/>), as well as career pathway programs at three sites from around the country.

Presenter information:

Nan Poppe, Campus President, Portland Community College Extended Campus

Nan Poppe is currently the Campus President of the Extended Learning Campus at Portland Community College and serves as the Chair of the National Council for Workforce Education. She has 25 years of community college administration experience.

Donna Miller-Parker, Director, ESL Program, South Seattle Community College

Donna Miller-Parker has been a basic skills teacher, trainer, curriculum developer, and administrator. At South Seattle Community College she directs ESL (including VESL), GED, and ABE programs. At her previous college, she created programs to partner with health care, business, automotive, and manufacturing programs.

Ellen O'Donnell, Dean of Human Services, North Shore Community College

Ellen O'Donnell is Dean of the Division of Human Services at North Shore Community College, Danvers, MA. She is Chair of the Breaking Through Initiative team at the College. Before assuming the dean's position, she was professor and coordinator of the Paralegal Program for many years.

Shannon Carroll, Director of Workforce Education, Dorcas Place Adult and Family Literacy Center

Shannon Carroll is the Workforce Education Director at Dorcas Place in Providence, RI. She has more than ten years of experience in adult education both in the US and abroad.

Handouts distributed for this panel included information about the panel, the moderator, and the Breaking Through initiative. Information was also provided on each panelists' career pathway program. North Shore Community College also provided a career map for its Early Childhood Education career pathway.

Session Impressions:

Donna Albanese: My overall impression from this session is that we need to re-examine how we offer ESL services. Our services are currently linear; students proceed through the academic functioning levels and then possibly into a GED or postsecondary program. On this panel, many successful ESL transition programs have students learning contextualized academic skills, at all levels, while enrolled in career pathways.

Adrienne Glandon: I found the discussion to be very informative, and the panel allowed sufficient time for questions. The handout provided by North Shore Community College illustrating its career pathway was very helpful. It demonstrates the different tracks within early childhood education and integral points along those tracks. In other states, they are funded similarly to Ohio but additional funding streams and initiatives that I was not aware of are also utilized. In WA, as I understand it, adult education is primarily offered through community colleges, whereas Ohio offers adult education through a variety of sources, community colleges, adult education centers, community based organizations, etc. This presents confusion as to how

students are actually counted for postsecondary goal completion. This confusion was later echoed in the policy forum session.

Workshop Session I: *Bridges, Ladders, and Webs: From Basic Skills to Careers*

Session Description: Learn how students can prepare themselves for careers at the same time that they are improving their basic skills. Explore the concept and examine three models of current, successful career-linked basic skills programs. See the benefits and become aware of considerations related to this approach. Participants will leave the presentation with ideas on how to implement career-linked basic skills instruction in their programs.

Presenter Information: Donna Miller-Parker has been a basic skills teacher, trainer, curriculum developer, and administrator. At South Seattle Community College she directs ESL (including VESL), GED, and ABE programs. At her previous college, she created programs to partner with health care, business, automotive, and manufacturing programs.

Handouts for this session include Instructional models, as well as, a guide sheet on “Planning for Career-Focused Basic Skills: Questions to Consider” (*adapted from Bridge Program Planning Guide, Davis Jenkins, Workforce Strategy Center, 2004*), and a Bibliography/Selected Reference Sheet.

Session Impressions, Jody Angelone: Bridges: Classes to bridge the gap between basic skills and technical training. Ladders: Courses which are ‘steps’ on a career ladder that includes training as well as employment. Webs: Similar to ladders, but less linear pathway; move from job to job or industry to industry.

We looked at Instructional Models: Sequential, Concurrent, Coordinated, and Integrated and then discussed the Advantages and Challenges with each of the models. This took the bulk of the session time.

Workshop Session I: *More than the Main Idea: From GED to College Reading*

Session Description: This interactive workshop will provide participants with a comparison between the reading requirements for the GED and the critical reading skills needed to succeed in college classes. The presenter will share her informal research study comparing the GED with the College Placement Test. Participants will have the opportunity to experience the kinds of critical reading skills needed to succeed in the college classroom and to discuss reading instruction that can prepare students for postsecondary reading/studying/learning tasks.

Presenter information: Sally Gabb (CAGS Developmental Reading) worked as an Adult Basic Educator for 35 years in a wide variety of venues including family literacy, homeless programs, ESOL and professional development. She currently is a reading specialist with the Center for Developmental Education at Bristol Community College, providing intensive reading instruction for reading challenged students.

Handouts for this workshop included the PowerPoint presented, Accuplacer practice items (reading), sample items from the reading section of the GED Practice Test, and references.

Session Impressions, Adrienne Glandon: Part of this session included comparing and discussing skills needed to successfully take the reading sections of the Accuplacer and the GED Practice Test. A lot of discussion centered on teaching theory and strategies. Many good practices were shared. The session would be very beneficial to those who teach reading.

Workshop Session I: *Raising Adults' Career Awareness: Collaborating with One-Stop Career Centers*

Session Description: This interactive session will focus on building relationships with One-Stop Career Centers and leveraging their career planning and related services. It will draw on the experience of Pennsylvania's Career Gateway transition project. The presenter will share strategies for collaborating with One-Stops, review possibilities and limitations of working with One-Stops, and provide details about the ongoing and evolving relationship that exists between the adult education agency and the local One-Stop.

Presenter Information: Mary Lou Friedline has taught ABE, GED, ESL and remedial studies for 20 years at the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette, Inc. in Greensburg, PA. She provides technical and instructional trainings for the Pennsylvania Southwest Professional Development Center and was the coordinator of their Year-One Career Gateway Pilot Project.

Handouts for this session include *Building Networks: a Partners' Discussion – PIC & CareerLink*, TABE information, checklist of Transitioning Skills for student success, and WIA Services.

Session Impressions, Donna Albanese: The most informative part was breaking into small groups and talking to colleagues from other states about their ABLE programs and relationships with the One-Stops. As was expected, there was a range of effective collaborations; my impression is that Ohio excels in One-Stop partnerships at the state and local levels.

Workshop Session II: *NCTN (National College Transitions Network) Policy Forum: Promising Policies and Promising Problems in Adult Transition*

Session Description: State directors will identify one promising policy and one promising problem with adult transition to postsecondary education in your state or organization. The goal of this policy forum is to identify three or four state and or national policy issues or areas for further exploration by the NCTN over the next two years.

Presenter Information: Cynthia Zafft, Director, NCTC/World Education, Inc.

No **handouts** were distributed; however minutes were provided after the conference.

Session Impressions:

Donna Albanese: Some examples of the promising transitional practices in other states include: dual enrollment systems, incentive funds to programs for transitioning students to PSE, career pathways aligned with high growth employment sectors, and scholarships offered to GED graduates. The state directors' group decided they had two main areas of focus for the NCTN: (1) need clarification, in writing, from OVAE about dual enrollment, and (2) increase marketing. Many legislators still don't know what ABE is.

Adrienne Glandon: This forum discussion was a great opportunity not only to showcase what Ohio is working on but to hear from other states as well. I provided the group with the fall issue of the CETE publication, Centergram. That particular issue of the Centergram offered an overview of the Transitions Task Force. Many states discussed issues that were not unfamiliar to Ohio: student retention, marketing, data tracking, etc. It was in this session that further discussion occurred on the issue of counting students who are dual enrolled as completing a goal of entering postsecondary. Cynthia stated she would try to get clarification from OVAE.

Workshop Session II: *Poster sessions* (participants were to pick three of the eight offered):

- The Admissions and Orientation Process in Rural College Transition Project
- College for a Day: Opening the Door to College for ABE Students
- In-house Mentoring for Transitions Students

Session Impressions, Jody Angelone: These were 20 minute quick information sessions on 'Best Practices' for student transitions. I was able to attend three 20 minute session.

The Admissions and Orientation Process in Rural College Transition Project

Hancock County College Transition Program (I have 4 packets of this information which includes an Abstract, College Awareness Assessment, Orientation Day Schedule, Suggestions for student panel, Course descriptions).

College for a Day: Opening the Door to College for ABE Students

Holyoke Community College and SABES sponsor a "College for a Day" program that brings ABE students to the community college where they provide a day for these students. The agenda includes: Coffee and Registration; Welcoming and Orientation; Keynote Speaker; Session I (Class); Session II (Class); Lunch and Remarks by HCC President (I have two packets that include: brochure, registration form and college day packet).

In-house Mentoring for Transitions Students

These presenters talked about their mentoring program for transitioning students from community based ABE programs into college. The mentoring program is funded through Project RIRAL (Rhode Island Regional Adult Learning), Nellie Mae Education Foundation and donations. The best thing about this session is that they shared their brochures and their newsletter with us (I have one copy of each). What they do for students is fantastic, but not realistic without funding to back it. They are full-time mentors that help the students at this center through the entire transition process to college.

Workshop Session III: *Collaborating in a Process: Strengths and Challenges*

Session Description: In November 2007, El Paso Community College's (EPCC) Literacy Programs and San Jacinto Adult Education Center will pilot a pre-transition-to-postsecondary program. The collaboration grew from the premise that the development of a successful and sustainable transition program must involve the directors, instructors, and learners in the process. The four presenters will share their particular point-of-view on the strengths and challenges they have faced in this collaborative process up to this point, as well as their expectations for the upcoming pilot.

Presenter Information: Sara Martinez, Manager of EPCC Literacy Programs; Blanca Andrade, Director of San Jacinto Adult Education Community Center; Susan Tollefson, Coordinator of EPCC Literacy Programs Transition-to-Postsecondary Program; Gerardo Guerrero, Instructional Faculty at San Jacinto Adult Education Center, and part-time ESL Instructor, EPCC

The **handout** for this presentation was the presentation slides.

Session Impressions, Jody Angelone: El Paso CC, located by the Mexico border presented on their Pre-transition program. They have a very large Hispanic population (78.2% - on handout). They identified this population as very hard workers, but having very low literacy and English skills. They decided to try to make better connections with the local Adult Learning Center to encourage and promote student transition to post-secondary education and training. The majority of their students are females, married with children, minimal formal education. They worked with NCTN and researched/interviewed/surveyed and lead focus groups to learn more about the students in AE/ABE. Found that most AE/ABE students had great difficulty with understanding the college entry process and that they needed career exploration before beginning the process. They then created student profiles for what generally happened to adult learners attempting to enter the community college. Next, they drafted a two stage transition process for these students (flow chart on handouts). Worked with area partners and NCTN to direct resources and gain support. They are currently in the Pre-Transition pilot stage (Nov '07-Feb '08) and have a small group of adults involved. They said it is a work in progress and that they are just starting to see more and more adults ask about the Pre-Transition Course. Feel that the best source for marketing has been 'word of mouth' from individuals involved in pilot sharing their experience with friends and family. The Pre-Transitions course includes: Academic Readiness (must be @ least level 3 Reading on TABE) and have HS/GED diploma), Career Readiness, College Readiness, Personal Readiness. All of the areas have critical thinking skills embedded in the curriculum. Sample course expectations and schedule is in handout. Follow up questions to students has found that the biggest assets have been a better understanding of college enrollment and the support given. The biggest obstacles have been family barriers (most have children and work) and time (commitment to class and course work). What has helped in getting through the barriers were program support/advising and family and employer support.

Workshop Session III: *Taking Career Pathways to the Next Level*

Session Description: This session will serve as a peer learning follow-up session to the Career Pathways panel. Participants will be asked to share their experience in implementing career pathways-both successes and barriers. As a group, we will brainstorm strategies and solutions that will help all of us take our career pathway efforts to the next level. Please bring any written materials you have to share with our participants.

Presenter Information: Nan Poppe is currently the Campus President of the Extended Learning Campus at Portland Community College and serves as the Chair of the National Council for Workforce education. She has 25 years of community college administration experience. During this time she has served as a Director of Workforce Development, Dean for Adult and Continuing Education, Dean of Instruction, Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and Campus President. Many of her programs have received national recognition. She has worked extensively in creating Career Pathway programs at community colleges for both non-credit and credit students.

No **handouts** were provided this session.

Session Impressions:

Donna Albanese: Most of the participants in this session wanted to hear more about the Washington I-BEST model, so that was the focus. What makes this career-pathway model unique is that there has to be a technical person working with an ABE teacher at the same time; hence, it is costly (about \$9000 per student). They had some challenges in this project such as resistance from the vocational teachers because they didn't want to share their class time. After seeing positive results for students, the teachers learned to value one another's expertise. The I-BEST program continues to grow with additional state support.

The main finding from this research is the concept of "tipping point"; students with a high school diploma or less who attended one year of college plus earned a credential showed a substantial boost in living wage earnings. At a minimum, Ohio ABLE programs should share this concept of tipping point with students to encourage them to continue their education.

Adrienne Glandon: This session was the most beneficial of all that I attended. One of my goals in attending this conference was to gain more knowledge about I-BEST and the practices in WA. Elements of the I-BEST model have good potential for implementation in Ohio. One barrier however would be the cost of implementing the model completely. This model has complete support from the state government, both philosophically and financially.

Conference Impressions, Terry Hamovitch:

I was fortunate enough to attend this conference in Providence, Rhode Island on November 8 and 9th. I was really anxious to go to this conference after attending Cynthia Zafft's sessions at OAAACE last spring. I must say that I was really inspired by many of the sessions, and by the people working in this field. I certainly became more focused on what we need to do with our students in our programs, in order for them to have any chance of success in the post secondary world.

One of the most important messages I got at this conference was about the alignment of GED scores and developmental English and math courses. Students who obtain a 500 on a GED test basically will be correlated with a C in developmental courses! I could really see why there is a lot of emphases on having students improve their scores in a GED class so that they will not be spending their financial aid on developmental classes. Our classes need to target higher level critical thinking skills for students to succeed. Students need to deal with complex vocabulary and know how to read and respond to complex text. Since GED programs emphasize "completion", there is not enough focus on critical reading strategies. Students need to learn to ask questions and develop questioning techniques to succeed at the college level. As such, many Adult Ed and colleges are offering "gap classes". These classes are more content focused and have more stringent requirements. They have required assignments to complete. They teach students about note-taking and developing study habits. There are a number of good articles on College Readiness by Dr. David Connelly. You can find them at www.epiconline.org

I was amazed at all the emphasis on transitioning higher level ESOL students to postsecondary situations. I think this population is often neglected in terms of transitions. At CUNY, they offer a 900 hour Language Immersion program to succeed in English. You can read more about it at www.clip.cuny.edu.

There are a multitude of college prep classes being provided by adult education folks. All of them are providing supports to students in terms of financial aid, career counselors, career path training, and advising. Programs are taking students through the application process. Often, they cover the cost of the application fee for the student. The students visit campuses and tour the properties.

All the sessions attended inspired me to come back and think about how to enhance our services for our students. I would like to develop and find funding for a Bridges to College for our ESL and GED students. I know I owe it to them!

Submitted by

Terry Hamovitch
ABLE/PLUS Coordinator
Lakewood City Schools

SESSION HANDOUTS AVAILABLE

- **Keynote Presentation:** *Designing Effective College Transitions for English Language Learners*
 - PowerPoint presented in a plain text format
- **Career Pathways Panel:** *Effective Transitions Through Career Pathways*
 - Overview of the panel, the moderator, Breaking Through initiative, career pathway program description, and Early Childhood Education career pathway map
- **Workshop Session I**
 - *Bridges, Ladders, and Webs: From Basic Skills to Careers*
 - Instructional models, guide sheet on “Planning for Career-Focused Basic Skills: Questions to Consider”, and Bibliography/Selected Reference Sheet.
 - *Math Strategies and Techniques for Student Success*
 - Session presentation and strategies
 - *More than the Main Idea: From GED to College Reading*
 - PowerPoint, Accuplacer practice items (reading), sample items from the reading section of the GED Practice Test, and references
 - *Raising Adults’ Career Awareness: Collaborating with One-Stop Career Centers*
 - *Building Networks: a Partners’ Discussion – PIC & CareerLink*, TABE information, checklist of Transitioning Skills for student success, and WIA Services
- **Workshop Session II**
 - *NCTN (National College Transitions Network) Policy Forum: Promising Policies and promising Problems in Adult Transition*
 - Meeting agenda and minutes provided by NCTN
 - Poster sessions: The Admissions and Orientation Process in Rural College Transition Project, College for a Day: Opening the Door to College for ABE Students, and In-house Mentoring for Transitions Students
 - Rural College Transitions Project outline
 - College for a day brochure and overview
 - In-house Mentoring brochures and newsletter
- **Workshop Session III:**
 - *Collaborating in a Process: Strengths and Challenges*
 - Slides from the session
- **Workshop Session IV**
 - *ESL/GED College Transition: Two CUNY Models*
 - *CUNY College Transition Pilot Overview*
- **Also available**
 - Conference Participant List
 - NCTN Policy Survey Results of Adult Education Directors