

Welcome from the National Coordinator

Welcome to the second edition of the Adult Learners' Week 2006 E-Newsletter.

I would like to thank everyone that has registered for and contributed to the e-newsletter to date; and for your support of this important calendar event in our adult learning community.

Inside this newsletter you will find interesting stories and initiatives from across the ACE and adult learning sectors.

There has been increasing interest in the Learn @ Work Program and this year we will be launching a revised campaign Learn @ Work Today. In August we will be introducing an exciting online e-learning resource which will be central to the Learn @ Work Today initiatives.

On behalf of the ALW National Management Team I extend to you best wishes for continuing and successful preparations for Adult Learners' Week 2006.

Regards,

Peter Murphy
Business and Communications Manager
Adult Learning Australia



Peter Murphy
ALW National Coordinator

Adult Learners' Week

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Learn @ Work Today

Learn @ Work Today is a national event that will be held on Friday 8 September 2006 as part of Adult Learners' Week. During Learn @ Work Today individuals and organisations throughout Australia will be encouraged to reflect on their learning practices and take the opportunity to try something new.

Learn @ Work Today is modelled on similar promotions held in the UK and US, and is an opportunity for employers and employees to:

- draw attention to the strategic importance of effective learning in the workplace
- highlight the enormous amount and variety of learning that currently occurs in the workplace, from informal exchanges over morning tea to

formal training courses

- develop a positive attitude towards learning throughout life!

Learn @ Work Today will promote:

- the value of developing a workplace which supports learning
- the importance of the workplace as a venue for learning activity in Australia
- the value of skills gained through workplace experiences (both paid and unpaid)
- the characteristics of effective workplace learning environments

The main goal of Learn @ Work Today is to raise awareness of the importance of

learning -- learning which, in most cases, is already happening.

Did you know?

Of the 80 per cent of wage earners that undertake some form of training annually; 72 per cent of this training activity is unstructured, on-the-job training (Source: Susan Dawe, Determinants of Successful Training Practices in Large Australian Firms, NCVET, 2004).

For more information about **Learn @ Work Today** visit <http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/learn@work/learn@work.html>

Inside this issue:

Women Work Together	2
So You Want To Learn?	2
Learning To Live Again	3
Diverse cultures form artistic community	4
Learn @ Work— Money 101	4
Barkly Creative Communities – Industry driving the demand for training	5
Did you know?	5

- **So you want to learn?**
- **Learning to live again**
- **Industry driving demand for training**
- **Diverse cultures form artistic community**
- **Social capital: learning for living**

'I've learnt to trust myself, talk about my hobbies and talk with other women about how we feel'.

Women Work Together

In Granville and Auburn, NSW, local women from migrant, refugee and non-English speaking backgrounds have had the opportunity to learn new skills and build networks through a community development program called 'Women Work Together'.

The Parramatta College developed a partnership with a local community organisation in Granville, the Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE) and offered an eight week program including English, computing and personal development classes three mornings a week, with free childcare.

The local Parramatta women were encouraged to build networks with other women from a diverse range of backgrounds, plus learn about the training, services and resources available in the area, including the Par-

ramatta Adult and Community Education College. The women were encouraged to think about further education opportunities available to them at a local level.

Souha Taleb talks about the Women Working Together program. 'It's beautiful. I never knew how to use the internet. I've learnt how to send and receive mail and how to find information on products, education, news and health'.

Marcel Samaan of Sudanese background says her English has improved through 'meeting and speaking with other women' from a range of cultures including El Salvadore, Turkey, Iraq, the Philippines and Afghanistan. She had never used a computer until participating in the Women Work Together and now uses email to keep in touch with her friends, who she

doesn't get the chance to visit in person. These new computer skills will help her look for work. 'I've learnt to trust myself, talk about my hobbies and talk with other women about how we feel'.

The Women Work Together finished in December 2005, and a highlight of their graduation was the chance for the women to swap recipes with many of the women bringing special dishes for all to share as a final celebration. Many of the women have gone on to further study locally, and a number are taking part in a local womens' network that meets regularly, and invites guest speakers on a range of health, education and community issues.

So You Want To Learn?

Building learning communities in Tasmania

In response to community interest in learning groups, the Third Age Learning Network of Tasmania (TALENT) recently published *So You Want To Learn?* a 26-page booklet of information, suggestions and contacts for people interested in joining a learning group, and for those wishing to start up their own.

The booklet covers, for example: finding suitable accommodation, communicating with members, supporting volunteers, insurance issues, incorporation (or not), attracting funding, and running a group, along with some very good 'long-term survival tips'.

While it is pitched at older people, much is relevant to setting up any kind of community learning group. And while the contacts and resources are Tasmania-focused, readers will find their parallels in most states and territories.

The booklet is available for downloading from the Council on The Ageing (Tas) website <http://www.cotatas.org>.



Sign Up Now



At the launch: Rowena Mackean (co-author, and coordinator, TALENT) and Kathy Mason (member, Tasmanian Learning and Skills Authority and 2004 (national) Adult Educator of the Year) Photo courtesy Prime Times Tasmania

Learning To Live Again

The Vietnam Veterans' Federation moved out of a small house in Ainslie into sheds, formally occupied by Parks and Gardens, in Page, on 1 July 2004.

Since then the old tin sheds have been upgraded and outfitted to accommodate a suite of offices, a large kitchen area, a computer room and a number of workshops. All of the manual work was completed by volunteer members honing their skills or developing new ones. Some learnt the intricacies of plastering, others painted or liased with companies to get the best price on a fridge or freezer – or building materials.

The Association has received a "Renew Community Infrastructure and Facilities Program" grant from the Stanhope Government in 2005. Computers, desks and chairs were provided by the ACT Government's Digital Divide Program. They are also one of the 20 groups to benefit from the ACT Government funded 2005 Adult Community Education (ACE) grants. The grant will enable the Association to purchase an interactive computer based training programs for Windows, XP, Exel and word, computer hardware, a wireless network and books. CSR has donated gyprock, cornice and insulation for all the sheds.

We still haven't got to the "men in their sheds" areas of woodwork and metal tech!

With nearly six hundred members, the Association provides many varied services to its members in Canberra and the region. There are two welfare officers and ten pension officers who assist members deal with the Department of Veterans' Affairs, two advocates who assist with cases that go before

the Veterans' Review Board, a Suicide Prevention team and one paid office Manager but these administrative services are merely the beginning.

Once members receive assistance, they are often drawn to the many different activities the Association offers. Not only can members join the walking, gym and gardening groups, sing in a choir or play golf each week, they can also partake in a wide range of support and learning groups. Hospital and hospice visiting groups visit those in need, pets as therapy dogs visit the nursing homes twice a week seeing approximately 138 people each day, and courses for carers have proved extremely popular as they provide training, support and the dissemination of practical skills.

Learning takes place in many different ways. There are many who take the craft classes – they "Never Mind the Dust and ..get crafty" while the new metal and wood workshops allow people to learn more transferable skills; "Dovetails for Diggers" and "Metal Mangles and Swarf Producers" will help here. Equally many participants have developed new talents while working on the refurbishment of the centre.

Classes in these three areas and in the computer centre provide a more formal teaching setting for members. The computer centre is interactive, allowing students to learn at their own pace but other activities encourage the direct sharing of knowledge.

Cooking classes titled "Cooking for one or two people" encourage veterans to cook healthy foods in association with the gymnasium classes they attend as they need to be fit both mentally and physically. Veterans teaching veterans will be the ideal set up for these classes.

It is apparent that one of the main attributes of the centre is the supportive and collegiate environment that you notice over the monthly lunch put on by the "girls" (partners of the Veterans). This is an internal fund raising activity but clearly displays the camaraderie that is developed and fostered among the group. The same solidarity is seen in the running of another fundraiser, the food van which recently swung into action for the annual convention of the Ulysses Club early in 2005, feeding meals to nearly 6000 people.

The group has many plans for the future - a gym, counselling rooms and a landscaped garden/barbecue but it is apparent that whatever the members undertake, the feeling within the organisation is best summed up by the comment of one member:

"I get so much joy from seeing what everyone gets out of the courses. We all feel so supported. That's why we keep coming back."

Surely this is an example of what adult learning should be – an extension of one's skills in a supportive, fun loving and caring environment.

For more information about Adult and Community Education in the ACT, visit the DET website
<http://www.det.act.gov.au/services/TrainingACE.htm>

"I get so much joy from seeing what everyone gets out of the courses."

"We all feel so supported. That's why we keep coming back."

Sign Up Now

Diverse cultures form artistic community



Picture courtesy of Lynda Winter, SMMRC

“The artwork provided a way of sharing their cultural experiences, stories and journeys”

A recent exhibition of cultural stories and textile designs created by migrant and refugee women has showcased the results of a fourteen week textile design course run by the South Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (SMMRC).

The SMMRC is a community-based organisation that provides settlement and support services to migrants and refugees, including Adult Community Education (ACE) programs.

The innovative project developed by SMMRC was funded through the Western Australian Department of Education and Training's annual ACE grants. Grants of up to \$8,000 are offered to increase participation and diversity in ACE.

SMMRC project manager, Lynda Winter said the eighteen women who participated in the Women's Textile Exchange Project are all from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

“The artwork provided a way of sharing their cultural experiences, stories and journeys,”

said Ms Winter.

“The women created a portfolio of ideas used to inspire printmaking and design activities and then items of clothing, bags, printed fabrics and other artworks were created.”

This ACE program has provided valuable opportunities for the participants, not only from their newly learnt artistic skills, but it has offered an avenue for meeting other women, sharing skills and stories and allowed participants to improve their English.

The project aimed to give migrant and refugee women the skills and self-esteem to find pathways into other education courses or more importantly employment opportunities.

Other community groups are now replicating this innovative idea and SMMRC are currently submitting further funding applications to allow this project to expand.

“The aim is to turn it into a women's cooperative, which will benefit other women from

the community who access our services in the future,” said Ms Winter.

“We wish to continue the project turning it into an enterprising cooperative where women can create and sell their art.”

To find out more about the SMMRC and this project email Lynda Winter Lynda@fmrc.asn.au.

For more information about WA Department of Education and Training grants to increase participation and diversity in ACE visit www.vetinfonet.det.wa.edu.au.



Learn @ Work—Money 101

“Money 101 is a workplace financial literacy education program that assists staff to take control of their finances and plan for a safe and secure future.

The program helps them make informed decisions about the use and management of their money during their working lives.

Businesses that have employees with no immediate financial anxiety enjoy greater productivity and staff morale.” (Source: Money for Life Pty Ltd)

Committed to providing information and access to literacy programs Adult Learning Australia in conjunction with Money for Life will roll out an online financial planning resource which will be central to the Learn @ Work Today (2006) campaign.

This free online resource will be offered on the Learn @ Work Today web pages as a ‘guest module’ and will highlight several features of the 6 modules that make up the Money 101 online financial planning package.

The register for the Money 101 ‘guest module’ will be open from **Friday 14 July 2006**.

The Money 101 ‘guest module’ will be active from **1 August 2006 to 30 September 2006**.

Those interested in accessing the Money 101 ‘guest module’ for the Learn @ Work Today campaign will need to register their details at http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/learn@work/money101/guest_register.html



Barkly Creative Communities – Industry driving the demand for training

The Barkly arts community participated in an E-Learning Creative Communities project in 2006 driven by Barkly Regional Arts in partnership with CHARTTES Training Advisory Council, Nyinkka Nyunyu and Julalikari.

The aim of the project was to look at e-learning and how it could be used to enhance access to information, communication and learning with this remote arts community.

Participants were introduced to a host of e-learning tools from communication options and photo stories, to toolboxes and internet activities. From these initial taster activities, the learning took on a life of its own, with the arts community driving the demand.

The visual artists became experts with digital stories and created a bank of stories about their art. This proved a powerful way to capture the stories behind the art and help market their art. The musicians were very interested in learning how to use the internet to market their music

and grow their business and set about designing their own website and utilising the web to access information about the music industry. They also recorded their stories and created music videos.

“Barkly Arts has a new website and spends a considerable amount of time keeping it current with all the arts activity that is happening in the region. With this increased effort to maintain a current and vibrant website they have gone from 2000 hits a month to over 60,000 hits a month.

During the project the coordinator at Barkly Arts got a phone call from Denmark. They had seen a movie called Green Day and wanted to know about the music from the Tableland Drifters which featured on the movie. The Tableland Drifters had no idea their music had been used (although it had been correctly acknowledged) but are now in touch with the other side of the world and talking music. All this from one Google search” said Lorna Martin

Increasing access to and capacity to utilise a variety of communication tools through training has provided a vital link between Tennant Creek, the region and the world.

Where contact and communication is often infrequent and non-direct, this provided a personal and closer mode of communication. Internet also proved a gateway to the world for the Tennant Creek and surrounds, as the information and knowledge gathered from this medium could not be gained in any other way.



Picture courtesy of Catherine Curry, CHARTTES

“The aim of the project was to look at e-learning and how it could be used to enhance access to information, communication and learning with this remote arts community.”



Did you know?

- Adult Learners' Week (ALW, Australia) is part of an international learning festival that is celebrated in over 40 countries around the world; and ALW has been celebrated in Australia since 1995.
- Since 2000, official online ALW events in Australia have increased by over 226% (Source: ALW Official Online Calendar)
- During the months of July and August there are over 400 visits (3000 hits) per day on the Australian ALW National Website. (Source: ALW website database statistics)
- One in four (1 in 4) Australians have seen or heard publicity about Adult Learners' Week (Source: AC-Nielson Omnibus Survey, 23-25 Sept 2005)

Adult Learners' Week
Sign Up Now



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Adult Learners' Week 2006

Adult Learners' Week

For more information visit
www.adultlearnersweek.org
or phone 1300 I LEARN

Useful ALW Web Links

Online Calendar

<http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/calendar.html>

Add an event

<http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/addevent.html>

Edit an event

<http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/editevent.html>

Frequently asked questions

<http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/faq.html>

Learn @ Work Today

<http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/learn@work/learn@work.html>

Literacy Resources

<http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/links/literacy.html>

Contact us

<http://www.adultlearnersweek.org/about/contacts.html>

Social Capital: Learning for Living

Call for papers

Adult Learning Australia (ALA) is now accepting proposals for workshops and seminars for its 46th Annual Conference. This year's conference theme, *Social Capital: Learning for Living*, will examine the importance of building and shaping our adult learning communities to ensure strong social and economic growth in both our communities and workplaces.

All proposals should address the theme of the conference.

Workshops

Workshops should last one and a half hours to allow genuinely interactive sessions. They should be directed at practitioners in the field of adult learning. Presenters are asked to demonstrate how they plan to involve participants in the session. Panel presentations will also be considered.

Seminars

These will give presenters the opportunity to talk about their current research activities or to give conceptual papers. They will be 45 minutes long. Selection of these papers will be rigorous. For those requiring it, papers can be refereed according to DEST guidelines.

The deadline for submission of proposals is **Friday 4 August 2006**. To apply, please fill out the pro-forma which can be downloaded at <http://www.ala.asn.au/conf/2006/callpapers.htm>

The ALA 46th Annual National Conference will be held on 23 – 25 November 2006 at the IBIS Hotel Therry Street, Melbourne VIC.

For more information visit <http://www.ala.asn.au/conf/2006/natconf2006.htm>



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