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Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning

Innovative Practices: Using Cell-Ed to Support English Language Learning

by G. Martinez Cabrera

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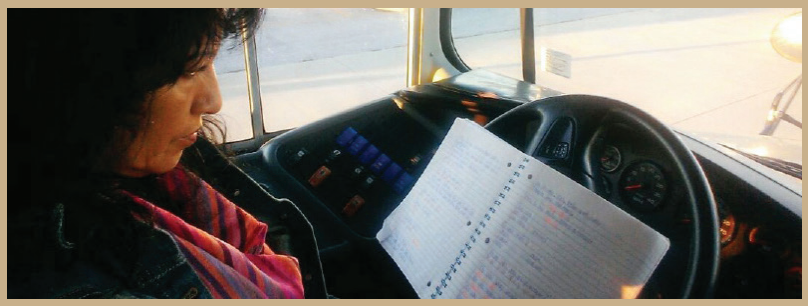


Albina Herrera works long days as a bus driver for the Hays School District in Kyle, Texas, a rapidly growing suburb of Austin. She speaks English well, but since coming to this country from Mexico, she never learned how to write the language. Though she has a real desire to learn, the long hours and her constantly changing work schedule make going to class nearly impossible. She needed a way to learn and practice her English during pockets of spare time on the job.

Across town, Sylvia Villasenor, who works night shifts cleaning at a large industrial bakery, has the same problem. Even if she could make a class before starting her shift, she feels she cannot focus on learning because she is just too tired.

Jon Engel, the Director of Adult Education at Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas (CA), understands the plight of these two students and the other 1,700 like them that his agency works with every year.

> "We do everything we can to create classes that fit our students' lives, but there's only so much we can do. Even if a student does show to a class, she usually can't practice what she learns, so she doesn't really succeed, which means she stops coming. We needed a solution."

Enter Cell-Ed, a developer out of California that created an ESL curriculum that can be accessed through any basic cell phone. Students can take multiple courses, which are geared toward Spanish-speaking immigrants, by dialing a number, listening to pre-recorded lessons with accompanying text, and texting back answers. Since starting in 2014, Cell-Ed has served more than 1,000 students like Albina and Sylvia,

giving them the opportunity to learn English *anytime, anywhere*.

In the case of Cell-Ed, the phrase "anytime, anywhere" is especially accurate. Cell-Ed is a standout digital learning tool in the adult education space because of its emphasis on mobile-ready technology that does not require Internet access.

"We find that many of our students - even though they are some of the hardest to reach in the adult education space - have cell phones, yet they don't always have data plans. So our curriculum works for them because they are able to access the knowledge in a way that is anytime, anywhere but also affordable."

Alison Ascher Webber
Education Director
Cell-Ed

For this reason, Engel thinks that Cell-Ed is a "natural fit." A product like Cell-Ed provides CA's students with a solution that is "truly meaningful and life-changing on multiple levels," said Engel.

Beside the language skills, Engel points to how the app also teaches students basic digital literacy skills that can be used in the workplace. When Senobia Rodriguez first started classes at the Kyle Learning Center, one of CA's 21 centers throughout nine counties, she struggled greatly -- she had never sent a text before. But once her kids showed her how to navigate the keyboard on her phone, she discovered she was carrying more than just a phone; she was carrying a powerful technology tool that could open new possibilities. In that first month, she studied for 22 hours on her own in addition to class time, and in the process, became more fluent in her English and in a digital literacy skill that many of us take for granted.

Senobia's story is by no means unusual for the CA students who are using Cell-Ed. One of the things that Engel looks for in a digital learning tool is how it can perform more than one function in the classroom. This is because in Texas, for a product like Cell-Ed to be judged a true success, it has to teach academic skills in addition to helping agencies like CA prepare students for the workplace. Since 2014, adult education in the state has shifted from its department of education over to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

"This change has created opportunities and challenges for us," Engel told us. One of the biggest challenges stems from how CA has had to rethink how they teach. Not only do lessons have to be academically rigorous and meaningful to their students' lives, they also need to match the needs of employers in the region. "I look at my students," Engel said, "who are almost all Latino and a large majority women, and I realize that they have to get better skills for the workplace - not just English, but digital literacy as well."

One doesn't have to look very hard to see what Engel means. Sofia Cordoba was one of the first graduates of the Cell-Ed program last summer. As a result of her hard work, she felt confident enough to apply to CA as a Teaching Assistant in one of its night classes for low-level ESL students. She is an example of how a strong adult ed program using smart technology can change lives. "Cell-Ed gave me the vocabulary and dialogue for interviewing," Cordoba said. "And that made a big difference for me."

Arguably, CA coupled with Cell-Ed did **more** than just provide her with the language skills she needed to get the job. The combination of CA's teaching staff and its use of Cell-Ed also gave Sofia the confidence to go after a job that helps her make ends meet while also allowing her to help her own community. "Cell-Ed looks for ways to break cycles of poverty," Ascher Webber said. And with CA, this seems to be happening in central Texas.

This article first appeared at digitalpromise.org.

http://www.digitalpromise.org/blog/entry/the-anatomy-of-a-solution-how-a-developer-and-a-cbo-are-making-a-difference

IN THIS ISSUE

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES
Using Cell-Ed to Support English Language Learning
by G. Martinez Cabrera 1

NEW AND NOTABLE
Updates from TWC
2015 Regional Workforce and Adult Education Integration Events 4

Update on WIOA Implementation and the NPRM 5

ADULT LEARNER ENGAGEMENT
Connecting Classroom and Career
by Ethel Alsbrooks 6

The Two Most Valuable Skills You Could Learn or Teach
by Anthony Gabriel 7

BUILDING COLLABORATION & PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT
SMU Community English Literacy and Life Skills Program
by Jaime Sisson 9

IDEAS FOR TEACHERS OF ADULTS
Teaching Pronunciation
by Dr. Glenda Rose 11

CAREER PATHWAYS & COLLEGE TRANSITIONS FOR ADULTS
New Roots to Employment: A Hybrid Career Readiness Program for Advanced-Degree English Language Learners
by Dr. Glenda Rose 13

ADULT LEARNER SUCCESS STORIES
Never Too Late to Learn
by Yvonne Cruz 15

My Journey Through Life
by Itzel Martinez 15

IN EVERY ISSUE
WELCOME TO OUR LIBRARY 16

READ IT ONLINE OR FREE BY MAIL 18

If You Are Involved in Family Literacy in Texas...

Join the Family Literacy Discussion List

This TCALL Family Literacy discussion list is open to teachers, administrators, and partners of family literacy and parent education efforts in Texas. This includes comprehensive Family Literacy Programs as well as family oriented library-based programs, Head Start parent educators, and others involved in intergenerational literacy.

To subscribe, email Lea Ann Schroeder at lschroeder@tamu.edu

Updates from TWC

2015 Regional Workforce and Adult Education Integration Events

Increasing the collaboration and occurrence of aligned services across Adult Education and Literacy and Workforce Solutions providers is critically important to support the state plans for AEL service integration and prepare for increased shared services to support common customers/students under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

To facilitate integration of the Adult Education and Literacy and Texas Workforce System, TWC in collaboration with Local Workforce Development Boards, is facilitating a series of ten regional meetings structured to identify gaps and solution-oriented strategies that address regional workforce and adult education system integration.

To support this objective, the TWC Commission allocated $240,000 to support these events and related efforts around the state.

The goal of these meetings is to close strategic and operational gaps in service delivery between adult education and workforce system services.

Because of their roles as area conveners for workforce system partners and employers, Workforce Boards are leading these events and inviting organizational leaders and direct service providers from the workforce and adult education and literacy systems.

Regional Workforce and Adult Education Integration Initiative		
Location	**Date**	**Workforce Board Areas**
Belton, TX	5/07/2015	Rural Capital, Heart of TX, Capital Area, Central TX
McAllen, TX	5/08/2015	South TX, Coastal Bend, Cameron, Lower Rio
Dallas, TX	5/21/2015	Dallas County
Fort Worth, TX	5/28/2015	North Central, Tarrant County
Denison, TX	6/04/2015	East TX, Northeast TX, Texoma
El Paso, TX	6/09/2015	Upper Rio Grande
Lubbock, TX	6/10/2015	Panhandle, South Plains
San Antonio, TX	6/15/2015	Alamo, Golden Crescent, Middle Rio Grande
Conroe, TX	6/25/2015	Brazos Valley, Deep East TX, Gulf Coast, Southeast TX
Snyder, TX	6/29/2015	Concho Valley, North TX, Permian Basin, West Central TX

UPDATE ON WIOA IMPLEMENTATION AND THE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKINE (NPRM)

On April 16, 2015, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor published draft regulations to the Federal Register for public comment, also known as a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM). These proposed regulations to implement changes result from the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and clarify new provisions in the law as well as update existing regulations.

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is developing a comprehensive agency response to these draft regulations to be submitted before the June 15 due date. TWC's comments reflect the agency's commitment to the integration, improvement, and accountability of the workforce system provided by WIOA and desire to maintain the flexibility authorized in statute to best serve its customers.

Important Dates for WIOA Implementation

April 16, 2015	Notice of Proposed Rule Making Published
June 15, 2015	Comments due to Department of Education/Labor for Notice of Proposed Rule Making
July 1, 2015	WIA performance and accountability extended for one year (WIA is the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, predecessor to the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or WIOA.)
January 22, 2016	Final WIOA regulations published
July 1, 2016	WIOA performance and accountability takes effect

Adult Learner Engagement

Connecting Classroom and Career

by Ethel Alsbrooks

Apply Learning to Life Experiences
When teaching adult learners, relate the content you are teaching to the profession they plan to pursue in life. In my Professional Communications class, I have my students transfer the knowledge learned about communication skills to real life personal and work experiences. As a teacher, the best way to reach an adult learner and engage them in the learning process is to help the students understand how what they learn in the classroom connects to their life.

Prepare Students for the Future 21st Century Workforce
Where adult learners are now does not mean that is where they will always be. The careers that many of my adult learners want to pursue range from truck driving to being a doctor. When it comes to writing and presenting speeches, a student who has determined that truck driving is what he is interested in pursuing is quick to say that this will never apply to his job. It is projected that within a person's life span they will pursue at least five different occupations. This is partly due to the advancements in technology, causing a change in the professions available for one to pursue.

Now, the transportation of goods from one place to another will always be a necessity, but I have to point out to that student that he may not always be behind the wheel of a truck. One day, he might train someone to master the skill of truck driving. Hence, the need to be able to express himself well in writing, because if he is a master at truck driving, his job could entail creating the training manual for truck driving, which could lead to him presenting the key points of the manual to truck driving students. In my classroom, when I help students to see the bigger picture, they take an active role in understanding and applying what I teach. By getting my truck driver to realize this as a possibility, it helped him and other students to realize how that could be the case with their chosen profession.

Learners that are Workforce Ready
The adult learners we are preparing for the workforce could work in professions that did not exist ten or twenty years ago. This is another point that I share with my adult learners. As teachers, we are charged with preparing our adult learners, through the teaching of our content, for occupations that we are not aware will exist in the near future. Therefore, we have to expose them to learning in a variety of ways. Utilize technology in delivering our instruction, but it is even more important for us to have our students engage in learning what we have taught them by using technology. Believe it or not, some of my adult learners, who despite being attached to their cell phones and video games, are reluctant to demonstrate their knowledge using technology. Again, this is where as the teacher, I have to help students understand that technological skill is a necessity in the workforce. They can expect an employer to ask them about their level of experience with technology in an interview. Television viewing, downloading music and video games is not what employers are inquiring about when they ask this question. Therefore, I have my students apply the communication skills learned that week in a project that utilizes technology.

Engage with Technology
Technology has become a major facet in both our personal lives and in our professions. Show students how technology is evolving and will continue to play a role in our personal and professional lives. As it relates to our professional lives, it is essential that adult learners be technology savvy. The knowledge of how to use various software programs, including web-based software, is a marketable skill that many employers seek to find in potential employees.

Although employers provide training in technology, an employer is more likely to hire a person who has been exposed to a variety of technology and is comfort-

able using it. It will be quicker, easier, and more cost effective to train an employee who is technologically competent.

Use Real-World Application
The purpose of learning is to not only have the knowledge but also know how to apply what we have learned to improve the quality of our life experiences. In order to experience success with adult learners, teachers must engage students in the process of learning through real-world application of the concepts and through the use of technology.

About the Author
Ms. Ethel Alsbrooks, M.Ed., serves on the campus instructional leadership team at John L. Patton, Jr. Academic Center in Dallas ISD and is the English department chair. Currently, she teaches English I and Professional Communications.

The Two Most Valuable Skills You Could Learn or Teach

by Anthony Gabriel

As many of us are apt to do, either by custom or habit, the beginning of the new year marks a time in our lives we generally look to make bold or well-intentioned proclamations of how we want to change or improve ourselves. If many of us are honest, by mid-year those proclamations have been replaced by the immediacy of pressing other issues that ultimately prevent us from accomplishing our well-intentioned goals.

Additionally, there's the specter of fear and uncertainty that also gives us ammunition in our rationalization of why we haven't reached or even seriously attempted our goals.

For many adult learners this process takes on an even more depressing result in that many have been promising themselves that they would make changes in their lives, (get a GED, find a job, learn to speak English, etc.), but for whatever reason, they have not been able to accomplish their goals. However, unlike some of us, they have more serious barriers (emotional/motivational, educational, and financial) that must be overcome in order for them to become more successful in their drives to change their circumstances.

The Two Most Valuable Skills
The two most important skills that would impact these types of adult learners are the skills that would enable them to handle **fear and resistance to change.** Adult Learners come to their learner environments with a number of fears they battle as well as the burdens of daily life that wears on their energies to be effectively and consistently engaged in their learning. Some of my learners would come to class and simply just want to sleep or talk because of the stressors or fears they were trying to handle. At that point, I would allow the class to decide what they wanted to do or simply let the individuals in question get the relief they were seeking. Helping adult learners embrace their fears by talking about them, voicing them to their peers, or just allowing them mental and physical rest were ways I helped them mitigate some of their fears or resistance to change.

"Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself."

George Bernard Shaw

Change is a hurdle we all are tasked to deal with at some point in our lives. For me, Mr. Shaw's quote reminds us that change must start with the idea of creation which demands finding out what gave birth to our past, then how that past impacts the present and future possibilities of creating ourselves anew. The question then becomes *how do we honestly use this knowledge to transform or change our conditions?*

Jack Mezirow, the noted adult education psychologist, best known for his ideas on Transformative Learning, sees change as a result of shifts in perspective and meaning. Mezirow identifies ten phases that provide a window to this change process:

- A disorienting dilemma;
- A self examination with feelings of guilt or shame
- A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions

- Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
- Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
- Planning a course of action
- Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plan
- Provision trying of new roles
- Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
- A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's perspective

Even if you are not familiar with Mezirow's ideas, a simple investigation or discussion of just one of the ten phases can be beneficial to your adult learners. Of course, this must be done in an environment of trust and comfort that allows your learners to speak freely and not have their personal challenges or past become weapons for others to use against them.

Ultimately, trying to change the mindset and life steps of an adult is a precarious undertaking that involves risk for all involved, and it must be done with the utmost sensitivity and understanding.

Best Practices

The "Adult Learning and Retention: Factors and Strategies" (2010) report published by the Cultural Orientation Resource Center, Center for Applied Linguistics. (2010). COR Center Web site: http://www.cal.org/co/ notes the following suggestions for working with adults:

When working with adults, keep in mind that adults

- Are self-directed
- Are practical and problem solving
- Need to know why something is being learned
- Need adult-appropriate content
- Have previous experience as a resource
- Need to demonstrate background knowledge and abilities, and
- Need to be able to apply learning immediately to real-life situations

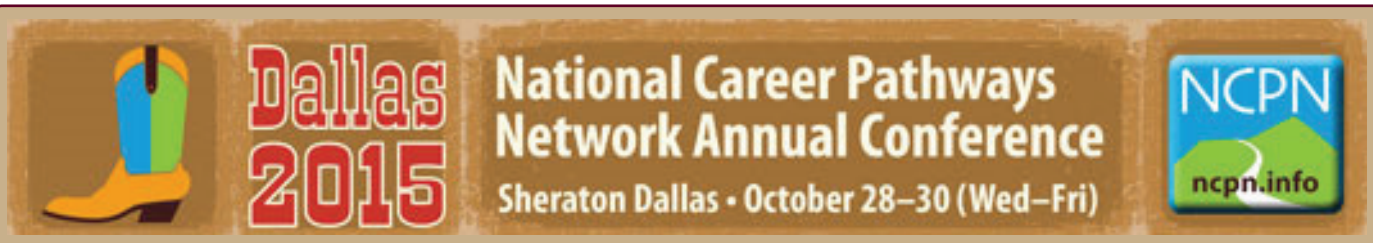
Many factors affect adult learning. These include the learner's

- Age
- Language background
- Level of prior education
- Degree of first language literacy
- Cultural background and related views regarding adult learning
- Individual learning preferences and styles
- Emotional and psychological issues
- Disabilities
- Motivation, and
- Personal situation and stressors

As an adult education instructor, administrator, or simply a champion of adult learners, helping them deal with their fears and adaptations to change are the two most valuable skill sets they should learn and you should teach.

About the Author

Anthony Gabriel is the Director of GABRTEACH/GABRWORKS, an educator, consultant, trainer, and activist deeply committed to Adult Education, Workforce Development, Emotional Literacy, and Fatherhood Advocacy. Current projects underway are Emotional Literacy and Father Engagement curriculum development. You can contact Mr. Gabriel at gabrteach3831@gmail.com or gabrielliteracy@gmail.com



Texas will be the site of this national conference to be held at the downtown Sheraton Dallas Hotel. This professional development opportunity will include over 150 breakout sessions with conference strands based on the U.S. Department of Education's "10 Components of a Program of Study (POS) Design Framework" and the U.S. Department of Labor's "6 Key Elements," along with a variety of preconference workshops, keynote speakers, networking opportunities, and exhibits of the latest products and services.

NCPN is a membership organization for educators, employers and others involved in the advancement of Career Pathways, Career Technical Education (CTE), and related education reform initiatives.

For more information, visit the conference web page.
www.ncpn.info/2015-ncpn-conf.php

Building Collaboration & Program Improvement

SMU Community English Literacy and Life Skills Program

by Jaime Sisson

As an undergraduate studying Spanish and Education at Southern Methodist University (SMU), I have had the opportunity to work with adult English learners for the past few years in the Dallas area. Through these experiences, I noticed that there was a need to provide adult immigrant workers at SMU with a program that could help them in developing the English skills they need for their job settings. Therefore, with funding from both Engaged Learning and the Caswell Fellows Undergraduate Leadership Program at SMU, I created the English Literacy and Life Skills (ELLIS) Program for the Aramark Facility Services employees who work at the SMU campus. The ELLIS program provides opportunities for participating Aramark employees to improve their English language skills, and accomplish their own individual life goals.

The Aramark employees that the ELLIS program serves are part of various immigrant or refugee communities. Among these workers, the most numerous communities are Bhutanese refugees, who speak Nepali, and Mexican immigrants, who speak Spanish. From various parts of Africa, there are also workers who speak Swahili and Kirundi. Because adult immigrants lead busy lives and could face scheduling challenges, the ELLIS program was designed to take place at these employees' workplace. In addition, due to the language barriers these workers experience, it is common to see division between English speaking employees and those who are not proficient in English. Therefore, the ELLIS program seeks to also strengthen teamwork and foster a sense of community at the workplace by having native English-speaking co-workers involved in the program as peer mentors or conversation partners. (Burt & Mathews-Aydinli, 2007).

Beyond everyday life English skills, our ELLIS program classes include workplace skills in the context of various language functions, such as asking for clarification, giving and following directions, and expressing lack of comprehension. As these language functions are both useful and transferable, mastering them can help students not only get a job, but also thrive on a job they have (Burt & Mathews-Aydinli, 2007).

I would like to acknowledge that Abi Zapote, a friend of mine and community partner of LULAC (League of Latin American Citizens) at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), gave me the idea to create the ELLIS program at SMU. In the Fall of 2008, Abi and the LULAC Council at UTD developed an ESL Program for the custodial staff. Based on the UTD model, I enlisted a couple of volunteers and began the ELLIS program at SMU in Fall 2014, using the same curriculum as UTD.

The support and collaboration of the Aramark leaders and staff was essential to the development and growth of the ELLIS program. After gathering different contacts I found on the SMU website, I was able to get a hold of the Director of Human Resources for Aramark at SMU, and we set up a meeting to discuss our ideas, goals, and plans for the program. The director and other managers were quite enthusiastic about the idea of creating an English literacy program for their employees and mentioned that they had been wanting to do something like this for a long time. We have met various times after that initial meeting, and they have helped me to spread the word and register the interested employees for the class. The Aramark leadership has expressed their interest in continuing to support the ELLIS program at the SMU campus.

One of the challenges our program faces is the constant variation in student attendance due to the variety

of responsibilities of adult learners. To address this issue, the instructors and I do things a little differently than one might see in a regular classroom setting. For instance, since English proficiency varies widely among students and students work on different material depending on their previous attendance record, we conduct a variety of one-on-one and small group tutoring sessions with students and volunteers. Because the ELLIS program is new students can join the program at any time during the semester. This system has allowed the program to grow and meet the needs of our adult learners.

Throughout the semester we monitor students' progress through formative, summative, and self-assessments, making any adjustments needed to improve student learning. By allowing program participants to explore their interests and advance at their own pace, the ELLIS program provides educational opportunities that engage and contribute to each of our students' personal growth. In addition, the ELLIS program seeks to empower adult English learners by building on the strengths they bring to Second Language Acquisition. According to Krashen (2004), adults are actually faster than children in the early stages of Second Language Acquisition and thanks to their superior knowledge of the world, they understand more of the input they hear and read. In summary, the ELLIS program seeks to develop autonomous acquirers, who are not perfect speakers of the second language, just good enough to continue improving without us in their daily lives (Krashen 2004).

I am taking the necessary steps for the ELLIS program to continue to grow after I finish my undergraduate studies this year. To this end, I am creating a student organization at SMU that will focus on the development and continuation of this program. In addition, I am conducting research to document how the ELLIS program has served workers at SMU. This information could be used to apply for additional grants and increase the visibility of the program at the regional and national level. I hope that the ELLIS program will continue to create a positive difference by providing immigrant workers with accessible and affordable educational opportunities.

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About the Author

Jaime M. Sisson is a recent graduate at Southern Methodist University with a Bachelors of Liberal Arts in Spanish and Education. She has worked with adult English language learners for the past 3 years in the Dallas area.

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Teaching Pronunciation

by Dr. Glenda Rose, PD Center Specialist at TCALL

Once upon a time in teaching English to speakers of other languages, a method called "ALM" (audiolingual method) was all the rage. It came out of preparing spies to go behind enemy lines, so the focus was clearly on pronunciation that was as near-native as possible. After all, your life depended on not being detected as an enemy agent.

In recent years, the focus on communicative competency has moved us away from drilling pronunciation, which is not, in itself, a bad thing. After all, the United States is an immigrant country and it doesn't really bother anyone if you say "to-MAY-do" or "to-MAH-do." In our ESL classes, we often say "good!" even when the pronunciation is understandable only to a trained ESL teacher. But if pronunciation impedes our students' ability to communicate with "Joe Blow" on the street, or, worse yet, a potential employer, we need to change our approach.

Let's look at some basic principles of teaching pronunciation:

- Training pronunciation works better when it is taken from a real conversation rather than from just learning rules and phrases. A whole-part-whole method is one way to accomplish this. Start with the whole dialog. At this point, do not interrupt to correct pronunciation as it can create a situation where students become hesitant to speak. Correct only things that are truly unintelligible. Afterwards, focus on one pronunciation aspect to improve: a single sound, phrasing, rhythm, fluency, sentence stress, etc. Once students have worked on the pronunciation "part," be sure to put it back into use. Have students create their own dialogs, or create a new one for them to practice the same pronunciation point.
- Individual sounds are important, but always be sure to put them into context. Sounds in English change according to their "environment." For example, you know the sound the "t" makes, right? But what sound does it make in "bottle"? When you say "I went to the market," what happens to the "t" at the end of "went" right next to the "t" at the beginning of "to"? What happens to the "t" at the end of "market"? If you are speaking normally, does that "t" have a lot of air after it (aspirated / released) or does it simply end in the mouth (unaspirated / unreleased)?
- Similarly, individual words are important, but, again, they need to be practiced in context. For example, you know how to pronounce the word "the" in isolation, but notice how it changes when you read it in a sentence. Since we are a phrase-level language (unlike, say, Spanish, which is a syllable-level language), we often reduce unimportant syllables. "What did you do yesterday" becomes "Whadchya DO yesterday?" If you only teach the distinct word version, your students 1) may have a hard time understanding native speakers and 2) may have sound a bit like a computer or robot when they speak. "Whatchya gonna do when they come for you?"
- Be aware that students may not initially be able to HEAR the difference in some sounds. The space in the mouth is the

same regardless of the language you speak, but how it is divided up to make different sounds varies from language to language. Some languages divide it up into 20 sounds. Some divide it up into 50 or more. English has about 44 to 46 (depending on whose list you follow.) Up until about nine months of age, all babies babble with a full range of sounds, but after that, they start to babble only in the sounds they are exposed to. This is the start of phonemic (sounds that impact meaning) awareness. So if they have a 20-sound system, learning to split those sounds up into 45 sounds will be challenging. For example, in some languages, the "i" in "ship" and the "ee" in "sheep" are heard as the same sound. Another trouble spot for many English language learners is the "dark l." A Spanish speaker may write the word "table" in their notebook as "te-ibo." They can't hear the back "l" because it doesn't exist in their native tongue.

- If the students cannot hear the sound, you will have to SHOW students how to make that difference before they start hearing that difference. There are many good videos on the Internet that you can use to demonstrate this. One of the sites I refer students to is http://www.rachelsenglish.com/. Some software packages, like Instant Immersion English, or courses like Burlington English also have resources that show how to produce sounds correctly. These are also good resources for you as an instructor if you have no background in phonology or accent training.
- For the "part" section of the Whole-Part-Whole method, you may want to introduce a minimal pair activity. Minimal pairs are words that are different because of one phonemic difference. For example, "chair" and "share" are minimal pairs for the "ch" and "sh" sounds. "Ship" and "sheep" are minimal pairs for the "short I" and "long e" sounds. The books "Pronunciation Pairs" and "Mastering the American Accent" (both available in the TCALL library) are a great place to start. For students wanting to practice on their own, direct them to American English Pronunciation Practice for free on ManyThings.org (http://www.manythings.org/pp/). A good short overview of how teach individual sounds can be found on YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnH4w-4UDA8).
- For practicing rhythm and fluency, consider using music, poetry, and even rap to help students develop the appropriate flow. Music in general naturally follows the phrasing and sentence patterns of spoken language. Don't worry. You don't have to sing if you don't feel comfortable. Reading the lyrics aloud will have a similar effect.
- Find out more! Many good resources are available to help you improve your ability to teach pronunciation. A good resource text available from the TCALL library is Celce-Murcia's *Teaching Pronunciation: A Course Book and Reference Guide*. The Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) also has a wonderful brief to get you started. Download it at http://www.cal.org/caelanetwork/resources/pronunciation.html. The website ESL Mania also provides a handbook for teaching pronunciation you may find helpful: http://www.eslmania.com/teacher/esl_teacher_talk/Pronunciation_Handbook.pdf.

Finally, keep in mind that our primary objective is to help the student communicate effectively. Perfect pronunciation (whatever that may be) is not required. Think of pronunciation as a dartboard with "native-like" at the center. Our goal is to help them get close to the bull's-eye, but they don't necessarily have to hit it to "score." If they are off the board (i.e., they cannot be understood by the average person), they may be too embarrassed or frustrated to keep trying to communicate with others, and that will impact their lives in a negative way. If we are overly picky about pronunciation because they aren't hitting the target center as we perceive it, we may discourage them from continuing to try, which will also negatively impact their interactions and opportunities in and out of class. As instructors, our goal is simply to have them hit the "pronunciation dartboard" so that they enjoy the process, keep communicating, and continue to improve.

New Roots to Employment: A Hybrid Career Readiness Program for Advanced-Degree English Language Learners

by Dr. Glenda Rose, PD Center Specialist at TCALL

Adapted from the COABE Presentation by Diana Satin of the Asian American Civic Association, Boston, MA

The Asian American Civic Association is a Community-based Organization (CBO) that serves immigrants and economically disadvantaged people in the Boston area. They provide English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), workplace preparation, job training, and social services.

In their ESOL program, staff had noted a growing number of student applications that they had to reject because their English was too advanced. English as a Second Language (ESL) students with a student proficiency level of 6 were not eligible for ESL services. Often, they were placed in Adult Basic Education (ABE) or Adult Secondary Education (ASE) programs, either of their own volition or at the recommendation of the program. If they were not interested in ABE or ASE (as they already had high school and college certificates from their home countries), they could be placed in job training, but the job training programs did not match the students' existing career credentials from their home countries.

These individuals had backgrounds in STEM careers (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) but, due to their limited English, were unemployed or underemployed, working in fast food, restaurants, and retail, and so on. Research into the job market in the Boston area showed that underemployment of these types of residents represented a huge loss of potential not only for the individuals but also for local employers and the general economy. Boston ranks 7th out of 100 metropolitan areas nationwide in STEM employment. Getting these already-trained and skilled adults back into their professions simply made sense. Although some of these students were savvy enough to navigate the system in the U.S. to find education, training and employment options on their own, many did not possess the knowledge of the education, job readiness and employment landscapes necessary to re-enter their fields.

An 8-month pilot course was developed based on a blended learning model using biweekly classroom sessions, weekly Skype sessions, Burlington English career modules specific to each student's area of training, and Schoology (a free Learning Management System) resources and assignments.

Recruitment required students to have a high intermediate level of English (SPL 5-6), have a college degree from another country in a STEM field, be interested in returning to work in their profession, be motivated and self-disciplined about learning, and be comfortable using a computer (specifically, a PC – no Macs or mobile devices due to the constraints of the online portion). They ended up with a total of fifteen students who met the criteria.

In addition to practicing the relevant English necessary to re-enter their field using Burlington English, the blended classroom and online instruction model included resume preparation, interviewing skills, advising assistance to form networks, access to mentors, and secure job shadowing opportunities to help them become more job-ready.

Following four months of participation in instruction, during which they also worked with a job counselor, participants had four additional months of case management to continue working on skills such as applying to and interviewing for jobs, searching for jobs, developing professional networks, crafting resumes, cover letters, reference lists and so on. The case manager worked with both students and employer partners to ensure that students were ready for employment.

While this pilot is now in the second four-month phase (job counseling), they have some successes to report. All of the fifteen participants completed the initial 4-month course, one has already been placed in his field, and another has completed a certification course.

In thinking about creating your own Career Pathways course for advance-degreed and/or certified English Language Learners, you may want to consider these questions:

- What are the "hot" careers in your area?
- How will you reach out to this group of ELLs? (Flyers, newspapers, PSAs, houses of worship, ethnic restaurants, etc.)
- How will you screen your applicants to make sure they are likely to succeed?
- Who will your employer partners be?
- How will you place students after completing the program?

If you would like more information about this project, you can contact Diana Satin by phone 617.942.0433 or email dsatin@aaca-boston.org

TRY THIS TECH!

Want to get your students more engaged in your classroom Q&A? Try using **PollEverywhere**. You can create different kinds of polls and surveys to engage students during class. Students respond by texting, going to a website, or tweeting. As a teacher, you don't have to setup an account, although you may want to if you'd like to reuse polls or accumulate more responses to the same poll over time. To get started, simply go to www.polleverywhere.com and click on the red "Create your first poll" box in the middle to create a poll for immediate use. Or click "Sign up" to create an account where you can store polls for later. (Signing up for a basic account is free.) A one-minute video will walk you through how to get started. Enter your Poll Question and the type of response: multiple choice (you enter the choices), open ended (you choose how the responses will display), or clickable image (for use with the app or online). Then click "CREATE" on the bottom right corner of the screen. I've created a short poll for you to try that says "Will you try PollEverywhere in your classroom." You can go to PollEv.com/glendarose397 to respond. To join the poll by text, first send the text message "GLENDAROSE397" to 37607. Then choose A (Yes!), B (No.), C (I'm not sure.) or D (I've already done it!). If you use Twitter, simply "tweet" @Glenda_L_Rose with the message "A, B, C, D." You can go to https://www.polleverywhere.com/multiple_choice_polls/sus5HWlJnYqM9Zx to view the results of this example. (You may want to come back later to see what other instructors have selected.) When you use PollEverywhere in class, you can use a computer and/or an LCD projector to show the results live as they come in. Use polls to do a comprehension check (with multiple choice or pictures), to activate background knowledge (for example, Why is understanding statistics important?), or to start a conversation about an important topic (such as college and career readiness, managing obstacles to learning, managing work and school, etc.). Students love this activity, and you may get some of your less outgoing students to be more actively engaged.

Adult Learner Success Stories

Never too Late to Learn

by Yvonne Cruz

I decided to return to school and obtain my GED® certificate to further my education. I would like to show my kids that it is never too late to learn. I made this important decision because I want to start a career in the food business. I want to enroll in El Paso Community College, and major in Culinary Arts. In the future, I would like to open my own restaurant.

I never finished high school because I had a terminally-ill mother that I had to care for. I also got pregnant my junior year in high school. I had a high-risk pregnancy. The pregnancy brought upon me struggles that I never knew existed.

Now that I have my life set, I decided to enroll in the adult learning center to obtain my GED® certificate. This is a big step for me because I always thought that I was too old to go back to school. With the years passing, I realized that it is never too late to learn. By me doing this, it also shows my kids that one should never give up in life. Life is hard, but with an education, it makes life much easier. It increases your opportunities for better things in life.

These opportunities come in handy if you put a small amount of time into your education. Do not let or think there are obstacles in life that would put a stop in furthering your education. Remember it is never too late to learn.

About the Author
Yvonne Cruz is a student at Ysleta Community Learning Center in El Paso Texas. In the future she plans to own her own business.

My Journey Through Life

by Itzel Martinez

Back in 2013 I was attending my junior year at Socorro High School in El Paso, Texas. I dropped out of school due to my constant fighting and missing classes. This was a daily occurrence throughout my high school years. My experience during high school was very bad because I didn't take school seriously. I do regret dropping out of high school and not being able to graduate like I should have.

High school for me wasn't the best because I was thinking wrong and by doing the stuff that I shouldn't have done like being in fights all the time, ditching school, and doing drugs. As a young teen I used to think that high school wasn't important and that in my future I didn't need any education. I never realized how much not getting a high school diploma was going to affect me. Doing drugs was the worst. I was leading myself into death and giving my mother problems, also ditching school was not a good thing either. It affected my credits and it made the principal take me to court.

As a young teen I made bad decisions in my life but now I'm correcting my errors. I heard about Ysleta Community Learning Center so I choose to come back to school after two years. I'm learning and it's helping me understand what I missed. My experiences here at school are helping me to move on and to get my GED® certificate and start going to college. I'm able to understand more of the subjects I was really bad at. For example, science. It's nice how the teachers motivate their students to graduate and to give us the help we need to earn the GED® certificate.

About the Author
Andrea Itzel Martinez is a student at Ysleta Community Learning Center in El Paso, Texas. Her goals are to start college at Milan Institute of Cosmetology. In the future, Andrea is planning to open her own beauty salon. Andrea strongly believes that nobody is perfect. She thanks God and her mom for supporting her. Her motto is "My failures have been errors in judgment, not of intent." – Ulysses S. Grant.

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E-tivities: The Key to Active Online Learning, Second Edition. Salmon, Gilly (2013). New York, NY: Routledge. The world of learning and teaching is at a watershed. One learning future lies in impactful, purposeful, active online activities, or 'e-tivities', that keep learners engaged, motivated, and participating. Grounded in the author's action research, E-tivities, 2nd Edition assuredly illustrates how technologies shape and enhance learning and teaching journeys.

English Comes Alive for Students!: Learner's Guide for ESL and EFL. Witherspoon, Jim (2014). North Charleston, South Carolina: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Fun, variety, and talk: that's what keeps students alert and thinking, and that's what Dr. Witherspoon gives them. Here they chuckle at idioms and limericks, smile as they correct goofy mistakes in grammar, touch body parts as they sing about them, play word games, read and discuss stories from around the world, and, most importantly, tell their own stories. By these and other means--and especially by talking, talking, talking--they become fluent.

Enhancing Learning through Technology in Lifelong Learning: Fresh Ideas; Innovative Strategies. Ingle, Steve and Duckworth, Vicky (2013). New York, NY: McGraw Hill. This book provides an essential resource for both new and experienced teachers, trainers and lecturers looking to harness the benefits of technology in their approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. The book presents a rationale for the use of technology in today's 21st century classrooms as teaching practitioners prepare themselves for the arrival of technologically mature and digitally literate 21st century learners with high expectations of their learning journey. It offers 25 activities that are presented in a user-friendly and accessible format, illustrated with case studies from across the sector to bring the ideas to life. Example technologies include social networking and micro-blogging, PowerPoint alternatives, the use of avatars and virtual characters, mobile devices and applications (apps), and creative technologies.

Flipping Leadership Doesn't Mean Reinventing the Wheel. DeWitt, Peter M. (2015). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. With this volume, you'll use the principles of connectedness and flipped learning to engage stakeholders—teachers, administrators, and parents—digitally, so they're ready for productive discussion when you meet in person. Featuring action steps, reflections, and "connected moments," plus more resources online, the book shows you how flipped leadership makes the school community visible to parents, creates authentic staff meetings, and maximizes communication between parents and school.

Focus on Grammar 1; Focus on Grammar 2; Focus on Grammar 3; Focus on Grammar 4; Focus on Grammar 5. Schoenberg, Irene E. Maurer, Jay (2012). White Plains, New York: Pearson Education. Centered on thematic instruction, this grammar series centers on thematic instruction and allows students to interact with grammar in realistic contexts to move them beyond controlled practice to authentic communication. Level 1.

GED Math Test Tutor. Rush, Sandra (2014). Piscataway, NJ: Research and Education Association. Written by a GED® math tutor and test expert, this book features content that is 100% aligned with the 2014 GED test. It has a comprehensive review that covers every topic on the exam. It includes step-by-step instructions on how to use the TI-30XS MultiView™ calculator and has 2 full-length practice tests (featuring new question types) with detailed answers.

Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World. Tapscott, Don (2009). New York, NY: McGraw Hill. The author has surveyed more than 11,000 young people. Instead of a bunch of spoiled "screenagers" with short attention spans and zero social skills, he discovered a remarkably bright community which has developed revolutionary new ways of thinking, interacting, working, and socializing. Today's young people are using technology in ways you could never imagine. Instead of passively watching television, the "Net Geners" are actively participating in the distribution of entertainment and information. For the first time in history, youth are the authorities on something really important. And they're changing every aspect of our society-from the workplace to the marketplace, from the classroom to the living room, from the voting booth to the Oval Office

Learning Articulate Storyline: Harness the Power of Storyline to Create State-of-the-Art E-Learning Projects. Harnett, Stephanie (2013). Birmingham, AL: Packt Publishing. Storyline is an authoring tool packed

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with out-of-the-box features that don't require any special knowledge to operate. This book introduces features that are changing the landscape of e-learning development. The reader will gain insight into how you can best leverage your skills and some best practices when working with Storyline.

Listening Power 1; Listening Power 2; Listening Power 3. Rogers, Bruce (2011). White Plains, New York: Pearson Education. Using a variety of materials - from short conversations to longer lectures and clips from radio and TV - this listening series targets the listening skills that students need inside and outside the classroom.

Longman Academic Reading Series: Reading Skills for College Level 1; Longman Academic Reading Series: Reading Skills for College Level 2; Longman Academic Reading Series: Reading Skills for College Level 3; Longman Academic Reading Series: Reading Skills for College Level 4; Longman Academic Reading Series: Reading Skills for College Level 5. Bottcher, Elizabeth (2014). White Plains, New York: Pearson Education. The Longman Academic Reading Series is a five-level series that prepares English language learners for academic work. The aim of this series is to make students more effective and confident readers by providing readings on academic subjects and by teaching them skills and strategies for effective reading, vocabulary building, note-taking, and critical thinking. The series also encourages students to discuss and write about the ideas they discovered in the readings. Level 1

Multicultural Education for Learners with Special Needs in the Twenty-First Century. Obiakor, Festus E. and Rotatori, Anthony F. (2014). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc. This book "provides general and special educators innovative information that address the road blocks to effective practice such that diverse learners will be appropriately; identified, assessed, categorized, placed and instructed. The book provides those who instruct diverse learners comprehensive, creative and best practice chapters by scholars in the area of multicultural education."

Professional Development: What Works, Second Edition. Zepeda, Sally J. (2012). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education. This book helps guide principals, directors of professional development, school/district committees, and other leaders in creating an effective professional development program that moves ideas from knowledge to action. Additionally, this book features helpful case studies, useful forms and templates, sample agendas, and other invaluable resources for professional development.

Skills for Effective Writing. Cambridge University Press writers (2013). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Students are better writers when they master discrete writing skills. These books teach these skills, such as identifying topic sentences and recognizing irrelevant information, and offers extensive practice opportunities. When students master discrete skills, all of their writing improves. This allows teachers to focus their time and feedback on the content of student work.

Teach Like a Champion 2.0: 62 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College, Second Edition. Lemov, Doug (2015). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. This teaching guide is for new and experienced teachers alike. With ideas for everything from classroom management to inspiring student engagement, you will be able to perfect your teaching practice right away. With the sample lesson plans, videos, and teachlikeachampion.com online community, you will be teaching like a champion in no time. The classroom techniques you'll learn in this book can be adapted to suit any context.

Words to Learn By: Advancing Academic Vocabulary; Words to Learn By: Building Academic Vocabulary; Words to Learn By: Expanding Academic Vocabulary. Dolainski, Stephen; Griffin, S. Elizabeth (2011). Chicago, Illinois: McGraw Hill. Words to Learn By is a three book series that helps students improve their high-frequency academic vocabulary (Tier 2 Vocabulary). Includes student and teacher edition.

Writing Power 1; Writing Power 2; Writing Power 3; Writing Power 4. Blanchard, Karen (2011). White Plains, New York: Pearson Education. Each book contains four separate parts that concentrate on four important aspects of writing proficiency. The structure is flexible, allowing the teacher to assign work from different sections of the book concurrently to target the students' greatest needs.

Email TCALL's Library Staff (tcall@tamu.edu) to request the current web address of these online resources - or to request a free hard copy by mail.

Read it Online or Free by Mail

Accelerating Postsecondary Transition and Success for Students in Adult Education and Literacy Programs: A Statewide Coordinated Action Plan FY 2014-16. Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (2014). Austin, TX: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The state has taken on the challenge of addressing reform efforts that promote the transition of adult education and literacy students into postsecondary programs. This report looks at changes to come, the alignment of workforce areas with AEL service providers, and will work to identify and support the transition and success of students into postsecondary institutions.

The Health Literacy and ESL Study: A Community-Based Intervention for Spanish-Speaking Adults. Mas, Francisco Soto and Ji, Ming and Fuentes, Brenda O. and Tinajero, Josefina (January 8, 2015). London, UK: Journal of Health Communication. The study was implemented with collaboration between the University of Texas at El Paso and El Paso Community College. Two groups of Spanish-speakers, who were at a low to intermediate level of English proficiency, were recruited through a Spanish radio station and randomized into control and interventions groups. They were given the Test of Functional Health Literacy in Adults (TOFHLA) before and after a 6-week ESL program. The control program was a conventional ESL curriculum, which included two health-related units. Although there was an improvement on all levels of health literacy across groups, the intervention was more successful in moving participants to significantly higher levels of health literacy. Proportionally more participants in the intervention group moved from the inadequate functional health literacy category to higher levels. These results suggest that ESL instruction may be a recommended approach for improving health literacy among Spanish-speaking adults, and that the Health Literacy & ESL Curriculum may constitute an effective tool for this type of intervention.

The Instructional Advances in English Language Arts/Literacy. Pimentel, Susan and Brown, Meesha and et al (December 2014). Washington, DC: StandardsWork, Inc. These training materials replicate four key activities created for adult educators who participated in three CCR Standards Implementation Institutes offered in 2014. Taken together, the activities that make up Units 1–4 will help participants learn what it means to implement the CCR Standards for English Language Arts/Literacy in adult education. Participants will receive a practical, transferable understanding of the fundamental advances in instruction embedded in the CCR Standards, which are crucial to preparing adult students to meet the real-world demands of college and careers. At the heart of the instructional advances is a careful examination of the texts that students read and the kinds of questions students should address as they write and speak about them. Each ready-to-use unit includes a facilitator's guide, an annotated PowerPoint presentation, and participant materials.

Measuring Alternative Educational Credentials: 2012. Ewert, Stephanie and Kominski, Robert (January 2014). Washington, DC: U. S. Census Bureau. The U.S. Census Bureau released this report stating that, as of fall 2012, more than 50 million U.S. adults (about 25 percent of the adult population) had received a

professional certification, license, or educational certificate that was not a degree awarded by a college or university. Of the awardees, some 34 million had a professional certification or license, 7 million had an educational certificate, and 12 million had received both a professional certification or license and an educational certificate. The report lists the content areas of the certificates and the comparison of employment of certificate holders vs. college degrees.

Missing in Action: Job-Driven Educational Pathways for Unauthorized Youth and Adults. Unruh, Rachel and Bergson-Shilcock, Amanda (February 2015). Washington, DC: National Skills Coalition. This report is on the effects of U.S. immigration policy on the estimated 11.4 unauthorized immigrants in America's labor force. The report examines the need for immigration policymakers to address gaps in the adult education and workforce systems in order to create effective policies that will allow immigrants to contribute to the economy.

Past Gains, Future Goals (Part II). Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (August 2014). New York: Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy. A collection of essays from 30 state and national leaders in adult education and workforce skills education. The collection was developed by CAAL, and is introduced by CAAL president Gail Spangenberg, to help stimulate thinking and action as the field moves into implementing and building on the recently-enacted Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

A Resource Guide to Engaging Employers. Wilson, Randall (January 2015). Oakland, CA: Jobs for the Future. This resource guide presents working models of successful employer engagement and lessons for securing and sustaining partnerships with employers. It was written to help education and training providers fully realize the value of strategic, long-term, and intensive partnerships with employers. The resource leads readers through a continuum of activities supporting these partnerships, with each level involving deeper engagement and integration of employers into the work: Advising, Capacity-building, Co-designing, Convening, and Leading. The continuum is flexible and adaptable, and suggests how productive relationships with employers might evolve, with activities at one level helping build trust, momentum, and leverage for more intensive activities.

Staying Healthy for Beginners: An English Learner's Guide to Health Care and Healthy Living. Florida Literacy Coalition, Inc. (2014). Washington, DC: Kratos Learning for U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. This publication uses health as a content area for literacy and ESOL instruction to improve student motivation and the acquisition of literacy and language skills. The resource includes a Teacher's Guide and a Student Resource Book. The Teacher's Guide includes ideas for lessons and activities, as well as suggestions for presenting the health information in a way that facilitates learning. The Student Resource Book provides easy-to-read information about things like talking to your doctor, taking medicine and eating healthy food. Used together, the Teacher's Guide and Student Resource Book seek to enhance students' understanding of health information, while at the same time improving their EL and literacy skills.

Using Workforce Information for Degree Program Planning in Texas. Goldman, Charles A. and Butterfield, Lindsay and et al (2015). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. This report was prepared by the RAND Corporation for the Coordinating Board in response to the requirements of HB 1296, 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session. The Report includes relevant information and five-year projections concerning the workforce needs of the state and the educational attainment and training of persons projected to enter the state workforce. The report was approved by the Coordinating Board at the January 22, 2015 quarterly meeting.

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