

IES Names New Adult Education Research Center

Funding for a five-year research center for adult education has been awarded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES). This is the first research and development center funded by IES and dedicated to the reading development of adult learners reading at the third- to eighth-grade levels.

This grant effort, the [Center for the Study of Adult Literacy \(CSAL\): Developing Instructional Approaches Suited to the Cognitive and Motivational Needs for Struggling Adults](#), is a collaboration involving four research sites: Atlanta, Ga.; Memphis, Tenn.; and Toronto and St. Catharines, Canada. The center will complete three projects:

1. A series of exploratory studies will investigate a wide array of reading, motivation, and cognition assessments to clarify the appropriateness of commonly used assessments and the underlying cognitive and motivational profiles of the target population.
2. A reading intervention for struggling learners will be designed and piloted. The intervention will include a Web-based, animated e-tutor designed to promote engagement and allow for greater individualization for students. A pilot study of the intervention will be conducted with about 300 adults in authentic adult education settings in Georgia and Toronto. The students will receive some 100 hours of instruction along with a series of assessments.
3. Dissemination of findings to keep practitioners, researchers and policy makers informed will occur through different media such as a website, training opportunities and webinars.

Daphne Greenberg of Georgia State University, the principal investigator, stated, "I am very excited to receive funding to explore the needs of adults who read below the high school level. I am thankful to IES for making research in this area a priority and look forward to five years of collecting and analyzing data on this under-researched group. I am also grateful to all the adult literacy programs in Georgia, Memphis and Toronto that have already committed to collaborating with us, and look forward as new programs join our research efforts."

Deputy Assistant Secretary Johan Uvin of OVAE expressed his enthusiasm for the center, saying, "We know from the [recent National Academies report](#) that there are many research gaps in our field. The new adult education center is primed to make great strides in helping us understand better ways to educate adults. We also know, from experience how important it is to pay attention to keeping learners engaged and motivated so they persist in the difficult task of literacy development in the midst of busy adult lives. That the center will be focusing on this topic, and employing cutting-edge technology in the intervention, should prove rewarding in the knowledge it will provide us."

Educators Learn Together During "Connected Educator Month"

The month of August has been designated Connected Educator Month by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

The Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology (OET) is collaborating with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and more than 50 organizations in this month-long online event, inviting teachers and other education professionals to use online collaboration and learning environments to enrich their knowledge, skills and practices.

Announcing this initiative, Secretary Duncan said August will be "a month-long opportunity to learn together in vibrant online environments ... [and] to advance personal professional learning networks and support faculty everywhere."

Duncan pointed out "Now, more than ever we need strong leaders ... to guide the country in transforming education and vastly improving the opportunity to learn for every American. ... [E]very educator needs to be connected with the best digital content, tools, and resources – in order to enliven the learning environment for students, and to fully connect with peers and experts."

Connected Educator Month is part of OET's Connected Educators initiative to strengthen online communities of practice in education. All through August OET will support informal, online, social, and professional learning for educators.

There will be coordinated opportunities to participate in activities in dozens of online locations to develop skills and advance learning, including through forums, webinars and contests. Visit the Connected Educator website (<http://www.connectededucators.org>.) and resource page (<http://connectededucators.org/cem-resources-for-participating-orgs>) to get connected with other educators.

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