

Connector Notes from Education and Life Training Center (Tracy Mead)

Nancy Boswell, Martha Conant, Tim Conrad, Judy Crosby, Debbie Eiten, Jerri Howe, Greg & Becky Kendall, Pat & Greg Ketchum, Dale Lake, Karlin Lee, Mary Alice McComb, Josh Rabe, Dusty Robinson, Linda Tanner (Namaqua intern), Tim Walsh made it to north Linden.

Seventeen Connectors convened at the ELTC at 7:30 on Tuesday the 27th to meet and learn about the Learning Center. Tracy Mead, the executive director described several of the programs currently being planned and/or being implemented.

Tracy's primary focus was upon the community model to end poverty from the book, *Bridges Out of Poverty* by Payne, DeVol, etc. and published by AHA. This book also served as part of the foundation for the paper on Hidden Rules of Class that was given out during connector training. Tracy has experimented with several classes in which members of the community are brought together with business persons to discuss their needs while being facilitated by professionals who then help to build courses to meet those needs.

The central class-seminar-community meeting is called Getting Ahead. It is attended by employers, and business champions and other key stakeholders from the community. They all work on hidden rules of class which the business community then puts into practice in their human resources. Out of such discussions basic tactics are developed to help community members with such diverse offerings as drivers training, a van bought by a business to transport new hires and interns, etc. Indigenous community members are supported in small business offerings such as a woman selling Tamales which are made in her home. Another woman learns to open and maintain a savings account. They also try to strengthen other programs such as P3, HSN, and Matthews House.

In addition to presenting an overview of the Bridges model above, the Learning Center regularly offers courses that are designed to help fast track persons out of poverty. They offer: Language and Literacy Programs, Computer Technology and Skills Training, Allied Health (with emphasis on Anatomy and Physiology, Phlebotomy, Medical Billing and Coding, Medical Insurance, Medical records, etc.) and Transitions Programming Support with their focus on Getting Ahead in Just Getting' By World.

They also maintain a computer donating and refurbishing program that utilizes such equipment in their computer basics courses. In addition each August they help community members acquire and stuff backpacks for returning school children.

All in all it was very informative. If you have further questions, Tracy can be reached by phone at 970.482.4357 or on the web at: www.eltcenter.org.

Please look at your calendars for June. We are trying to set up a next connector meeting at that time. This time we will try to do it on Saturday for you folks who cannot make week days.