



The Bridge

The ACCESS Program Community Newsletter



Newsletter Date
Volume 1, Issue 2

Cape Cod Community College, ACCESS, 540 Main Street, Hyannis, MA 02601
Web: <http://www.capecod.edu/web/access> E-mail: thuff@capecod.edu Phone: 508-375-5005

ACCESS Students Showcase Countries and Cultures at Multicultural Festival

by Terri Huff

On Saturday, March 1, 2014, ACCESS students from ESL and ABE HiSET classes participated in Cape Cod Community College's 14th annual Multicultural Festival. Several students marched in the Parade of Flags that opened the festivities, carrying flags that represented their native countries. Many students staffed the ACCESS table, which featured a colorful display of cultural artifacts from across the globe.

ACCESS students answered many



Kathryn Carpenter with ACCESS students Marie Vernet and Celina Costa.



ACCESS students answered questions at the table display of their countries.

questions about the program, serving as "ambassadors of diversity" while offering testimonies to the benefits of funding adult education at Cape Cod Community College. Student volunteers had an opportunity to practice their English skills while representing their countries.

Kathryn Carpenter, an ACCESS Advisor and Director of the Cape Cod Literacy Council, coordinated ACCESS student participation. She was pleased at the number of volunteers and at the excitement the community event provided.

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“The ACCESS students seized an opportunity to engage in conversation while showcasing their cultures. It was a great day filled with good food, entertainment, fun, pride, and joy” said Ms.Carpenter.

Students who represented ACCESS at the table:

- Celina Costa, Brazil
- “Sherpa” Kyakpa Ongchhuk Sherpa, Nepal
- Maria Gonsalves, Brazil

- Maria SantaRita, Brazil
- Saul Trinidad–Zepeda, Mexico
- Diana Bass– Coley, Jamaica
- Handal Ignace, Haiti
- Alejandra Williams, Mexico
- Marie Vernet, Haiti

Students who carried a flag and spoke on stage:

- Samya Stone, Brazil (PACT)
- “Sherpa” Kyakpa Ongchhuk Sherpa, Nepal

Cape Cod Adult Education Reaches Out to the State House

By Terri Huff

An enthusiastic group of ACCESS students and staff ventured into Boston to visit the Statehouse, carrying hundreds of hand written thank you notes from ESL and ABE/HiSET students, that were delivered to the offices of Cape Cod State Senators and Representatives. Students met with several Cape Cod legislative staff, sharing their stories, aspirations, and gratitude for supporting adult education for more than 30 years on Cape Cod.

Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education (MCAE) and Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Literacy (MassAAL), a student member organization representing the adult learner in Massachusetts, organized a briefing on the Massachusetts Adult Education journey. Several legislators and adult education advocates delivered inspiring speeches to many adult learners from across Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary

and Secondary Education provides funding for over 400 adult education students attending classes at ACCESS, as well as PACT a college transition program at Cape Cod Community College.



ACCESS students were among hundreds of adult education students from around the state who ventured into Boston on March 20th to meet with legislators at the State House.



Adult Education advocate delivers a passionate speech to adult learners.

MassAAL Honors ACCESS Program with Leadership Awards

By Terri Huff

On March 20 at the Massachusetts Adult Learner Advocacy Day, Executive Director of MassAAL, Ernest Best recognized the ACCESS program for developing strong leaders in the Adult Education community.

Alejandra Williams, a student who is studying to complete her HiSET credential, became a leader on the ACCESS Student Leadership team this year. Over the past year, members of this year's team came together from all of the different ACCESS program locations to raise awareness for students' concerns and ideas for improvement of the ACCESS program.



Alejandra Williams accepts her Leadership award.

Alejandra was eloquent in her acceptance speech, as she spoke to the many that were in attendance. "First of all, I would like to thank everyone who has worked with every student from Adult Leadership. I enjoy doing what I do for the school, trying to help those who help me."

"I was as excited this time going to the State House to meet the representatives as it was the first time I went. It was nice to see so many students from other communities and hear about their commitment to learning." Said Alejandra, "When I heard my name being called to come up front for an award, I was speechless. You never know that there are others who see what you do."

ACCESS Staff member, Carmen Lebron received two prestigious awards recognizing her leadership skills and accomplishments since joining MassAAL in 1999. Currently, she is Vice President of MassAAL and was past President for many years. She has been a passionate adult learner advocate for over a decade, recruiting hundreds of students to join MassAAL. Through the years, Carmen has been involved in several ACCESS program enhancements, including



Carmen Lebron shows her leadership award.

initiating funding for a mobile health van several years ago, which served students in assessing and meeting their healthcare needs. She also co-produced and hosted a multicultural community radio show in the late 1990's.

Last year, Carmen fulfilled one of her long-time goals when she led the initiative to take ACCESS students to the State House. This year, many more ACCESS students participated and were thrilled to see one of their own honored.

When asked for words of inspiration, Ms. Lebron said, "I always tell the students, don't ever give up, even though it can be hard to learn as an adult, education will open so many doors for you."

Excerpts from Mother's Day Essays: Reaching Your Dreams

Students from Janice Forcellese's Level 3 HiSET classes share their inspirational stories about their return to school after becoming mothers.



Viviana

Life taught me that it is never too late to learn when I really persevere. If I am encouraged, I can go as far as I want.



Pauline

I push myself really hard, on the days when I feel like I really cannot make it to school. Some days I am really tired, the weather is horrible, the car will not start, and the list goes on. For this reason my kids are happy and excited for me, making my children proud and improving myself are the reasons for attending ACCESS.

Teacher



Janice

Through the years, I have come to the realization that as unique individuals we all are blessed with gifts. I consider teaching my special gift. My cycle in educating began as a part time adult educator, continued as a full time teacher in the K-12 school system, and completed as a Hiset3 ACCESS instructor. With each class, I feel so fortunate to witness the success of every individual adult. Now, years later adult students continue to inspire me. I admire their courage, sacrifice, and endurance.



Cheyanne

It made me realize that I want a better life for my unborn child. I also want him or her to be able to look up to their mother and realize she did a lot to try to give them the a better life and pushed herself to get a better education. Now, all I can say to mothers that are expecting and current mothers is to make sure you have the education you want and need.



Sam

As I set personal goals for myself, my children watch me from afar. I hope by example I set a positive outlook for them. I love being a young mother even with all odds against me; I will succeed in what I put 110% of my heart and soul towards. I'm so ready for the challenge of being a good mother who is getting an education.



Carlene

In addition to working full time, I also raise my two sons' ages three and five and my nephew who is four. They are my world; the reason I keep going to work, the reason why I want a better education and most of all the strength that keeps me going.

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CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE/ACCESS PROGRAM

The Bridge Staff Newsletter Editor:
thuff@capecod.edu

Technical/Layout Advisor:
lmarchant@capecod.edu

Cape Cod Community College
2240 Iyannough Rd.
West Barnstable, MA 02668
508-362-2131

ACCESS @ Hyannis Center
540 Main Street
Hyannis, MA 02601

508-375-5005 | Fax: 508-778-0988
<http://www.capecod.edu/web/access>