



## The Word on Literacy

Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition  
564 Laurel Street  
Baton Rouge, LA 70801  
225-381-7141  
[www.gbrliteracy.org](http://www.gbrliteracy.org)

Spring 2008

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### Our Mission

*The Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition is dedicated to promoting adult literacy through the creation, maintenance, and sustainability of an integrated, cohesive and well-managed system that supports literacy service providers.*

## BRCC Adult Literacy Conference Engages Students and Professionals

More than 60 participants, including students and literacy service professionals, gathered at **Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC)** on April 19 to learn and to network at the second annual 'Overcoming Barriers - Adult Learning Conference'. The event, sponsored by the **Louisiana Branch of the International Dyslexia Association** and the Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition, showcased the wealth of literacy resources and support available in the Baton Rouge area.

Presenters discussed math, science, learning styles, resources, careers and memorization techniques with the high school, GED, and BRCC Upward Bound students in attendance. As the event was hosted by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in honor of Disability Awareness Month, it drew high school students and their

**"The networking was worth it for me. I got as much information between sessions as I did in sessions."**

Janet Norris, Professor, Speech-Language Pathology, LSU

families to learn more about what the college offers those with special needs.

One grandmother, who came with her dyslexic grandson, said, "Baton Rouge Community College is a wonderful place. I think Austin feels like there is a place for him in the future." Coming onto campus was an adventure for her family as well. "The boys were quite positive," she said. "I think they got a lot out of it ... and dare I say I heard the word 'fun.'"

Ray Hollowell, Director of the Office of Disability Services, said the conference highlights the successes of BRCC students who have overcome personal challenges to excel in the

classroom and workforce. Another target population with significant presence was non-traditional students working on GED preparation. Seeking to learn more about transition into the post secondary institution, they attended sessions focusing on recruitment, skills acquisition and career development.

For literacy service providers, the conference was a great opportunity to share ideas in person. Agencies and institutions represented included **East Baton Rouge Parish School System**, **YWCA**, and **Adult Literacy Advocates of Greater Baton Rouge**.

Attendees indicated that the presenters, who were "enthusiastic, innovative and challenging" with their content, created an atmosphere of opportunity and collaboration. Upward Bound instructors even requested a similar program this summer for their whole group.



## Literacy Coalition Launches Portable Learning Lab

**“The literacy level of a child’s mother is the greatest predictor of a child’s academic success.”**

**Sharon Darling, National Center for Family Literacy**

### *The Need by The Numbers:*

◇28% of the Baton Rouge

population functions at the

lowest level of literacy.

(National Assessment of Adult

Literacy)

◇There are seven census tracts

where over half of the

population ages 18-24 is

without a high school diploma,

with the highest percentage at

76%. (LSU School of Social

Work)

◇50% of the chronically

unemployed are not functionally

literate. (U.S. Department of

Education)

More Stats and Facts at  
[www.gbrliteracy.org](http://www.gbrliteracy.org)

Thanks to funding from the Credit Bureau of Baton Rouge Fund and the Charles Lamar Family Foundation, GBRLC distributed laptop computers to five adult literacy organizations. The laptops are part of GBRLC’s Portable Learning Lab, which provides access to web-based, self-paced instruction for GED and Pre-GED instruction, lower level reading instruction, and English as

a Second Language software. Because students can access the web-based software from sites other than the lab computers, they can continue learning outside the classroom by logging in at home or at the public library. Organizations participating in this project include **Adult Literacy Advocates, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Literacy Works, St. Paul Adult Learning Center,**

and **YWCA Center for Family Empowerment.** These organizations have participated in training and are already thinking of new ways to deliver services.

**“We can even use the lab to help students who cannot make it to class due to health or other special circumstances.”**

David Jones,  
Executive Director  
St. Paul Adult Learning Center

## Staff Develop Goal Setting Skills at Workshop

Local adult literacy service providers recently sent staff to a goal setting workshop led by **Melanie Mayeaux of the State Department of Education.** The workshop, sponsored by the Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition, stressed the importance of goal setting in the classroom. With adult students, instructors work to help students meet both their educational and personal goals.

At their site, Literacy Works

instructors discuss goals with each of their students, write their goals for them in their personal folders and evaluate their progress throughout the program.

**Sherreta Harrison, Literacy Works Program Coordinator and Classroom Instructor,** notes similar goals within age groups.

“Many of our 16-21 year olds want to obtain their drivers’ licenses and employment.

We talk about starting at entry level positions and the training necessary to advance to higher paying jobs.

With older students, goals often include helping their children with homework and reading the Bible. Some students have purchased books on topics that interest them, and their goal is to read those books.”

With personalized instruction and support, adult students gain the confidence they need to reach their goals.

### **Five Strategic Areas of GBRLC’s Community-Wide Literacy Plan:**

**Outreach, Recruitment and Retention  
Marketing  
Funding and Resource Development  
Quality and Accountability  
Training, Curriculum, and Best Practices**

*Join Us in  
Promoting and  
Supporting our local  
Literacy Service  
Providers:*

Become a Coalition  
Member for \$25!  
(free for students!)

Print literacy  
awareness  
information on your  
business's marketing  
materials!

Volunteer as a  
reading partner!

Serve on the  
Coalition's  
Marketing or  
Fundraising  
Committee!

Help a youth group  
organize a  
fundraiser!

Offer space to hold  
classes at your  
business or house of  
worship!

Purchase two GED  
tests and a practice  
test for an adult  
literacy student for  
\$100!

GBRLC is a nonprofit  
organization and  
contributions are tax-  
deductible.

## Literacy Coalition and Hollywood Casino Partner for Magic Show Fundraiser

Award-winning Las Vegas  
magician **Aaron Radatz**  
amazed and entertained nearly  
100 guests during a show April  
26<sup>th</sup> at Hollywood Casino, with  
all proceeds benefiting the  
Greater Baton Rouge Literacy  
Coalition.

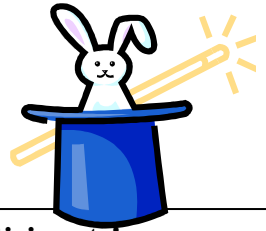
Several adult literacy students  
had the pleasure of attending as  
well, thanks to the generous  
donation of tickets by **LUBA  
Workers' Comp.**

The Coalition and its  
partners greatly appreciate  
the gift of this first  
fundraiser for the Coalition,  
which not only generated  
funding, it helped spread the  
word about adult literacy  
service providers in our area.

**"There is a definite need to  
address literacy in the  
Baton Rouge community,"**  
Hollywood Casino General  
Manager **Jon Zimmerman**  
said. He explained that the  
Casino spends a great deal  
of time and money on staff  
training.

**"The business community  
often has a responsibility  
to provide education when  
the school system has not  
succeeded."**

The Coalition is grateful for  
the concern and action  
shown by business leaders  
that contribute their time and  
profit to advance literacy in  
our community.



### Thanks to our Advisory Panel Meeting Participants!

**Carl Crane  
Tia Edwards  
John Hightower  
Sharon Kleinpeter**

**Dave Luecke  
Garth Roberts  
Pam Sills  
Rosallynn Wilson**

Your guidance in our marketing and fundraising efforts this year is critical!

### Greater Baton Rouge Adult Literacy Service Providers

**Adult Literacy Advocates  
383-1090**

**Baton Rouge Marine Institute  
356-3461**

**Catholic Charities, Baton Rouge Diocese  
346-0660**

**Cenikor  
218-1960**

**East Baton Rouge Parish Library  
231-3745**

**Literacy Works  
923-3121**

**Reach Out and Read  
987-9050**

**St. John United Methodist Church  
766-4594**

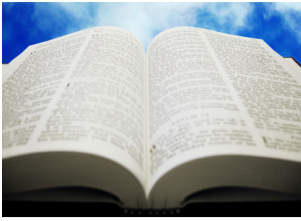
**St. Paul Adult Learning Center  
344-8590**

**YWCA Center for Family Empowerment  
338-0028**

**East Baton Rouge Parish Adult and  
Continuing Education Department:**

Baker Adult Learning Center  
Christa McCauliffe Adult Learning Center  
East Baton Rouge Parish Prison  
East Iberville High School-Adult Education  
E.J. Gay Middle School – Adult Education  
Family Road  
Helping Hands  
Hispanic Center of Baton Rouge  
Louisiana Technical College – Jumonville  
Louisiana Technical College – Port Allen  
Lower Bains Elementary – Adult Education  
LSU Employee Development Center  
Mayfair Adult Learning Center  
McKinley Adult Learning Center  
North Baton Rouge Women's Help Center  
North Iberville High School – Adult Ed  
Port Allen Middle School – Adult Education  
Reader Connections  
Rosenwald Adult Learning Center

**226-7650**



**Look for the directory list on our website, [www.gbrliteracy.org](http://www.gbrliteracy.org)!**

## Literacy Coalition Releases Service Directory!

In May, the Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition staff mailed the new literacy service providers directory to more than 70 local social service providers, businesses, and individuals. The Coalition

hopes that the directory will help empower adult learners as they begin the journey to reach their potential for self-sufficiency, employment and lifelong learning.

**Classes available in:**

- Adult Basic Education**
- GED**
- High School Diploma**
- ESL**
- Workplace Literacy**
- Life Skill Training**
- Family Literacy**
- Computer Literacy**

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## Might you know an adult with low literacy?

Adults with limited literacy skills often suffer in silence – embarrassed and unsure how to get help. Some signals that adults are struggling with basic reading skills:

◊They bring another adult with them to fill out forms

◊They take forms home to fill out

◊They ask you to tell them information by phone rather than mail them documents

◊They may forget appointments and fail to respond to written notices

If you know of adults at your work who may benefit from literacy services, please ask your employer if you may post a list of local providers in a common employee area. You may even ask your employer to distribute the list of local providers to all employees.

### Welcome and Thank you from a Board Member!

“Dear Readers, Please accept our sincere appreciation for all of our supporters. We hope the information you receive through our newsletter will keep you informed of the activities of the Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition, and we thank you in advance for your continued support.”

Willie C. Johnson,  
Sr. Vice President,  
Community Development, Baton Rouge Area Chamber



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