

Iowa Dept. of Education
WIA Incentive Grants – Adult Literacy for the Workforce in Iowa
ALWI I and II

ALWI I:

Short History

In recent years, numerous reports have been presented at national meetings and conferences about efforts in other states to provide integrated approaches to basic skills and workplace skills in an effort to assist students to efficiently move through their basic education towards post-secondary education and/or employment. Iowa adult literacy seeks to move into the ranks of those states supporting education and employment simultaneously. To assist with this initiative, we have sought help from Washington State (I-BEST), Wisconsin (RISE) and Oregon (OPABS), where integration of skills and transition programs has been implemented.

ALWI I – Adult Literacy for the Workforce in Iowa, 2009-2011

In 2009, Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) and the Iowa Department of Education's Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation, received incentive grant funds in the amount of **\$779,429** which the Iowa Dept of education was able to use for ALWI I. Approximately \$20,000 was reserved at the state level for statewide meetings and professional development and support for the implementation of the National Career Readiness Certificates and Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) Curriculum in eight regions of the state where this opportunity was not previously available in adult literacy programs. \$45,000 (\$3,000 per community college) was distributed for planning purposes to encourage the IWD, business, community, and inter-departmental collaboration on determining the local approach. The balance of \$700,132 was allocated to the 15 community college adult literacy programs to be used through March 15, 2011. From March 15–June 15, 2011, minigrants will be offered for sustainability and expansion efforts.

ALWI I Grant Requirements:

- Research, including regional employment needs assessment data
- Recruitment and retention plan
- Plan for sustainability
- Soft skill development
- Technology skill development
- Commitment from community and administration
- Two Key Components of ALWI
 - Student Services
 - Partnerships
- ALWI Partnerships
 - Local employers.
 - Workforce and economic development agencies.
 - Community-based organizations.
 - Existing community college programs (credit and non-credit).

By developing partnerships, local programs will be able to develop support for the initiative while addressing and integrating the needs and expertise of each partner.

Grant Application Focus Questions

- What will work locally?
- What exists that can be built upon?
- How can the local program creatively implement the grant requirements?
- What is the local level of readiness?
- What is the level of local support?
- How will the effort be sustained?

ALWI I Grant Requirements:

Proposals had to include and funding was awarded based upon the effort of the community college to include the following in their plan:

- Innovation
- Research to support approach
- Partnerships
- Plan for recruitment and retention
- Sustainability
- Evaluation plan
- Commitment
- Professional development

An Additional Opportunity – National Career Readiness Certificates

- 7 community college regions had access to the multi-level, web-based NCRC assessments and the WIN curriculum.
- The remaining regions were added as new sites, and ACT set up testing realms for these 8 Community College Adult Literacy Programs.
- The involvement and recognition of the certificates is crucial, so IWD will recruit business support in all 15 areas.
- Data will be collected to show participation and impact.

ALWI Outcomes

ALWI participants will comprise a longitudinal data set that will include follow-up outcomes on:

- Workforce entrance and retention.
- Enrollment in postsecondary education and training programs:
- Credit Training
- Non-Credit Training
- Community Colleges
- Public and Private Universities

ALWI II:

Iowa was awarded another Incentive Grant for \$806,297 with \$706,297 coming to the Iowa Dept. of Education in 2010 and \$100,000 allocated to the Central Iowa Reengagement Center (CIRC).

The 2010 WIA Incentive Grant Proposal has four components of mutual (all WIA Titles) benefit:

1. Expand Community College Adult Literacy for the Workforce In Iowa (ALWI)-

A new round of funding will provide the colleges with the opportunity to enhance their present ALWI efforts in one of several ways:

- ✓ Apply similar efforts to students with a lower skill level
- ✓ Build a new direction for additional competency based, job specific, integrated skills programs
- ✓ Increase support opportunities for students through additional community college/IWD collaboration

2. Invest in Online GED Program-

- ✓ Adopt a technology based GED program such as GED-I for all 15 community colleges through the purchase of a statewide license
- ✓ Open the doors for more students to access and proceed through the GED instruction process and move towards ALWI programs and a family sustaining wage

3. Extend National Career Readiness Certificate and WIN Licensing-

- ✓ Support license extension through June, 2012, for 15 community colleges in partnership with IWD
- ✓ Continue to provide professional development to refine procedures and to encourage broad implementation.

4. Data System Alignment Activities-

- ✓ Professional development for community college adult literacy staff and workforce staff to improve transition rates of GED students into non-credit and credit courses.
- ✓ Track students from ABE into and through the workforce system including job placement, retention and increased earnings and
- ✓ Develop longitudinal data systems from 2003-2012 for job placement, retention, increased earnings and post-secondary placement.

ALWI I Successes

The ALWI grant is flying at our 15 community colleges. Each program has developed the partnerships (including local IWD) to implement their customized approach to integrating workplace and basic skills. There are success stories all across the state of strong collaboration, dislocated workers moving towards employment, transition specialists guiding GED students beyond the high school equivalency to post-secondary education and employment. Some success highlights include:

NIACC:

- NIACC provided NIACC Tool & Die program students with 4 weeks of integrated Algebra Trig tutoring during the spring semester.
- The transition specialist added the on-line course *College Readiness for Adults* to her ALWI training plan.

SWCC:

- SWCC Steps to Success has transition tutoring assistance 5 days a week as well as office counseling hours.
- The transition specialist has helped over 20 students with transition services including GED fast track, CNA preparation, basic skills enhancement for college preparation, counseling and referral services. Referrals have come from the adult literacy program, non-credit class offerings, SWCC assessment center, IWD, Vocational Rehabilitation and other agencies.
- IWD is collaborating with SWCC to offer summer bridge classes for students needing a refresher in math and/or writing prior to the fall semester.

NCC:

- Through restructuring of the Intro to Machining class (a 3 credit course), individuals will be able to earn certificates in four separate areas through non-credit offerings: OSHA/Safety (OSHA 10 card), Technical Drawings & Measurements, Introduction to Lathe and Introduction to Mill.
- The summer trial will begin on May 27, with a cap of 16 participants. All 16 seats are taken.
- Instructional support will be available to assist with math, vocabulary and digital literacy.
- Iowa Lakes Community College, Northwest Iowa Community College, WIA and IWD are working to enhance their collaboration through cross training of staff and instructors.

EICCD:

- The ALWI Pre-Tech curriculum for Health Occupations & Welding Mfg. has been designed and approved by the Health/Welding faculty at EICCD.
- The first student orientation for the ALWI project will start Monday, May 24; at this time 10 students are registered.
- low@Work and EICCD are partnering during the orientation and pre-tech training and an low@Work counselor is going to be working with the ALWI advisor and students to provide Workplace Essentials & career readiness training.

NICC:

- Solidified community partnerships through the dual roles of the participants in the ALWI Planning committee and the Adult Literacy Participatory Planning Committee.
- Strengthened internal partnerships with the transition coordinator, the learning center, student services, disability services, adult literacy, and career and technical ed.
- Provided orientation and wrap around services intended to enhance the students' success (brush up classes, job skills computerized training/certificate, learning styles assessment)

DMACC:

- Des Moines Area Community College Adult Literacy will carefully select students who fall into a mid level learner category and increase their English skills and their basic educational levels at the same time we are training them to be an active participant in their communities.
- Students will learn skills including basic keyboarding, computer skills, career preparedness skills.
- Students will learn how to use the Iowa Works system at Iowa Workforce Development.
- We would not have been able to develop this program and offer the students these much needed skills without the funding from the ALWI Incentive monies.

ICCC:

- The Iowa Central Adult Literacy Coordinator has worked in partnership with Region 5 IWD and Iowa Central Admissions Representative, Non-credit Business Coordinator, and Economic Development Director to implement the Learn2Earn project funded in part by ALWI; 87 people have participated in a Learn2Earn activity to date
- A Transition Coordinator was hired in May and will be conducting GED orientation sessions in Fort Dodge as well as teaching College 101, Employment 101, and Financial Literacy classes.

HCC:

- Ray is a Hawkeye Community College GED graduate who came to the new (ALWI grant funded) HCC transition office wanting help to find a job. When Ray began his GED studies, he was a displaced fork lift driver. (His employer had moved their operations to Mexico.) He was very discouraged about having to return to school at the age of 48 and doubted his scholastic abilities.
- With the Transition Specialist, Ray completed a rough sketch of a resume, including education and previous employment. He then took his resume to Workforce Development, where it was typed into an appropriate format. They also helped with a job search.
- Ray returned several days later to thank the HCC Transition Specialist, saying it was the resume they worked on together that had secured his new job. His new job pays \$16 per hour, is full-time and has full benefits. We were all thrilled for Ray!

Kirkwood:

- Kirkwood offered an integrated GED/CNA program called PACE (Partnership of Academic and Career Education).
- We enrolled 10 high school dropouts who indicated they had an interest in pursuing a health careers pathway.
- 7 students have earned their GED diploma; 1 more has passed 2 actual GED tests and has passing practice test scores in the remaining areas; the other 2 have passed 2 tests each and are working with a volunteer tutor on their math skills.
- 9 out of 10 students were awarded a certificate of completion for their CNA course. The 10th student passed the course but did not earn the certificate due to too many absences.
- All students are registered to take the computer and skills CNA tests. Some students have begun this state testing and others are completing the tests yet this week.
- 2 students are interested in enrolling in the Kirkwood nursing program this fall; all students are interested in finding employment as a CNA.
- 7 students earned NCRCs.

IVCCD:

- The Transition Coordinator has worked with a gentleman who has been involved with Promise Jobs and working on his GED for two years. On May 5th he got his GED. Back in 2009 he took the COMPASS test hoping to start college but now with his GED he is registered and ready to start in the Fall. He has taken one NCRC test and is on his way to earning a silver certificate.
- Another individual has been in prison and was unable to earn her GED while incarcerated, but with a little extra coaxing from our Transition Coordinator she has successfully completed the GED, taken the COMPASS test and enrolled in the next CNA class. Her goal is to eventually get her LPN degree. She also took the NCRC tests and was awarded the Silver certificate. It's interesting what can be accomplished with just a little "hand holding/encouragement"!!!!