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FUN WITH MATH & READING...

Whether operating or planning programs, developing policy, or fundraising to those ends, we all work hard to advance adult education, so that our fellow-Americans are skilled in the basics, able to hold good jobs, and participate fully in American society. This is serious work, and the gains come all too slowly at times. We get so busy that we sometimes forget to stop and laugh at ourselves or with the world around us--I know I do--or just to engage in a moment of silliness or something magical. So I want to share with you two delightful surprises that bring a smile to my face and I hope will to yours. One is a 1947 You Tube rendition of Jimmy Durante singing "[The Day I Read A Book!](#)" The other is [Math Encounters](#), a newsletter put out by an exciting new math museum, called [MoMath](#), that will open in late 2012 on East 26th Street in Manhattan. It'll be the world's first math museum, designed to foster understanding and love for mathematics among people of all ages. Until it opens, MoMath

has a travelling exhibit touring the country. These are surely two treasures worth stopping for. [Gail Spangenberg]



NEWS IN BRIEF



The National Center for Family Literacy is taking nominations for the 2012 Toyota Teacher-of-the-Year Award. For the 16th year, Toyota will honor teachers who demonstrate exemplary practices in family learning and parent involvement. The prize is \$20,000 and the runner up will get \$2,500. Nominations close at midnight February 1 and winners will be notified by early March. The [application form](#) is available online from NCFL. For more information, contact Brenda Logan at blogan@famlit.org.



The **Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)** is making [resources available](#) to help grant applicants prepare their proposals for the U.S. Department of Labor's \$98.5 million in [Workforce Innovation grants](#). (The DOL program is for state workforce agencies and local workforce boards or consortia, for projects that will develop strategies for service delivery and/or system-level reform. The projects must be designed to improve employment and educational outcomes for workers, create efficiencies in the workforce system, and build cooperation among education, training, and human service entities.) CLASP has also prepared an [analysis and recommendations for improving high school graduation rates](#) -- in response to the President's State of the Union challenge in this area, which calls for compulsory school attendance to age 18. In response to another of the President's important challenges, CLASP has also completed an [analysis and recommendations on worker skills training](#).



[Limited English Proficient Individuals in the United States: Number, Share, Growth, and Linguistic Diversity](#) is a new LEP Data Brief (December 2011) from the Migration Policy Institute of the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. It is filled with data about Limited English Proficient residents in the U.S., as drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau and Census Bureau American Community Survey. The Brief focuses on states with the largest LEP populations, but charts are provided with demographic data for all of the states.



[Overlooked and Underpaid: Number of Low-Income Working Families Increases to 10.2 Million](#) is a new report by The Working Poor Families Project (WFPF). This 14-page Policy Brief shows that for the third year in a row, the number of middle class families falling into the low-income working poor category has risen from 28% to 30%, for a total of 10.2 million. These families earn less than 200 percent of the official poverty level. Put another way, "about one in three working families in the United States is struggling to meet basic needs." The Brief examines racial/ethnic differences, issues of income inequality, regional variations, the impact of all this on children, and implications for

the future.



[The New Age of Workforce Development: How States and Schools are Training Workers for Next Generation Jobs](#) is the title of the December 2011 issue of GrayWay, a newsletter put out by Gray Construction. Gray is ranked among the Top 100 Green Contractors by ENR Magazine (July 2011). Jeff Bischoff, VP of Business Development, stresses how the strength of a company's workforce can make or break a business. The issue examines two programs that are widely recognized national models, Georgia's Work Ready and Forsyth Tech in Winston-Salem, N.C., the latter a community college founded solely to provide a skilled workforce to business.



[UNLOCKING THE GATE: What We Know About Improving Developmental Education](#) is a 116-page MDRC report by Elizabeth Zachry Rutschow and Emily Schneider (June 2011). This "best-practice" work is based on a research review originally conducted for the National Center for Postsecondary Research. It focuses on four developmental education models that improve students' progress from remedial education to college-level courses. The report highlights the most promising methods and emphasizes technology-assisted approaches, curriculum design, and aligning secondary school education with college readiness standards. Among the conclusions are that developmental education outcomes need to be more carefully evaluated, that community college assessments used to place students in developmental education need to be reconsidered, and that despite numerous promising trends in this area, "radical" change is needed in developmental education to move more students into college-level courses.



In 2011, MDRC issued the findings of its performance-based scholarship demonstration projects in New York and New Mexico, two of four states (Louisiana and Ohio are the others) where they have been tracking the results of performance-based scholarship programs for low-skilled students. The two reports--although the findings are preliminary at this early stage--provide encouraging evidence that the scholarship incentives offered to part-time, low-income, and low-skilled students have the effect of increasing student retention and success, motivating them to enroll on a full-time basis, and in the case of New Mexico of reducing reliance on loans. **[PROMOTING FULL-TIME ATTENDANCE AMONG ADULTS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Early Impacts from the Performance-Based Scholarship Program in New York](#)**, by Lashawn Richburg-Hayes, Colleen Sommo, and Rashida Welbeck, reports on the experience of 1500 low-skilled adult students tracked at Manhattan and Hostos Community Colleges of the City University of New York. **[STAYING ON TRACK: Early Findings from a Performance-Based Scholarship Program at the University of New Mexico](#)**, by Cynthia Miller, Melissa Binder, Vanessa Harris, and Kate Krause, reports on the VISTA project (Vision Inspired Scholarship Through Academic Achievement) at UNM. The final report on these projects is expected in 2014. The findings to date have been given in testimony to the federal Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance (along with information about similar results achieved in the Louisiana and Ohio demonstrations).



[The Change Agent](#) is published twice a year by the New England Literacy Resource Center at World Education. It is a magazine teaching resource to help teachers and students integrate civic participation and social justice into their learning, instruction, and daily lives. Each issue tackles a different topic through news articles, classroom activities, poems, and other means. Selected articles

from the last three issues are now available for students to listen to online. They can improve their reading by listening to [spoken text](#) , maximizing their pronunciation and fluency. They can play, pause, and fast-forward as often as they want. They can also download [back issues](#) of the publication. For more information: cpeters@worlded.org.



[Report on an Analysis of Correspondences between the EFF Curriculum Frameworks and the Common Core State Standards](#) was issued by Equipped for the Future in August 2011. Donna Curry (Math), Peggy McGuire (Writing), Amy Trawick (Reading), and Andy Nash (Speak and Listen) conducted the research. Similarities and differences are examined, and among the key findings is that the Standards and the EFF Frameworks share many of the same priorities and are not in any fundamental conflict.



[Tapping Mature Talent: Policies for a 21st Century Workforce](#) is the theme of an event co-sponsored by The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and the National Governors Association (NGA). The two groups are inviting leaders from private, public, and nonprofit organizations to join them for a discussion on May 3 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, from 8:30am to 1pm. Among the speakers will be former Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall (a member of the National Commission on Adult Literacy) and Professor Peter Cappelli of the Wharton School. For more information, contact Lisa Schumacher at lschumacher@cael.org.



The McGraw-Hill Research Foundation recently published [From Financial Literacy to Financial Action](#) by Jonathan Morduch and Barbara Kiviat of NYU's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. The 20-page policy paper is a review of recent literature that shows how and why Americans need to be more financially savvy than ever before.

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