

LEARN Minutes – March 14, 2006 at College of DuPage Library

In Attendance:

1. Jean Demas (Lisle)
2. Debra Kakuk (College of Dupage)
3. Ameet Doshi (College of Dupage)
4. Izora Lewis (Glenside)
5. Sr. Marybeth McDermott CSJ (School on Wheels – LaGrange)
6. Susan McNeil-Marshall (Woodridge)
7. Karen Neal (Downers Grove)
8. Lisa Thackeray (Literacy Volunteers – Dupage)
9. Joe Popowitch (Indian Prairie)
10. Tuki Sathaye (Addison)
11. RoseAnn Vonesh (Oak Park)
12. Carol Larsen (New Readers Press)

Publicity:

- Susan McNeil-Marshall has talked to David Seleb at MLS who has posted information about LEARN on Refflist. She will disseminate information about our group to other library systems like the North Suburban Library System, DuPage Library System and Heritage Trails Library System.
- Each individual library can promote the Web site through its own newsletter.

Meeting Minutes:

- Debra Kakuk asked that we include our minutes on the new LEARN Web site at www.adultslearnenglish.org. Anyone viewing the site could then review the minutes to see the topics that are discussed by the group and get a feel for what we are doing.
- I think someone also suggested having a link to our yahoo e-mail group. However, I think we can give that out, as necessary, to people who contact us through the LEARN Web site. A few times in the past “people” have joined the yahoo group only to post advertisements.

Grant Opportunities:

- Jean Demas and I have been investigating the possibility of applying for a grant for the group. Possible funding sources that Jean mentioned included The Coca-Cola Foundation, GE Fund, AT&T Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (although Sr. Marybeth has previously been turned down by the Gates Foundation) and the LSTA grants offered through the Illinois Secretary of State. Though the LSTA grant for literacy is geared more for groups like Literacy Volunteers of Dupage, there are some other more general LSTA grants that we could utilize. I have looked through the Foundation Directory and picked out a few local foundations that might offer grants for which we would be eligible.
- Unfortunately we do not seem to have a definite use for the grant money that would enable every member organization to benefit. Should we ask for more

materials (e.g. book, CD, software, etc.)? Jean thought that perhaps we could use the money to purchase laptop computers that could be circulated among the member libraries. I thought that perhaps we could use the money to promote and host coordinated programs, much like The Big Read program which zone one of MLS hosts. These programs and publicity might bring more students to use our collections as well as more tutors for our groups that offer tutoring. Susan suggested that we wait to see what the needs are of some of the smaller libraries in our group.

- We will each consider our own needs for which the grant money might offer funding. At the next meeting we hope to have a better grant concept.

Use of Collections:

- Tuki lamented that the Addison collection was being underutilized by students as well as tutors. Other libraries echoed this thought, and it was noted that the stand alone literacy computers, one at Lisle and one at Indian Prairie, were not being used much.
- Someone mentioned that students were often more interested in general computers for getting online or learning to type.
- Debra mentioned that COD instructors are very enthusiastic about local libraries and make a point of directing their students to libraries to use the resources.
- Susan suggested that we spread the word to the tutors to specifically ask the Reference staff at their local libraries to describe all the resources available for them and their students. Woodridge has a computer training lab that could potentially be used by tutors when it is available. Perhaps each library could post tutoring tips in its newsletter.

ESL Classes: Tuki also asked why we as libraries generally do not host ESL classes. It was pointed out that only larger libraries could afford to devote staff to conducting ESL classes on a regular basis.

Carol Larsen Presentation on Tutoring Students at the Library: Carol Larsen of New Readers Press described how she as a tutor introduces students to the library. She distributed a handout with some of her thoughts which included:

- **Library Goals:**
 - Bond with the books
 - Love the library
 - Get library cards
 - Be comfortable speaking with librarians and asking questions
 - Read, listen, speak, write better English
 - Bring children to library activities
 - Tour the library – know where some things are
- **Quick Hints**
 - Specific set of library tables to begin class
 - Library cards

- Less is more
- Flexibility
- Tour – Some areas of the library always on tour, some specific to the class (less is more).
- **ONE** book, Web site, ESL listening tape, etc. heard and explored thoroughly makes a big impression.
- Contact between teacher and librarian actually working with the class. An Internet agenda given to the teacher by the librarian is very helpful.
- Slow and clear speech (less is more)
- Developmental library visits
- Someone who speaks a predominant language to assist is invaluable. Inform students when this person is around.
- **Survey results** conducted by Carol show that students are most interested in:
 - Bi-lingual books (each page has both languages)
 - English for work
 - Computer classes
 - Computer programs
- **Library Visits for ESL Classes**
 - Before
 1. Talk, e-mail, visit, contact just before
 - a. Goals
 - b. Location
 - c. Sequence of activities
 - d. What worked well in the past
 - e. Ideas coming from both teacher and librarian
 - f. Questions from both teacher and librarian
 - g. Decide what books to have on the tables and look at samples of student reading materials at the different levels in the class. Some other materials to show, but books first.
 - h. Librarian pulls books and other materials day of class.
 - i. Print materials agreed upon – Calendar, newsletter, map of library, bookmarks, etc., list of costs of materials and over dues.
 2. In Class
 - a. Sheet for students with assignment (before, during, after)
 - b. Prep discussions
 - c. Library card applications filled out as a learning experience even if student lives in a different area.
 - During
 1. Meet at quiet location
 2. Turn in library card requests and Internet forms
 3. Read books on tables

4. Librarian shows some books and other materials. Demo of ESL CD, etc.
 5. Tour
 - a. Children's fiction and nonfiction – show where books they read came from.
 - b. CDs, DVDs, Computers, ESL collection, Bilingual books, foreign language books, electronic resources.
 - c. Desks and librarians to ask questions. "Hi, my name is Carol. I am an ESL student."
 6. Back to the books.
 7. Newsletters, calendars, children's activities, adult activities, cost lists, etc.
 8. Finding books on the computer, encyclopedias, fun children's video with words (oral and/or written), ESL videos. Sometimes for all, sometimes for those who express interest, but not every time.
 9. Thank yous all around.
- After
 1. Thank you!
 2. Class discussions and surveys.
 3. Student use of libraries and English speaking, listening, reading, and writing increase.
 4. Students share experiences with classmates, friends, relatives, children.
 5. Many people improve their English speaking, listening, reading and writing.
 6. More patrons at the libraries. More funding.
 7. Everyone is happy.
 - Tuki asked about items sold by New Readers Press that include a student book, teacher's edition and workbook. Would the student book be useful alone, or did all items need to be purchased for the learner to get any use out of it? Carol said that *most of the time* the student book would be useful on its own.

Tour of the College of Dupage Library: Ameet Doshi, who will be leaving soon to take a job in North Carolina, conducted a tour of the COD library. The ESL collection, though largely in the Library of Congress PE section, is not a stand alone collection. All formats (books, cassettes, videos, etc.) are interfiled. Besides the resources in the PE section, Ameet pointed out the career resources area and *briefly* the new book area, graphic novel collection and general library resources (Reference Desk, computer stations, etc.). COD makes equipment such as video recorders available for patrons to view materials in the library.

Next Meeting: Karen Neal will look into booking the next LEARN meeting at Downers Grove Library on Tuesday August 8 or August 1.