



SHOP TALK # 56: Seguin ISD Reaches Out with College Prep Program

Serving adult learners on the outskirts of urban centers or in semi-rural communities presents its own set of challenges. Assisting these individuals in preparing for and accessing postsecondary opportunities becomes complicated. The Seguin ISD Adult Education program, which serves three counties north and northeast of San Antonio, has joined forces with Education Service Center Region 20's Adult Education Cooperative for outreach to adult learners who are potential candidates for postsecondary education and training offered by the Alamo Community College District in the greater San Antonio area.

With a grant from the Texas Higher Education Board to implement an Intensive College Readiness Program for Adult Education Students (IP-AES), Seguin and Region 20 have partnered to offer instruction to four cohorts of adult learners who either have their GED or are close to receiving it. Classes are held at the Dolford Learning Center in Cibolo and at the Erskine Education Center in Seguin, or at the Westside Technical Center in San Antonio.

“You’re ready for college, you’re just not college ready.”

Program participants must make a serious commitment to this intensive six week, seven hour per day program. Key to the program is the rigorous, student-centered curriculum which focuses on postsecondary math, reading, writing, and college readiness skills. Instruction requires close coordination between math and reading/writing instructors as well as with the college transition coordinator, who teaches the college readiness course and helps students with test taking strategies in preparation for the ACCUPLACER (online exam from the College Board) and the THEA (Texas Higher Education Assessment). Career exploration is incorporated into math, reading, and writing instruction. Many of the participants are English language learners and have limited knowledge of postsecondary education and training opportunities. Career interests among current learners include healthcare professions, teaching, and fire fighting/emergency medical technician.

The writing and research part of the curriculum takes students through first person essay writing and focuses on student goals and the skills needed to conduct personal career investigation. The curriculum includes job observation as a form of research, along with computer research skills. Students eventually produce a research paper focused on the career they wish to pursue. Students work in groups to produce Microsoft PowerPoint® presentations about a selected industry in which they are interested.

By the time students complete their portfolios, they have developed good organizational skills and have a deeper understanding of their skills and the careers that interest them. They have investigated postsecondary institutions that offer specific careers of interest and have received \$400 scholarships. Most importantly, the program is designed to help students bypass developmental education courses once they enroll at the postsecondary level.

For additional information, contact Melissa Sadler-Nitu at mnitu@seguin.k12.tx.us. In April, Melissa and Rene Coronado (Region 20) present “Practical Transitions” at COABE 2011 in San Francisco.

SHOP TALK is a series sponsored by Texas LEARNS to highlight promising practices and address issues, concerns, and questions related to meeting adult learners’ needs for workforce development and successful transitions. For additional information or to request that a particular topic be addressed, contact Barbara Tondre-El Zorkani at btondre@earthlink.net. For a complete review of all SHOP TALK releases, go to www-tcall.tamu.edu and click on State Leadership Activities; click on TISESL and scroll down to SHOP TALK.