



ANTA training awards

November was a very busy month. Among the highlights were the ANTA training awards, in which I participated as a judge for the best vocational student of the year—no easy task! From ALA's point of view one of the most pleasing aspects of these awards is that they underline how important the love of learning is in contributing to vocational success. To find out about this year's winners go to: www.anta.gov.au/vetWinners.asp

The Smith Family

I addressed a seminar on Lifelong Learning at the Smith Family. The speech is available at www.ala.asn.au/docs/smith_family.pdf. The other keynote speaker at the event was Tony Vinson who spoke about the inquiry he has chaired into the NSW State School system. (See www.pub-ed-inquiry.org). Questions after the session concentrated on the school sector, underlining to me the challenges we still face in ensuring that adult learning gets sufficient attention. I was able to stress the relevance of adult learning principles to many young people who are not coping with the school system, as well as the importance of ensuring that those adults who fell through the school system get a second chance at learning, for their own and their children's benefit.

Learning in Museums

John Cross and I championed the cause of adult learning at a seminar hosted by the Australia

Museum. Again, the audience was focussed on children but, I hope, also got the message that there is tremendous potential for museum educators to expand their offerings to adults, both current and potential visitors. The seminar proceedings will be made available by the Australian Museum Audience Research Centre: www.amonline.net.au/about/amarc.htm.

On the same day, a very handsome report into older Australians and Museums, 'Energised, Engaged, Everywhere', was launched. Copies can be ordered from Lynda Kelly (lyndak@auamus.gov.au) or Susan Tonkin (s.tonkin@nma.gov.au). I would encourage members to take a look at these materials and to consider how you, too, might be able to use museums as a learning resource.

Libraries

Libraries have always been important players in lifelong learning. Many are now seeking out new ways in which to engage with the knowledge society. The National Office has just completed a short training session at the State Library of Victoria during which we introduced staff to adult learning principles and the learning circle methodology. We have also been involved with the Australian Library Information Association's initiative on information literacy and look forward to building our links with the library sector during 2003.

ACOSS

ACOSS held its national congress in Hobart at the end of November. The two days were jam packed with speakers. The theme of the conference was a fair and inclusive Australia, with much concern aired about current attitudes towards asylum seekers and the breaching provisions of the Working Together bill. I attended a workshop on the Active Participation Model to be introduced into the Job Network system next July. David Thompson, CEO of Jobs Australia, spoke, welcoming the more personal service that the system will introduce but warning that it might also herald an even more stringent compliance regime. The Job Seeker accounts are potentially an opportunity for ACE providers to become further engaged in work with the unemployed, in particular those who may not be ready to participate in vocational training. It will, however, be important to forge links with employment agencies, to ensure they are aware of the services available in the adult and community education sector. To assist with this, we are planning to do research into learning audit tools and their application in this arena. ALA will also continue to lobby for greater flexibility in the timing and delivery of training to the unemployed.

Another theme at the conference was the nature of Australian federalism and the implications of GST flows to the States. Dr Vince Fitzgerald spoke to the review which he and Professor Ross Garnaut conducted on Commonwealth-State funding issues. For those interested see www.reviewcommstatefunding.com.au/library/BackgroundPaper_FINAL.pdf.

Two presentations included substantial references to the importance of learning: Rob Simons from

the Smith Family spoke of the need to understand that education was the main element in nurturing social inclusion. He referred to a very interesting Canadian publication, Development Health and the Wealth of Nations, edited by Keating and Hetziman. Here's a web address:

www.acscd.ca/acscd/public/dhwn.nsf/79bd30dc8fee05dc85256638007535f0/82a8cbdf1c3c9ff085256ba70073f35c!OpenDocument.

Jenny Macklin told the congress that education was at the heart of the ALP's policy review. She spoke about education as the driver of a knowledge-based economy.

Draft Training and Assessment (TAA) Training Package

NAWT (National Assessors and Work Place Trainers) has published a first draft of the Training and Assessment (TAA) Training Package, to replace the Assessment and Workplace Training package. The name change reflects the wider scope and substantial changes in content in the revised draft Training Package.

The 'first cut' of the Training Package will need considerable fine-tuning and strengthening. NAWT is interested in receiving both general comments on the new structure and scope of the Training Package as well as detailed comments on specific areas. Visit nawt.bsitab.net for more information and to provide comments. ALA would also like to hear your views on the new package. Please email us at info@ala.asn.au.

Jenny Jankowski

It's already time to farewell Jenny who joined ALA in May in the temporary position of Administrative Assistant. Jenny was primarily involved in the Adult Learners' Week campaign, during which she

talked to many, many people, promoting the great diversity of learning opportunities that are available in our community. She was also heavily involved in ALW's writing and photographic competitions. In taking her leave of us, Jenny writes, 'It was in this working environment that I started to re-consider the options available in terms of my own career development.

Consequently, I have applied to undertake study next year with a view to returning to my previous career in Human Resources. I would like to take this opportunity to thank ALA for the opportunity to work with you and to wish you all well in 2003!' Likewise we wish Jenny every success in learning and life.

Website of the month

Our website of the month award for December goes to CCD.net (www.ccd.net), a site about community cultural development (CCD) in Australia. Community cultural development, while widely practiced, is not known well by the name. CCD.net provides a useful introduction by presenting a brief outline of the theory, definitions and a glossary of terms. It also offers news, training and career information, directories of CCD-related projects, links, organisations and event listings.

In addition to all this information, CCD.net makes a point of fostering an online community; by registering you will be able to participate in or host your own discussion forum, and to contribute projects, events and other resources to the website.

Seasons' Greetings to all!

The National Office will be closed from 23 December to 10 January, although many staff will not be back until later in the month. We hope that all members will have the opportunity to take a break over the summer in preparation for what no doubt will be another hectic year.

Francesca Beddie

Executive Director, Adult Learning Australia