

# Watsonville/Aptos Adult Education News and Views



*Through others, we become ourselves.*  
L. S. Vygotsky



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The Hibernation Issue

Dec. 4, 2006

## Meeting of the Minds

Last week at this national adult education research symposium in Sacramento, a team of our teacher-researchers presented their action research and findings about the impact of a formal orientation process on student persistence. Elizabeth Cunningham, Kim Iwasko, and Cary Keisler were the only teachers who were asked to present. They will share their experiences in a later News and Views. But we should all know that the research-based elements of their orientation curriculum was very well received. Even the huge LAUSD is interested in seeing what they did. This curriculum is what all ESL teachers were provided this semester, and asked to present to their students the third week of school. This next semester we will experiment even further, and have a modified managed enrollment, in which we'll ask NEW students to have a dedicated three hours of orientation before they begin class. We all need to be critical thinkers about the curriculum, the orientation process, and share with each other our ideas and practices. Initial analysis of fall semester data appears to indicate that our "persistence" rates continue to improve. We have done so much in the last few years of having more adviser hours, group presentations, and expanded and regular student councils. Teachers have also worked hard to assess what students want, to give them experience relevant to their lives, and give students recognition for goals met, and progress made. Our expanded Distance Learning program has also had a substantial impact on persistence, accomodating students with barriers to regular classroom attendance, or needs to "stop-out."

## Student Voices, Student Councils

As an adult education program, we have had a unusual history of regular and productive student councils. We have four student councils, mostly of our ESL and Learning Center students, which meet on a monthly basis. They offer authentic, and important, input in decisions about how we operate. The students in the councils helped us design our new building, and give us ideas about classes, and instruction.

Two things this month struck me: first the students talked about being oriented to the school. Some said they had received a good overview, but others wanted to see our "orientation curriculum" to give input. Students clearly want a picture of the "course of study." Related to this is a request for some "home-work" for the long holiday vacation. Students wanted to continue "self-study" during vacation.

*Fundraising Campaign: Winter Festival Postponed*  
*Feedback from students and others was that we should wait until after the*  
*Holidays to attempt a large "community-building" event to raise*

**Spring Semester Dates:**

**Jan. 8 - June 15, 2007**



# WAAE Calendar

**December 6: December payroll due to Marjorie.**

**PVUSD Board of Trustees Meeting Wednesday, Dec. 6**  
Our site block grant, and the naming of the new building will be presented

## **School Council**

Dec. 13, 4:00-6:00, Porter

## **ESL Recognition/Award Ceremony -**

Watsonville High School Cafeteria  
Thursday, Dec. 14, childcare provided  
6:00-6:30 Music interlude, our guitar class will play  
7:00pm - 8:00pm, Student Award Ceremony  
8:00-9:00pm, all school holiday dance

**WAAE Holiday Festival fundraising event**  
*Postponed until February*

## **Winter Break, Dec. 18 - Jan. 8**

**Office will be open Dec. 18-21, Dec. 27-29, and Jan. 3- 5**

**The Office will be open in the daytime only during Winter Break**

Any Lifelong Learning teachers who want to teach during these down weeks  
MUST coordinate with your chair, Jane Reyes  
Most classes begin on Monday, Jan. 8  
Some classes begin later.

Check with your department chair to make sure we are set to open the semester.



## **As the WAAE World Turns:**

... one of our Saturday teachers, Refugio Murillo, who teaches Pharmacy Tech had a very serious heart attack and has been in intensive care for two weeks... our best wishes to him and his family... there was a super graduation ceremony for our Certified Nursing Assistant program two weeks ago, look for pictures in the next news and view... our Institute of Language and Culture is slightly over schedule but still it looks like we will be moving furniture into the building the last two weeks of February...there will be a 1.2% raise presented to the board for their approval this Wednesday for all adult ed teachers... other units will also have a raise presented... that we have run two years in a row in deficit has prevented us from agreeing to an even higher raise... attendance, especially the average student per class, is the single thing that can help us be fiscally more solvent... the ILC, with its large rooms, and ability to attract students, is expected to help us considerably in this effort to get our average class size higher... in the next issue you will see information about the "Focus on Learning" self-study... it is time for our whole school community to study deeply how we have changed in the last few years, what our students and community need, and ask our selves frankly, are we doing the best we can?