



# SPOTLIGHT on Adult Education

## Rose-Marie Mills, Superintendent

### O.A.C.E. Nursing Students Take the Pledge

Over one hundred O.A.C.E. Nursing Students (52 from the Brooklyn Campus and 58 from the Manhattan campus) attended the Capping Ceremony at the Mid-Manhattan Adult Learning Center on January 10th.

Opening the ceremony was a vocal and steel drum performance of *America the Beautiful* followed by a moving speech by Deputy Chancellor Dr. Dorita Gibson, inspired by her mother's journey as a nurse.



*Deputy Chancellor Dr. Dorita Gibson shares her own personal inspiration.*



*Nursing students Rita Stelmokiene (vocalist), Alyssa Cain (steel drum), and Ankh Ra Amen Hetep Henderson (piano, not pictured) perform America the Beautiful in the opening ceremony.*

Celebrating with the students were Senior Superintendent Dr. Laura Feijoo, Deputy Chancellor Dr. Dorita Gibson, O.A.C.E. Superintendent Rose-Marie Mills and Deputy Superintendent Valena Welch-Woodley. Also attending were their proud Principals, Ryntha Henderson-Amare and Daisy Torres, Assistant Principal Gladys Byrd, their nursing teachers, other O.A.C.E. Regional Principals and staff, and family members.



*Applauding the nursing students: Senior Superintendent Dr. Laura Feijoo and O.A.C.E. Deputy Superintendent Valena Welch-Woodley and Principal Ryntha Henderson-Amare.*

When the moment came, students were officially capped and received their lamps—the symbol of nurses since Florence Nightingale, the “Lady with the Lamp”— as they and all the participating nurses in the audience recited and renewed the nursing pledge. This has been a rite of passage since 1893.



*Nursing students make it official as they hold their lamps with a lighted candle, wear their caps, and recite the Nursing Pledge.*

## O.A.C.E. is TASC-Ready!

On December 20th, 40 prospective proctors and test coordinators received training from the New York State Education Department on new testing protocols for the TASC (Test Assessing Secondary Completion). Pat Mooney



*Sandy Vasquez and Nancy Fernandez, Region 5 Assistant Principal smile for their photo. Congrats to Sandy on her retirement after 14 years of service!*

and Sandy Belitza-Vasquez led the group through a comprehensive overview of testing beginning with the his-



*O.A.C.E. Superintendent Mills and Pat Mooney (NYSED) share a laugh before the session.*

tory of the GED to the impending changes.

In the final six months of 2013, 13,675 students were tested. This year, in preparation for the TASC, three more testing sites have been

added. The ten NYSED-approved sites span all five boroughs, and four of these—the Adult Learning Centers—accommodate computer-based testing.

Although dates for testing have not yet been set, applications are currently being accepted and testing staff are being trained to administer the new assessment.



*The TASC team during training: Standing, from left: Jazmin Carey, Susie Mota, Shamara Whetstone, Frances Gillepsie; Seated: Ana Wilson, Belkis Contreras*

## O.A.C.E. Leads Professional Development in the Southern Tier Regional Adult Education Network (RAEN)

O.A.C.E. staff members were invited to lead a series of workshops on Common Core and the Danielson Framework for adult educators in the Central Southern Tier Regional Adult Education Network. James Matt, RAEN director, coordinated the two-day event. More than two hundred teachers and program managers participated.

The workshops were launched with a plenary session facilitated by Superintendent Rose-Marie Mills.

Breakout sessions in English Language Learner support, Math, Danielson, and Common Core were facilitated by a cohort of instructional leaders from O.A.C.E.: Victoria Capeci, Region 7 Instructional Facilitator, Patrick Cravillion Region 8 Assistant Principal, and Central Team Assistant Principals Marvin Super-ville and Luckisha Amankwah.

O.A.C.E. is a frontrunner in implementing Common Core standards in adult education.



*Superintendent Rose-Marie Mills during the plenary session.*

## Growing Our TAFE and Best Plus Training Team

Throughout the months of February and March, newly-certified BEST Plus trainers from O.A.C.E. will provide training on the BEST Plus test for per session teachers. A cohort of TAFE trainers will also be conducting training sessions across regions. The mandated trainings are being offered to all staff in an effort to increase the post-test rate. O.A.C.E. services more than 40,000 students each year.

Among other parameters, the effectiveness of the organization is measured by educational gain using the two assessments.

*From Left, 2<sup>nd</sup> row: Efiom, Luckisha, Kathleen, Katie, Rebecca, Betsy, and Vicky*

*From left, front row: Lydia, Leonor, Lloydia, Karlene, Monette, Doreen, and Sarah*



## O.A.C.E. Presenters Shine at the National Conference on Family Literacy

Educators from coast to coast gathered at the nation's largest family and community literacy conference in Washington, DC, on February 17-19. Family literacy professionals, educators, researchers, advocates, coalition members, and policy makers participated in interactive workshops.

The six keynote speakers all spoke on the theme of family literacy.

The opening speaker, Sharon Darling, President and founder of the Louisville-based National Center for Families Learning, spoke about the importance of educating the whole family. Research suggests that literacy must start pre-birth, and that everyone in the family—parents, grandparents, extended family, and even neighbors—must be involved.

Holly Robinson Peete, actress, parent, education advocate, and founder of the HollyRod Foundation, shared her personal journey as an advocate for her eldest son who is on the autism spectrum. She detailed the challenge of finding an appropriate learning environment for him, and applauded his diligent educators.

The workshops ranged from early childhood to middle school, high school, and adult education, again reinforcing the theme that literacy must be woven throughout an individual's entire life.



*Assistant Principal Luckisha Amankwah leading participants through the Seven Steps to Standards-Surpassing Writing*

The conference was well-rounded: participants had opportunities to attend workshops, hear keynote speakers, and visit sites within our national's capital that were related to the themes of the workshop.

Two of our very own staff developers, O.A.C.E.'s Luckisha Amankwah and Lavern Nelson presented sessions (*Seven Steps to Standards-Surpassing Writing*, and *Preparing 21st Century Readers*, respectively) that attracted and engaged educators from across the country.



*Assistant Principal Lavern Nelson presents Preparing 21st Century Readers to a deeply engrossed audience.*

## Upcoming Conferences

Members of the O.A.C.E. professional development team will be presenting at the COABE conference this spring. Visit the workshops when you attend.

For more information on professional development opportunities, please contact Valena Welch-Woodley:

[VWelchW@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:VWelchW@schools.nyc.gov)

### We're on the Web:

<http://www.oaceny.org/>

#### CONTACT US AT:

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ADULT AND  
CONTINUING EDUCATION

475 NOSTRAND AVENUE  
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11216

PHONE: 718-638-2635

FAX: 718-623-2080

E-MAIL:  
[OACE@SCHOOLS.NYC.GOV](mailto:OACE@SCHOOLS.NYC.GOV)

## Step into the Spotlight!

If you would like to contribute articles or photos to the O.A.C.E. *Spotlight on Adult Education*, please contact:

Luckisha Amankwah  
[LAmankw@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:LAmankw@schools.nyc.gov)

or

Tom Trocco  
[TTrocco@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:TTrocco@schools.nyc.gov)



## O.A.C.E. Students Set Goals for 2014!



*Clifford Providence has been in the United States for less than six months and has the goal of earning a high school equivalency diploma and becoming a paramedic.*



*Merle Frederick, who recently celebrated her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, has taken the GED test before and admits, that like many older students, she'd prefer things to stay the way they were before. She aspires to earn her High School Equivalency Diploma.*



*Jerome Lewis participated in CTB McGraw Hill's TASC pilot in October. Despite feelings that the new test has the potential to take away students' confidence, he's ready and willing to do what it takes to earn his HSE Diploma this year.*

## Welcome New O.A.C.E. Staff

Region 6 Case Manager Althea Aarons has worked in education for the past 27 years in middle school, high school and adult education. She is a certified ESL and English Language Arts teacher. Althea is also a certified guidance counselor.

After working at a District 79 school for ten years, she decided that working in adult education as a case manager would be a meaningful extension to her roles as a teacher and as a guidance counselor.

Welcome, Althea!

## Go the Distance with Distance Learning GRASP: (Giving Ready Adults a Study Program)

The O.A.C.E. Distance Learning program offers eligible students with busy work and family lives the opportunity to study independently, at their convenience, with individualized support from a certified teacher. Students may also supplement independent study with face-to-face instruction when they

participate in tutoring. Teachers use one or more of several distance learning curricula such as GED Connections, Pre-GED Connections, Crossroads Café, GRASP, and SMART. Interested students may contact their case managers for more information.



*Kathy Berkheimer, GRASP trainer (far right) with MMALC Distance Learning teacher Stephanie Moore (left) and Kathy Sheehy (center), NYSED Associate.*

## A Final Thought from Florence Nightingale:

“Were there none who were discontented with what they have, the world would never reach anything better.”