



## AEFLA ANNUAL REPORT - PY 2010-2011

- 1. Describe successful activities, programs and projects supported with State Leadership funds, and describe the extent to which these activities, programs and projects were successful in implementing the goals of the State Plan.**

The USVI's Department of Education's State Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education provided supplemental funding through competition for 8 local Adult Education providers territorially (2 LEA's, 2 Government Organizations and 4 CBO's) . The State monitors and evaluates local programs, and provides technical assistance, trainings and professional development to ensure that they are viable and structured, to capture the interests of adults through integration of non traditional and conceptual teaching methods with core academics that relate to real life experiences. VIDE believes that such integration will not only enhance student performance and productivity, but it will also reduce the drop out rate, which is a long standing negative aspect of adult education programs, as they try to compete with everyday life situations faced by adults, which can serve as barriers to continued attendance.

Successful activities supported with State Leadership funds for this PY centered on the Adult Recovery Summit which was held October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> at the Sugar Bay Resort in St. Thomas, USVI. The Summit, "Building Collaborative Bridges", a two day event for Adult Educators and students (Literacy and Adult Career and Tech) infused with training and professional development workshops had an overall attendance of 291 participants (a success rate of 74% above previous year's attendance). This summit brought Adult Literacy and Adult Career and Tech programs together to collaborate on dual enrollment and streamlining of services for adults without duplication of efforts.

Training was provided for 83 adult literacy and adult CTE students by Dr Ronald Harrigan, Adult Educator; retired Associate Professor of Education and retired Interim Dean of the School of Education, University of the Virgin Islands. The two day training focused on "How to Become a Master Student" and "From Master Student to Master Employee". Students were engaged in classroom discussion and homework activities that ranged from proper studying techniques, juggling school and family priorities, to effective note taking; critical thinking and moving from school to the workforce. The Summit generated greater attendance on day two, as students who attended day one brought additional participants to engage in the training sessions and enroll in programs.

Students received workbooks which were filled with charts and worksheets that they could incorporate into balancing regular daily activities of life, work and school.

Another aspect of training for current and prospective Adult Literacy students focused on Workplace Literacy and incorporating soft skills into the workplace. This session conducted by Caribbean Institute of Training and Development, provided training on effective workplace techniques, or “soft skills” for students who were already in the workforce, or had short term goals of employment. Topics covered included *Commitment and Setting Realistic Goals; Celebrating Diversity in the Workplace; Dressing for Success, Effective Communication; Attitude and Conflict Resolution.*

The National Center for Family Literacy conducted Professional Development for Instructors, Program Directors and Staff of Adult Literacy programs. Four topics covered were:

1. Differentiated Instruction
2. Goal Setting for Adults
3. Keeping Programs Thriving in Tough Economic Times
4. Adult Literacy as a Gateway to Postsecondary Education

The topics for training and Professional Development for this year’s Summit were a direct result of feedback from monitoring visits conducted on Adult Education programs in the previous PY. Adult Literacy Programs also received software and training on Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE and ESOL classrooms. This year’s summit success will be evaluated by measuring current program enrollment with next PY’s program enrollment to assess retention. Student reports will be compared to contrast the ratio of students that increased in gains from one PY to the next.

This reporting period, the State contracted the National Reporting System for Adult Education to conduct our annual NRS training on January 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011 to keep Subgrantees abreast of NRS reporting requirements and program updates from Federal level. The training was hosted by Project Director, Larry Condelli, Deputy Project Director, Dahlia Shaewitz and Mary Ann Corely, Ph d. The objectives were:

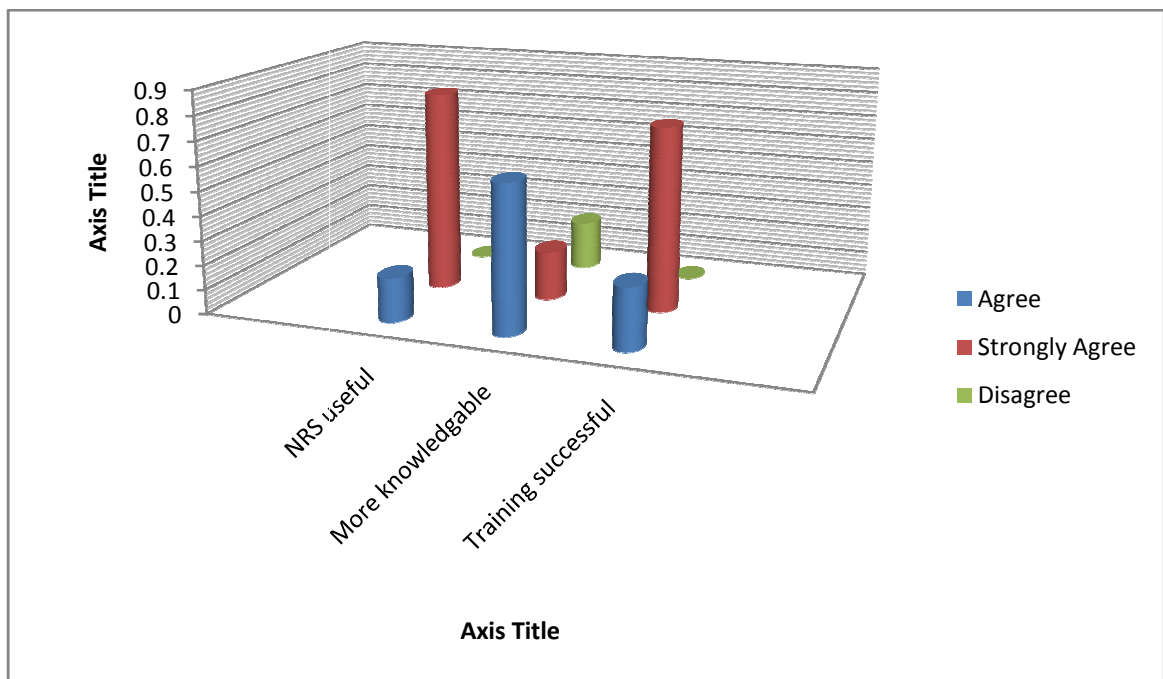
- Explain the purpose of AEFLA and requirements of Federal and local grantees and Subgrantees;
- Identify factors contributing to low levels of adult literacy (in the VI and Nationally);
- Discuss the functions and value of an accountability system for adult literacy programs;
- Describe the measures and data collection requirements for the NRS;

- Review national data and consider how data can be used to make programmatic improvements;
- Describe characteristics of effective adult literacy programs;
- Begin to plan for change to enhance program quality;
- Identify ways to overcome staff resistance to using data

It was essential for the NRS team to provide training in which adult literacy program directors and staff were interactively engaged to make them aware of the need for data reporting, standardized testing, timely data entry and its relevance to the continued success and funding of AEFLA. Programs were also apprised of:

1. Updates to the State Assessment Policy Manual (as well as given a copy)
2. The need to pre and post test students
3. Pre-enrollment counseling and,
4. Assisting adult students on setting specific and realistic short term goals that leads to completion of long term goals.

Feedback surveys from attendees' show that 82% of attendees strongly agreed that the training would be useful to them in their programs' structuring, 60% claimed to acquire knowledge that they did not have prior and 75% strongly agreed that the training was a success.



State technical assistance and training for new and existing service providers is ongoing and consists of collaboration with VIDE's key departments at annual AEFLA orientation sessions to provide information on local and Federal fiscal policies and procedures, as well as on program regulations; local procurement procedures; budgeting requirements; allowable costs; and annual updates. Providers receive copies of State templates (i.e. intake applications, follow-up and student surveys, monitoring template, etc...) and copies of the Edgar for easy referral.

A Literacy Pro mandatory Management Information System (MIS) training was conducted on November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 by Literacy Pro trainer Shannon Stangis for all AEFLA Subgrantees. This annual training is conducted to keep Subgrantees trained on effective utilization of the MIS and up to date with changes to the MIS system that is required to facilitate quantitative data for AEFLA. Programs are required to utilize the MIS system to track student enrollment, educational gains and faculty, as well as to track student demographics needed to conduct the mandatory follow up survey. In addition to the onsite hands on interactive training, the State contracted the service provider to conduct a series of WEB Ex trainings and ongoing technical assistance for subgrantees due to excessive complaints relative to technical glitches with Literacy Pro not counting student data.

#### **ONSITE MONITORING AND VISITS**

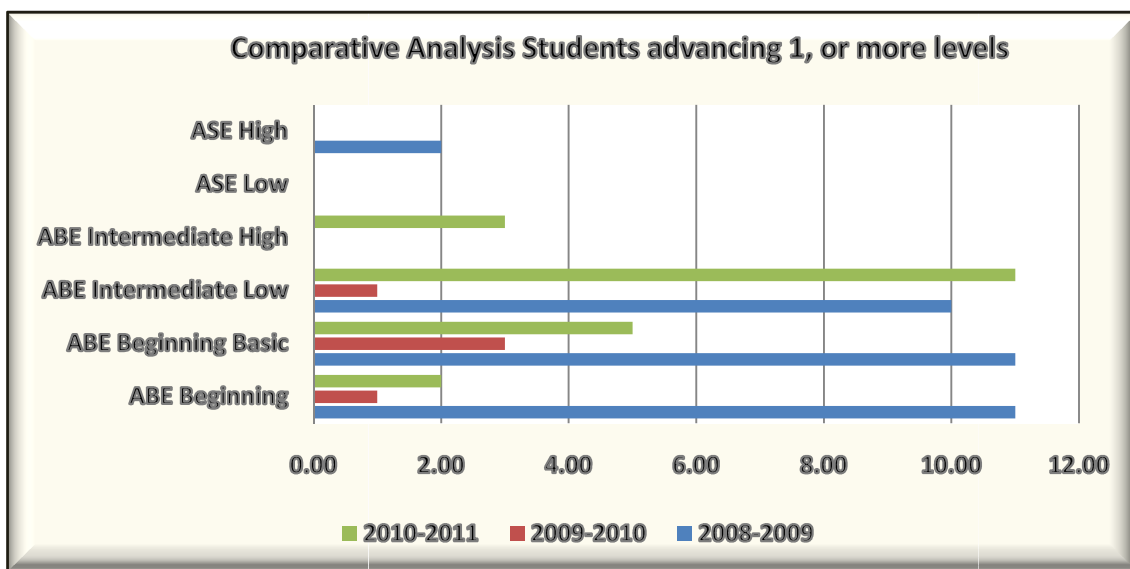
Some program sites were visited within the earlier months of the current PY and latter months of the previous PY to ensure compliance. Programs were required to show evidence of internal policy manuals, as well as evidence that students are pre and post tested and that they are keeping up to date student demographics and records. Additionally, Fiscal monitoring is ongoing throughout the year with each request for draw from subgrantees. Purchase receipts, invoices, and PO's, or requisitions are reviewed for allowableness and reasonableness. They are cross referenced with supporting data as a red flag detection measure. Students' time and attendance are also cross referenced with employee's time and attendance and State follow-up calls to students are conducted periodically.

**II. Describe significant findings from the eligible agency’s evaluation of the effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities based on core indicators of performance.**

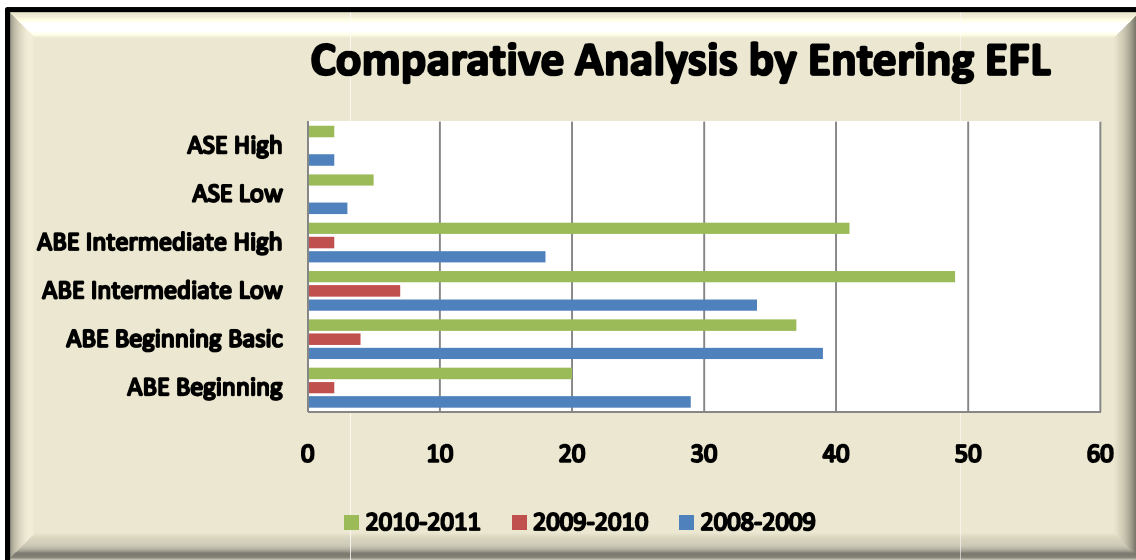
The eligible agency is making considerable progress in student retention and gains in Adult literacy programs. With extensive State training and professional development activities, programs became familiar with the regulations of AEFLA and are administering locator tests for placement and pre and post tests to gauge gains.

An issue that is affecting the VI’s enrollment count for the 10-11 PY, is the principals for ASE programs argue that they do not have staff capacity to administer the TABE to the vast amount of students enrolled; that the test is timely; and that the students are already assessed regularly, as they are earning credit towards their High School diploma. Although they are mandated to administer the abbreviated version of the TABE so that the students can be counted in the MIS, many ASE students have not been counted because of the time the assessments take away from regular scheduled instruction.

A comparative analysis of data derived from the MIS provider shows that in 08-09, 11 more students completed a level and advanced one or more levels than in 2010-2011. Contrastingly, because of the setbacks faced in the 09-10 reporting period, 27 more advanced in 08-09 and 16 in 2010-2011 than the reported 5 in 09-10. Specifically, the ABE beginning students will show less improvement in advancing because of their low literacy levels and the time that is needed to prepare them for advancement.



As we assess the compassion of students entering the programs by EFL's the VI experienced an increase in the number of ASE Low and ABE Intermediate High students placed for FY 10-11 compared to previous years (ASE student count data is not representative of entire ASE population, as indicated in earlier text). Additionally, although the 08-09 data for ABE Basic and ABE Beginning surpasses the 09-10 and 10-11 data, the afore mentioned setbacks experienced by the eligible agencies and Subgrantees attributes to the decrease in numbers for PY 09-10, as well as impacts PY 10-11 count. On the positive side, PY 10-11 reporting data shows that the VI is back on track with regards to increasing gains and enrollment of their Adult Literacy population.



sponsored under Title II with other adult education, career development and employment training activities. Include a description of how the eligible agency is being represented on the Local Workforce Investment Boards, adult education's involvement on the State Workforce Investment Board, the provision of core and other services through the one-stop system and estimate of the Title II funds being used to support activities and services through the One Stop delivery system.

The eligible agency is supported on the local workforce boards by the State Director, Eduardo J. Corneiro. The Adult Recovery Summit was working summit and a continuation of the previous years' Summit that was held at DIVI Carina Bay, in St. Croix, VI, with the first half of day one opening in a conference format. Similar to St. Croix, the St. Thomas/ St. John summit consisted of key representatives from major sectors of the Government, Business, Civic and Religious organizations *listening* to the public, sharing new collaborations, and engaging in a panel discussion that opened up to question and answer from the public. The second half of day one and the entire day two consisted of training opportunities for students and educators, collaboration between Post

Secondary Educators and Adult Education professionals, as well as hands on working sessions, including the inception of collaborative work on creating Programs of Study in High Schools territorially.

In attendance were representatives on behalf of the Governor of the USVI, Honorable John P. de Jongh, Jr.; the Honorable La Verne Terry, Ed. D, Commissioner of Education; the Honorable Albert Bryan Jr, Commissioner of Labor; a representative on behalf of the Honorable Chris Finch, Commissioner of Human Services; the Provost of the University of the Virgin Islands, Dr. Karl Wright; the District Superintendent from the St. Thomas/St. John district Mrs. Jeanette Smith-Barry; The District Superintendent from the St. Croix district Mr. Gary Molloy; Ms. Mc Mahon Arnold on behalf of Dr. Sarah Mahurt, Deputy Commissioner of Curriculum and Instruction; the Career and Technical and Adult Education Principals from both districts; Ms. Winona Hendricks, Chairperson, VI Board of Education, all AEFLA Subgrantees, CTE and AE faculty and students, as well as prospective students from the general public. Additionally, there was a Mock One stop with representatives of Department of Labor, Human Services, UVI Cell, VI HOPE and many other organizations that displayed services available to adults, and held open registrations.

There were various presentations from VIDE's Leadership Team relative to utilization of current technologies that can assist in the improvement of literacy gains, as well as facilitate the Integration and alignment of Adult Literacy and Adult Career and Tech. Ms. Mc Mahon Arnold spoke about VIDE's push towards improving reading and literacy, Dr. Ann Hodge Richbourg, Director of STEM made an interactive presentation on two new initiatives by VIDE:

- a. Defined STEM – “Defined STEM is a web-based application designed to promote effective and relevant connections between STEM classroom content and STEM career pathways, thus providing learning opportunities for students. Defined STEM provides teachers a resource where they can access highly effective media content and related support materials. These resources and materials allow teachers to connect STEM career awareness to existing lessons and standards-based curriculum.” <http://www.definedlearning.com/defined-stem.cfm>
- b. ALEKS program – “a web based system that assesses the student's current course knowledge by asking a small number of questions (usually 20-30). ALEKS chooses each question on the basis of students' answers to all the previous questions. Each student, and therefore each set of assessment questions, is

unique. It is impossible to predict the questions that will be asked.” This program is bilingual. [http://www.aleks.com/about\\_aleks/overview](http://www.aleks.com/about_aleks/overview)

By the time the student has completed the assessment, ALEKS has developed a precise picture of her knowledge of the course, knowing which topics she has mastered and which topics she hasn't. The student's knowledge is represented by a multicolor pie chart.

Adult Literacy Programs are seeking to integrate the Defined Stem in ways that would facilitate integration of career awareness into the literacy programs. Additionally, they view the ALEKS program as a technology tool that can be used to assist learning and improve students' numeracy gains at a pace in which they are comfortable, without the pressures of being forced to keep up with more advanced learners.

## CONCLUSION

During the 09-10 and 10-11 program years, the VI Adult Literacy programs experienced considerable challenges. However, the most significant measure of success for any program that deals with disenfranchised adults and students is the success stories of the students themselves. One of the VI's previous Adult Literacy program remains a pivotal example of success in creating positive outcomes in the lives of Adult Literacy students for the USVI. Following is a story shared in an anthology of work composed by Adult Literacy students of the Women's Coalition Center in the St. Croix district, ran by Director, Dr. Sue Diverio. This student recounts her life and the impact being a part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Adult Recovery Summit held at the DIVI Carina Bay in St. Croix had on her:

*“You let me know I matter.” As I lay in the street after being brutally attacked, the first thought that entered my mind was, “will I live or die.” The second thought was “what would my mother think if I died this way.” All I owned was a knapsack. I didn't want to be remembered as the person with the knapsack. What was in that knapsack would define me. I didn't want to be yet another story where people said “She could have been something.” I wanted to be someone who mattered; someone who made a difference with her life.*

*It is less than a year ago that I was that person lying in the street, covered with blood and dirt. I was homeless and living on the streets-an active addict for 30 years. My life was a lot of poor decisions. I began drinking at the age of 10. My parents were alcoholics, so it was easy for me to sneak drinks, and eventually bottles. I wanted desperately to fit in, and when I showed up with the booze, I was instantly popular and accepted. By the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I began smoking pot. My best friend introduced me to it. When my dad caught me, he gave me the usual speech, “It will lead to other things.” Today I can honestly say, “You were right dad.”*



*I left home at 15; dropped out of school in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. My dad and I had a massive fight, so I took off. At first my friends hid me, and then I moved in with my boyfriend. I took drugs on a regular basis and held a variety of dead end jobs. I stopped caring about what I did because of the drugs. I lied. I stole....*

*As I lay helplessly in the street feeling humiliated and lifeless, my life became important to me because I thought it was over... I picked myself up and entered the Village for the second time. I promised myself that if I had the chance, I would do it right. I'd be somebody, and that's what I am doing- working on becoming somebody. Link has been a stepping stone. It's a place where people never say "I can't do it". It's a place where people say "I can and will amount to anything I want."...*

*A few months into the program, Dr. D, asked if anyone would volunteer to speak at the Education conference at DIVI Carina Resort. I am so petrified to speak in front of people, but something inside of me blurted out "Yes, I will." I wanted to grow and take on challenges. For days before, I prepared my speech. When I got to DIVI I was so nervous I could barely speak. I walked to the podium with another classmate and wondered why I said yes. I looked in the crowd and saw a familiar face-my therapist. She smiled at me telling me she was proud of me. I felt very supported. I began to tell my story. I finally owned it. I felt relief.*

*As I look to the future, I want to live differently than my past. I want to help others. I look forward to what I am meant to do, but I know there will be struggles.*

Women's Coalition reports: Independent and confident, she now holds a job and is applying to college. She moved into an apartment and will be getting a drivers license in the near future (Project Link, 2011, p. 68).