



CAERC COMMUNITY

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A Publication for the Capital Adult Education Regional Consortium Community

Director's Message

A global pandemic was not a part of any of our plans—not the strategic three-year plan, nor the annual plan. In early March 2020, our adult education programs in the greater Sacramento Region were like busy beehives overflowing with the "honey" of learning outcomes and newly acquired skills related to careers and employment. Then suddenly we found ourselves in the state of quarantine. With awe, and a great deal of gratitude, we witnessed our adult learners and their teachers, administrators, and support staff switch to distance learning. Our adult programs successfully persisted and met the challenges head on. We would like to give credit to a long-standing system of support provided by the state-level leadership that ensured the field was well prepared and able to transition to online tools and interactions.

Four months later, challenges remain. Unprecedented economic uncertainty, coupled with social issues and an overarching concern for public health, are the elements of the backdrop against which we are planning for the new school year. Many will agree that it has never been more challenging to be a teacher and an administrator. It is also very challenging to be a learner in these unprecedented times. While this is true, our consortium members are actively preparing to educate, re-train and up-skill many adults in our region so that local businesses can rebound, and our communities can grow stronger.

After all, adult education has played this important role for almost 165 years, since the times when the first recorded adult school sponsored by the San Francisco

Board of Education in 1856 offered classes in the basement of St. Mary's Cathedral. Many students were those who decided to make California their home even after the excitement and the riches of the Gold Rush subsided. The California Adult Education system progressed and expanded through the difficulties of the Great Depression and the challenges of two world wars. The adult learners of school year 2019–20 are resilient and deserving of our admiration and respect. So many of them accomplished their goals despite the circumstances.

In this issue of our newsletter, we celebrate them: the many high school diplomas and equivalents earned, vocational certificates received, and English language skills improved. Our preliminary data for 2019–20 show that out of 11,830 enrollees in the region, 64% of learners persisted and recorded 5,790 outcomes as measured by increased academic skills, new or better jobs, and short-term training completion. Let's start school year 2020–21 and address the challenges with this saying in mind: "In the midst of every crisis, there lies an opportunity." In this issue we are proud to list some of our accomplishments. We are even prouder to share the journeys of our adult learners. Please give us feedback at caerc@scoe.net, and send anyone who may benefit to our learner portal and asset map at capitaladulthood.org.

Branka Marceta, CAERC Director

For more
information,
visit caerc.org!



Capital
Adult Education
Regional Consortium

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Adult Schools Shift to Distance Learning

When schools across the state closed in mid-March due to the Coronavirus pandemic, adult schools were faced with the challenge of providing students access to devices, connectivity and online instruction to support distance learning. Adult schools across our region rose to the occasion and met this challenge head on to support the students and communities they serve.

Amador Adult Education

Amador Adult Education moved to distance learning for all of their courses and programs including high school diploma, high school equivalency preparation, English as a Second Language, and workforce development certificate programs.

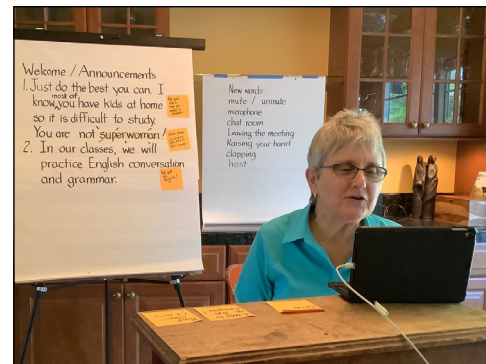


Amador Adult Education staff Melissa Case and Kelly Hunkins collect school materials with social distancing and safety precautions in mind.

Creekside Adult School – ESL

Shireen Miles' Beginning Low ESL class at San Juan Unified School District's Creekside Adult School moved to remote instruction via Zoom following the school's closure. Of the 26 students on her roster, 19 continued participating in remote hour-long ESL lessons held four days a week. A bilingual instructional aide added numerous Zoom lessons and provided explanations of difficult concepts in Dari, the predominant language of the students in the class.

ESL instructor Shireen Miles teaches her beginning ESL students via Zoom.



At the beginning of the shelter-in-place order, Ms. Miles focused on providing students with the latest news and information related to COVID-19 including food resources, the eviction moratorium, and the federal stimulus money. She also shared with students the resource hotline established by the refugee resettlement agency, International Rescue Committee (IRC). Many of Ms. Miles' students had numerous concerns and were wary about leaving their apartments. She helped answer questions posed by her students such as "Is it okay to go out to buy naan?" and "Is it safe to open the windows of my apartment?"

Recognizing the heightened importance of community and connection during the shelter-in-place order, Ms. Miles focused on making lessons fun and social. She established a class group in WhatsApp and encouraged students to share what they were doing while at home. Students were engaged and interactive, posting and commenting on their classmates' photos. With Ms. Miles' encouragement, one student created and posted a how-to video on creating a water lily table centerpiece out of white paper napkins. Ms. Miles demonstrated how to make paper helicopters out of a piece of paper and a paper clip. She showed the students videos of two nearby California state parks and introduced them to the Scholastic.com site as a resource for themselves and their children. She also demonstrated how to adjust the speed of YouTube videos and turn on captions.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE, *continued*

Ms. Miles used her school's National Geographic Learning curriculum, "Stand Out," to deliver instruction during Zoom lessons. For homework, she posted pages from the workbook on WhatsApp for students to copy or print, complete, and re-post. This allowed Ms. Miles to give students an immediate "thumbs up" and informally assess student progress. Concepts that were less well understood were reinforced or retaught. The class completed the *Jobs and Life Skills and College* units via Zoom. A guest speaker from the community college system joined the class to answer questions the students had previously brainstormed with Ms. Miles.

The class covered lot of ground on grammar as well. Ms. Miles hadn't introduced the simple past tense until remote instruction began. The students would review the grammar in class, practice, and then write sentences for homework using the grammatical structures they'd been taught.

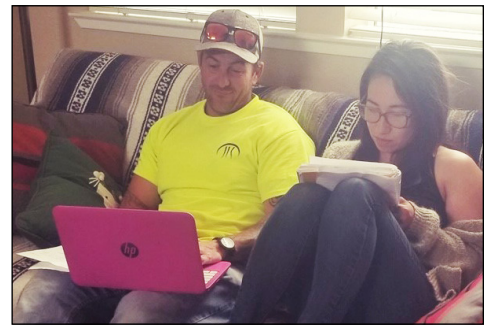
Ms. Miles also conducted remote EL Civics assessments on the Census 2020 unit and reinforced the importance of student participation in the Census. As a result of her efforts, all of her students reported having completed the Census for their households.

Galt Adult School

In a matter of days following the school closures, Galt Joint Union High School District issued 877 Chromebooks and 132 hotspots to their high school and adult education students. While the distribution of technology was the first priority, staff quickly learned that access to laptops and online materials alone were not sufficient for learning to take place. Creating a sense of normalcy for students was an essential first step for learning to resume.

Understanding the importance of home-school connection and in line with their program's strong culture of family and sense of belonging, Program Coordinator Jacquie Heath and Administrative Assistant Brenda Avalos prioritized daily communication with students via email, messaging, and by phone. Many times, what started out as quick check-ins with students led

Galt Adult School students Russell Long and Tiara Carter adjust to the new norm of distance learning.

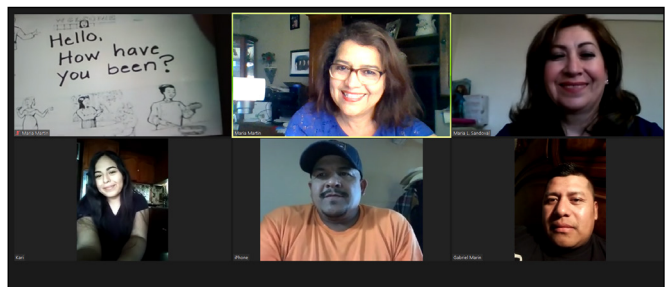


to in-depth conversations about the health and safety of students and their families. Some students expressed frustration and feelings of disconnection, while others experienced a smooth transition to distance learning.

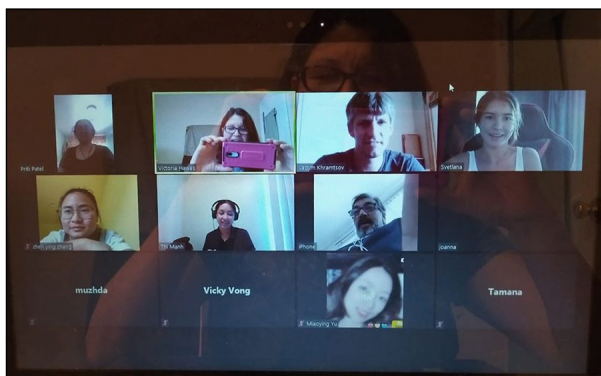
Distance learning put staff on a steep learning curve, and teachers quickly realized that classroom instruction and assignments would look different. Teachers used Burlington English, Fuel Education, Google Classroom, and Zoom as platforms to deliver instruction to their students. Without a doubt, staff discovered that being innovative, creative, resilient and fast-thinking were required to make things work.

Despite the many challenges and concerns that students would fall behind academically, Galt Adult Education is proud to announce that 13 students graduated with high school diplomas this year.

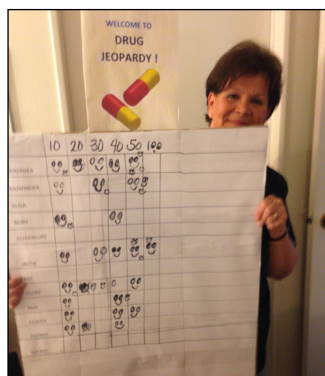
Photos, clockwise from top left: ESL Teacher Andilene Weathers, HS Diploma Track Teacher Brendan Moore, HS Diploma Track Teacher Tony Hegner, and ESL Teacher Maria Martin checking in with her students on Zoom.



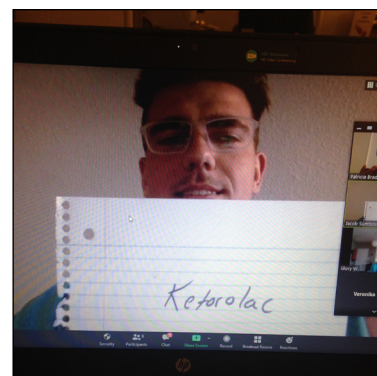
MEETING THE CHALLENGE, *continued*



Daily Zoom meetings with their ESL teacher help students stay on top of their English.



Let's play Zoom RX Jeopardy! Making distance education fun in the Medical/Clinical Assistant Program.



Charles A. Jones Career & Education Center, Sacramento City USD

ESL – Pre-beginning, Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced ESL teachers conducted weekly Zoom classes on a regular schedule during each week of the COVID-19 school shutdowns. Students were able to participate using web-based lessons in Burlington English. Students used their personal computers or cell phones to complete Burlington English lessons and to participate in Zoom meetings with their teachers. Several teachers helped students access social service and educational resources for their children and employment resources for themselves.

Citizenship – During the school shutdowns, the CAJ Citizenship teacher outlined daily lessons using resources from USCIS and US Citizenship POD. Lessons were emailed to students, and telephone interviews with each student were conducted twice a week to check in on lesson progress and discuss student needs. Students also emailed questions to the teacher. Telephone discussion in English has been great practice for Citizenship students!

Adult Basic Education, Secondary and HiSET preparation, and Math Bootcamp – Students preparing for their high school equivalency were able to continue their studies during the COVID-19 shutdown using AZTEC software, Zoom meetings, and Zoom office hours with the instructor. The Math Bootcamp instructor conducted 40 hours of

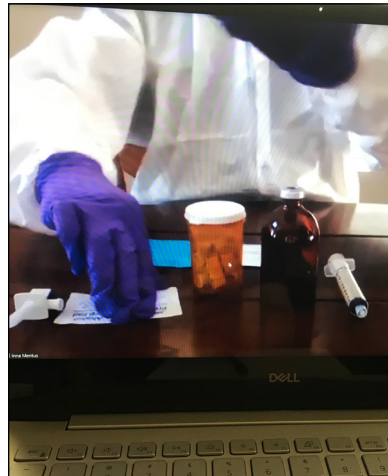
Zoom lessons over the course of two weeks to help students hone their math skills for HiSET test preparation or to improve their readiness for CAJ CTE programs.

CAJ CTE Programs – Hands-on learning is the hallmark of CTE programs in adult education. So, how did their CTE classes make the shift to remote learning? Very creatively! As soon as it was announced that they were not going to be allowed back into the classroom, as of March 15, 2020, the **Medical/Clinical Assisting and Pharmacy Technician** program teachers kicked into high gear using online materials provided by their textbook publishers. Teachers attended training sessions provided by OTAN on using Moodle and Zoom, and within days of receiving training, the teachers had signed up for their free Zoom accounts and started providing lessons to their students. Fortunately, the Medical/Clinical and Pharmacy Tech externship students were able to continue working at partner hospitals, doctors' offices, and retail pharmacies during the COVID-19 closures. In cases where partner extern sites had to close to student externs, the Medical/Clinical Assisting and Pharmacy Tech teachers were able to reach out to other partners and find new externship sites for their students. The Medical/Clinical assisting and Pharmacy Technician teachers have had many months to learn to integrate creative activities into their distance education environments to meet their CTE industry requirements. Also, many of the

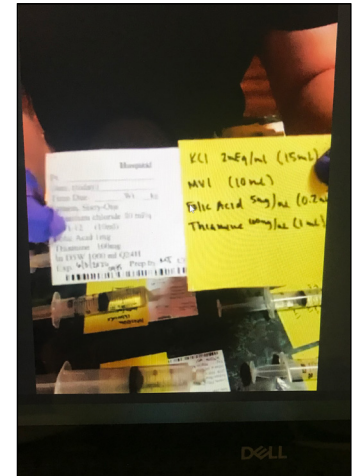
MEETING THE CHALLENGE, *continued*



Pharmacy Tech students work on labs from the bathroom sink.



And this is how we learn IV skills in a time of social distancing!

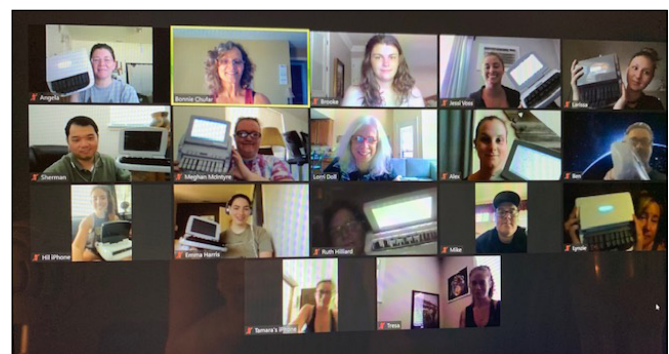


program completers were hired during this period, and able to seamlessly move into their essential roles of helping patients in their communities.

During the COVID-19 shutdowns, the **HVAC** program teacher was able to assist students with studying for industry-related licensure exams and with completing online tests through ESCO. The teacher used the textbook, online, and simulation activities, and periodic Zoom check-ins with students. Although the HVAC student programs will need to be extended to include HVAC hands-on training, students were able to move forward with their learning and obtain critical industry licensure.

Court Reporting and Vocational Nursing took a little longer to make the shift to distance education, primarily because their curricula focus heavily on in-person lecture and in-person skills observation. After obtaining approvals from their respective state boards to make the shift, program teachers and the Nursing Director conducted research on best practices for providing distance education modules that would ensure the students were continuing to learn the skills necessary for state licensure. While Court Reporting teachers conducted research and took OTAN webinars on designing distance education programs, students were able to continue accessing online speed testing and transcript development using EV360. During the development process, Nursing students were assigned textbook chapter reviews

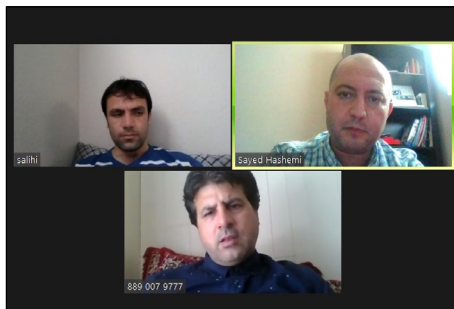
and had access to weekly office hours to consult with the instructors and Nursing Director if they had questions. By early April, both the CAJ Court Reporting and Vocational Nursing programs were ready to go “live” with their Distance Education plans, using Zoom meetings several times a week for skills practice and review, weekly office hours, and close monitoring of student work submitted for review. The Vocational Nursing program was also able to get board approval to use a new curriculum called ATI that uses case study simulations for clinical practice. On-site clinical rotations in the nursing homes for Vocational Nursing students have been on hold since the COVID-19 shutdowns. Finding a curriculum that could replace some of the clinical hours has been invaluable to helping students learn and review clinical skills using distance education.



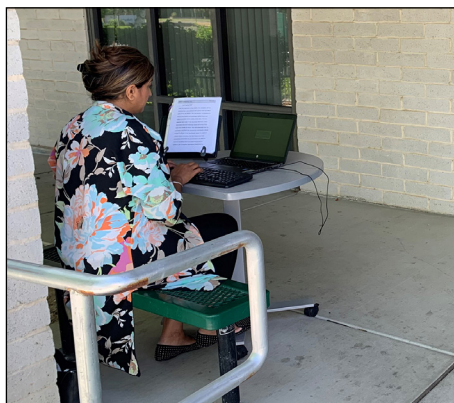
Court Reporting dictation works in Zoom, too!

Remote Access to the America's Job Center of California located at Charles A. Jones Career and Education Center – Even the CAJ Job Center developed ways to provide job center services remotely. Along with CAJ Teachers, Job Center staff attended OTAN webinars in a variety of subjects during the COVID-19 closure, and the Job Center Customer Service Relations Clerk worked closely with the Supervisor to create a Google Classroom to disseminate important Job Center documents to new and existing clients. Clients attended a remote Job Center orientation and were able to sign important documents using DocuSign and other secured documentation processes through SETA computer servers. CAJ Job Center Coaches met with clients using Google Meet and Zoom, and they assisted CAJ students who are also job center clients by providing employment-related services and needs-based social services. Many job center clients even received free Chromebooks provided by SETA to

help them access their distance education classes. Because of their strong partnership with Adult Education in the region, Job Center staff received valuable training in designing distance education processes, and the Job Center didn't miss a beat!



CAJ Job Center staff meets with clients via Zoom.



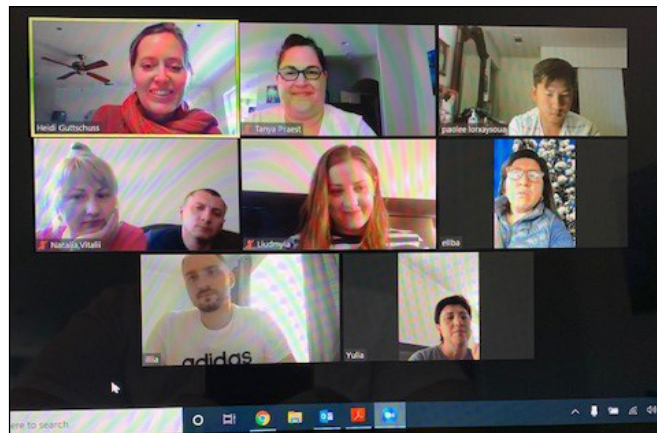
A community member takes a typing test outdoors at the America's Job Center of California located at Elk Grove Adult & Community Education.

With the help of OTAN training webinars and with four months of development and practice, all CAJ Adult Education Programs and the Job Center are now well prepared to continue with hybrid instruction and services in fall 2020, as they move forward with designing school safety plans in accordance with county and state guidelines. Making this shift has actually opened up new possibilities and flexible scheduling opportunities for their students and staff that will continue into the future.

Twin Rivers Adult School – ESL

ESL classes at Twin Rivers Adult School moved to an online format following school closures in March. In addition to synchronous instruction through Zoom, TRAS students were given access to a Google Share Site for distance learning resources and websites including Rosetta Stone, Burlington English, USA Learns, and ESL Library to further support student learning.

ESL students from Rich Pancaro's and Heidi Guttschuss' classes continue online instruction via Zoom.



CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES



Creative Ways to Honor Student Successes

CAERC member districts found creative ways to celebrate their high school and career education graduates in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic. Banners, virtual events and outdoor drive-through celebrations provided opportunities to recognize student accomplishments across the region.

Amador Adult Education

A record number of high school graduates earned a diploma from Amador Adult Education this year. In addition, ten community members completed the paraprofessional or Instructional Assistant career education training. While this year's first-ever adult school graduation was postponed due to the pandemic, Amador Adult Education recognized student achievements on banners and by providing formal graduation portrait sessions.

El Dorado County Office of Education

El Dorado County Office of Education (EDCOE) organized an outdoor graduation in May. Graduates were recognized with a drive-through commencement celebration. High School Diploma recipient Tracy Fanara gave the following commencement address.

EDCOE Commencement Speech

Good morning fellow classmates, teachers, and families. My name is Tracy

Amador Adult Education recognizes its graduates on banners posted around the community.

High school diploma recipient and commencement speaker, Tracy Fanara



Fanara, and I am also graduating today. I am honored to be here to celebrate the achievements of the adult high school class graduating year 2020! What a year to be alive! Today is an amazing day worthy of this celebration. I want to tell you that this journey has required drive, commitment, and courage on many levels.

I started this journey in January of 2018, two and a half years ago. I was technically in the beginning of the 11th grade academically, but earning my high school diploma always seemed so out of reach...so far away. It almost seemed unrealistic to achieve. Until one day, my son's Early Head Start teacher inspired me to do this right before I became

CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES, *continued*

pregnant with my daughter. One day she asked me, "Well Tracy, what is it that you want to do in life?" For as long as I can remember, I wanted to have my diploma. I wanted to better myself. I have been wanting to tell the truth on applications instead of fibbing most of my life. So, I just started the process and took the time, and I did it!

When Donna, my teacher, asked me to be a student speaker, my first response was, "No, I'm sorry I have really bad anxiety, and I'm too scared to speak." Even I felt let down thinking about declining the opportunity to tell you all my testimony. Fear is a feeling we all know too well. Fear will keep us from our dreams. If I can tell you one message, it would be to have the courage to accept that you are not perfect. No one ever is. Most of the time nothing in life ever is, and that is 100% okay. But never give up! You can achieve anything that you really want to do. You will never know what's around the corner unless you rise to the peak and simply be courageous.

I want to be the first one to say that life is not that easy for students. For any

reason, it's easy to fall into the path of not finishing high school as a teen. Some of us slip under the rug, and it's easy to give up so we can do things that are maybe more important to us at the time instead. Like my classmates, I decided it was time to take control of my life.

I wanted to do it for myself, and for my family. I wanted a career or a trade and that is the bottom line. This evening we not only celebrate our accomplishments through our journey to this point of graduation, but we honor our classmates who may not have been able to pass all the required subjects in school originally, but then chose to continue with it until the desired outcome was achieved.

A quote for you that I will leave you with:

"Success is not final, and failure is not fatal. It is the courage that continues that counts."

- Winston Churchill

Thank you all for being present, and I want to tell everyone and my classmates that my message reaches, "Good luck and God bless you on your future endeavors."



Graduate Tracy Fanara with her instructor Donna Seifert



ABOUT CAERC

Our Consortium

The Capital Adult Education Regional Consortium (CAERC) is a regional delivery system for adult education programs across the greater Sacramento region.

CAERC is funded through the California Adult Education Program (CAEP), a joint partnership between the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) and the California Department of Education (CDE). CAEP funds support courses for adults in seven program areas:

1. English Language Learners (ESL/ELL)
2. Adult Basic and Secondary Education (ABE/ASE)
3. Career and Technical Education (CTE)
4. Workforce Preparation
5. Pre-Apprenticeship
6. Adults Training for Child School Success
7. Adults with Disabilities



Find more
information at:
www.caerc.org

Help your students and
community members find
classes at www.capitaladulthood.org

