

OVAE CONNECTION

Learning-Based Virtual World Available to Support Career Pathway Connections

[Whyville](#) is an educational Internet site geared toward preteens and teens. This learning-based virtual world helps students transition from middle and secondary to postsecondary education by engaging them in career exploration through games. The Department of Labor and the Texas Workforce Commission funded Whyville to develop workforce-related games about advanced manufacturing and biotechnology. Whyville gaming activities are also used in Texas high schools and college programs to help students discover career pathways.

Some benefits for students and teachers include: raising student awareness about the importance of high school coursework; exposing students to college programs through gaming; preparing students to complete their high school plans; building connections to high school and college staff; and—for teachers—receiving free professional development about the use of gaming in the classroom. Whyville is available on PCs in participating classrooms. The program has won numerous awards for content and safety for kids on the Internet. For information on the program, contact Clint Zintgraff, DaVinci Minds, Inc. via e-mail: cliffz@davinci-minds.com. To learn more about Whyville, please visit Whyville.net.

Texas Adult Education Credentialing Steps Beyond the Classroom

The Adult Education Credential Project allows adult educators to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to build and sustain successful adult education programs. The [teacher credential](#) emphasizes the link between current adult education theory and professional practice. Teachers complete high-quality professional development, implement what they learn, and engage in critical self-reflection focused on student and instructional outcomes. The project moves beyond the classroom with an [administrator credential](#), which emphasizes experience and encourages collaborative learning communities and mentor relationships. New administrators can prepare for increased responsibility and continued career growth by earning the credential, which also may serve as a tool for program improvement. Experienced administrators obtain new perspectives and a better understanding of their role through reflective practice. For more information contact aecredential@txstate.edu.



OVAE Welcomes Project SEARCH Intern

OVAE is pleased to announce that Ronald Covington, a former student at the Thurgood Marshall Center in Washington, D.C., has joined the OVAE team as a Project SEARCH intern. He will work with OVAE staff for the next three months, exploring work opportunities in the government. Covington is developing his computer and administrative skills in OVAE, taking a look at the functioning of government offices, and gaining the necessary experience for transitioning to the professional world. His optimistic, energetic approach is guided by the work ethic, “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try, again,” to which Covington adds, “And keep moving forward!”

[Project SEARCH](#) is a one-year, high school transition program that provides skills training and work experience for young adults with disabilities ages 18–21. The goal of the program is to prepare students for competitive employment by giving them the opportunity to complete three different internships at the Department of Education during the school year. Components of the program include classroom training, job coaching, a business liaison at ED, and a supervisor and mentor at each worksite. Project SEARCH is in its 15th year, but this is only the second year that it has been used in a federal agency. This is the first year it has been implemented at ED. Visit the [Project SEARCH Fact Sheet](#) for more details about the Project SEARCH federal job site model.

Ohio Offers Evaluation Framework for ABLE Professional Development

Ohio’s Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) Evaluation and Design Project, conducted at Ohio State University, has created a [new model](#) for evaluating adult education professional development. The multi-tiered [framework](#) collects four levels of evaluation data focused on: participants’ initial reaction to professional development; knowledge and skills they acquire; the applications of the acquired knowledge and skills; and the effect of professional development on student and program performance. More information is available from [David Mullins](#).