Literacy and Learning Disabilities
Special Collection

Grant Number X257S000012

April 1, 2002 – June 30, 2002

3rd Qtr

text from Year 3 proposal

I. YEAR TWO ACCOMPLISHMENTS
   A. Goals, Objectives, and Measurable Outcomes

   **Goal 1: Maintain an accessible, one-stop electronic gateway of high
   quality learning disabilities resources consistent with NIFL’s LINCS.**
   Our main focus in Year 2 was redesigning the site to achieve greater
   accessibility and organization of content. To that end we:
   - Restructured the site so that users could find information in multiple
     ways:
     - A graphic organizer built around the main *Bridges to Practice*
       topics
     - A revised navigation bar
     - Intra-site links when information fits in multiple areas, e.g.,
       Living with LD is on the navigation bar and also under the
       ‘Understanding LD’ section of the graphic organizer
   - Introduced main topic areas of the graphic organizer with a ‘clear and
     simple’ language section that contains links to expanded information.
   - Offered a choice of background colors so users can reduce glare
   - Removed dead links, updated pages, and added new resources on a
     regular basis

   **Goal 2: Establish / work with a CKG to guide the development of the
   collection.**
   The CKG played a very active role in the redesign of the special
   collection, contributing ideas and feedback on design, wording, and
   accessibility. In addition to individual calls and email, they participated in
   a conference call in January and will have another in August.

   **Goal 3: Enhance the learning disabilities collection with high-quality
   materials.**
   We carried out a variety of activities to enhance the collection,
   including the following:
Web-published two ‘locally produced (CLS) materials’ related to learning disabilities:
  o Keys to Effective LD Teaching Practice (already on site)
  o Learning Skills: A Comprehensive Orientation and Study Skills Course
    (will be on site by end of year 2.)
  o Placed smaller pieces of the above two publications in relevant parts of the graphic organizer topics, e.g., Assessment, Teaching/Learning, Becoming a Self Advocate.
  o Contracted with Robin Schwarz, a CKG member who has worked extensively on LD in ESOL populations, to create a new ESL / LD feature for the collection.
    (will be on site by end of Year 2)
  o Created new Features: About This Site, News about LD, Research, ESL/LD and Living with LD
  o Created and web-published introductory ‘clear and simple’ sections to each of the four Bridges to Practice content areas: Understanding LD, Assessing, Planning, and Teaching/Learning.
  o Created and web-published a ‘clear and simple’ Glossary for the Quick Reference section.
  o By the end of Year 2, will have created and web-published a History page
  o Added 62 resources to the site by the end of Qtr. 3

The following table summarizes accomplishments in this area:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Enhancements to LD Special Collection 1st–3rd Qtrs.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials Web Published</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Identified for Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Catalogued</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Added to Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web Pages Launched</td>
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<td>Web Pages Updated</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Goal 4: Use training events and marketing strategies to increase awareness of and expand use of LINCS.**

Trainings were conducted for a variety of audiences (local, regional, state, national) and with varying degrees of accessibility for participants (use of CD ROM by presenter, presenter online, everyone online in lab). Participants’ reactions indicated that the more hands on, the better.
Probably the most effective training situation I conducted in the past year was at NAASLN. I did a session on line and stayed in the lab most of the time to greet people and introduce them to LINCS as they came in to check e-mail. Each computer was set with the homepage at LINCS, LD Special Collection, or Corrections Special Collection. (Lots of Corrections people attended.)

Specific training events were:
- a series of four regional (Tennessee) PD events focused on LD Instruction- Spring/02
- a local community College, Pellissippi State, for Adult Education teachers 4/02
- COABE, as a part of a collaborative presentation: Bridges to Practice & Bridges to Policy-5/02
- a state wide ‘Academy for Instructional Excellence‘-7/02
- a national meeting, NAASLN in 4/02
- In addition, an open computer lab at NAASLN was jointly sponsored and hosted by the LD Special Collection and the Ohio Literacy Resource Center.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Training Sessions Offered</td>
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<td>Number of Participants at Training Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>(An additional 50+ were introduced to LINCS while using the computer lab at NAASLN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing Materials Distributed</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 article written about the LD Special Collection for Virginia’s Progress Newsletter. Will be published this fall; readership unknown.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance / Reference Questions Answered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Goal 5: Build knowledge base about use of LINCS LD Collection and assess the utility of the site for the field.**

We now have several mechanisms in place for assessing the usefulness of this collection.
Web-Trends software is now functional and provided data for an eight-week period. Data from Quarter 3 should be available soon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web-Trends Statistics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 14 – April 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The # of hits</td>
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<tr>
<td>The average hits per day</td>
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<tr>
<td>The # of unique visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The # of visitors who visited more than once</td>
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<tr>
<td>The average visit length (front page):</td>
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Site Evaluation- on the site.
Home page invitation to send “comments and questions.”

At present, however, neither of these last two tools has produced any feedback.
Another evaluative plan, conducting a focus group with practitioners at NAASLN, did not work out. We are in great need of solid evaluation from practitioners and students, so that will be a priority next year.

**Goal 6: Manage development of learning disabilities collection effectively**

- Project staff communicated with NIFL staff to coordinate development of the site with the *Bridges to Practice* initiative.
- Project staff Bingman and Lindop met together at least monthly to review and plan work.
- We met monthly with SLINCS RTC staff and informally—as needed—with web specialists and the librarian.
- For tracking and reporting purposes, CDP staff kept a program log and sent quarterly reports to NIFL.
- Staff participated in CDP conference calls and the discussion group.

**B. Significant Challenges and Barriers, Together with Plans for Overcoming Them**

- There have been several unique challenges in the development of this collection:
  - Coordinating the content, language, and organization with *Bridges to Practice*, while-at the same time-making available a wide array of resources.
Making decisions about terminology and about choice of resources in a field that is so politically fraught.

Finding ways to present information in ways accessible to a variety of users, adult learners with possible LD, family and friends of those adults, adult education practitioners, researchers, employers, and social service agency staff.

Meeting these challenges required a lot of time in conversation and review of drafts with the CKG and NIFL staff. During the site redesign, especially, June Crawford and I (Lindop) spent many hours on the phone. CKG members reviewed a series of graphic organizers and text and gave valuable feedback.

- Because of these challenges, time itself was a challenge. Two days (sixteen hours) a week seemed such a little time to accomplish such big goals! In year 3, we are proposing an increase to 20 hours a week for Lindop, adjusting the budget to allow for this.

- Best use of the CKG has evolved. Although they are usually willing to offer feedback, they are extremely busy people. What has worked best so far is to request specific help as needed from members with particular expertise, e.g., research, clear and simple language for struggling readers.

C. Contributions exceeding original proposal/cooperative agreement

Coordinating the LD Special Collection with Bridges to Practice is a privilege as well as a challenge. Although not specified as Year 2 work, I welcomed the opportunities to ‘further the LINCS vision’ by collaborating in other phases of the Bridges to Practice initiative.

- Participated in Bridges to Practice Online Course: phone conferences with Stefanie Williams (Instructional Designer for Eastern LINCS), June Crawford, and others as they design this course.

- Took part in Bridges to Practice & Bridges to Policy, a group presentation at COABE. Along with Marilyn Cruter from the Office of Civil Rights and Christine Bishop from a VA service agency that works with TANF agencies, I (Lindop) spoke about Adult Education and the LD Special Collection. Wil Hawk from NIFL moderated and spoke about reading, technology, and the Corrections field.

- Agreed to serve as Bridges to Practice Contact Person for Bridges to Practice.