

# Visions



A Newsletter of the Staff Development Committee—October 26, 1998

## New Faces At QCC



photo by Dan LaMarche

### Naomi McKenna

by Susan Gately

Naomi McKenna is our new Evening/weekend Librarian. Naomi's position is a step in a new direction for us, too, as this is the first time we have sought an MLS degreed person for this position. Naomi has not only an MLS, but also a Master's in Adult Education and in International Policy. Her undergraduate degree is Russian. She's a wonderful resource for our evening and weekend students. Her "shift" starts at 2:30 p.m. Mon-Thurs, so some of our day folks will have a chance to meet her too.

photo by Dan LaMarche

### Randy Fournier

by Susan Gately

Randy Fournier is QCC's Instructional Technology Director, a step in a new direction for the College. He oversees media services, the ILC, and developments in Distance Education and Instructional Technology. Randy is one of the few people around who has a Ph.D in Instructional Technology. Coupled with his own classroom experience, he is an asset to our faculty as we venture further into Instructional Technology. He has already made many changes; one you will love is the complete transformation of the Media Center. Stop by for a look.

(New Faces at QCC continues next page)



## Visions Publication Dates and Deadlines for Fall, 1998



### Deadline

### Publication Date

November 9 ----- November 16

December 1 ----- December 7

Layout, Artwork, Editing by Paul Connell

Photos by Dan LaMarche (last issue too!)

# New Faces at QCC continued



*photo by Dan LaMarche*

## **Michelle McCrillis**

*by Paul Connell*

Michelle McCrillis, of E. Brookfield, is QCC's new Coordinator of Student Financial Aid Services. She comes to us from Worcester State College where she was a financial aid counselor.

She has a Bachelor's Degree in English and an M.S. in Human-Services Management from WSC. Michelle has taken the non-traditional path to education, her college career being interrupted by motherhood.

Michelle is active in Boy Scouts of America. She recounts that one of her proudest moments was when "both of my sons attained the rank of Eagle Scout and my daughter earned Girl Scouting's Silver Award."

Stop by Financial Aid and say hello to her.

## **Boundary Violations in the Professions**

*by Vicki Kirsch*

*Prevention and Treatment of Boundary Violations by Professionals Conference, Hosted by the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute*

Treading into the often painful, always difficult, and agonizing current issue of boundary violations by professionals with several hundred conference participants and presenters was my privilege during October 3-4, 1998. Focusing mostly on sexual misconduct by psychotherapists, other health care professionals and clergy, the meeting also turned its attention during a brilliant plenary by Rev. Marie Fortune to the White House and power dynamics as a certain kind of mirror to our challenges at hand.

Beginning with an opening plenary session on "Prevention and Intervention in Professional Misconduct: International Perspectives" by internationally known psychologist Gary Schoener followed by a presentation on "Research Presentation: Effect on Clients of Sexual Abuse by Clergy, Mental Health Practitioners, and Medical Practitioners" by locally known Nancy Avery, LICSW and Estelle Disch, Ph.D. (co-founders of BASTA! Boston Associates to Stop Treatment Abuse), the workshop sessions covered a wide spectrum of topics from discussions on professional ethics committees to educating professionals about professional-client boundaries to a closed session for survivors of therapist and clergy abuse to share stories and strategies for survival.

Other plenaries included one on risk management and the legal perspective which provided an overview on

statutes concerning the fiduciary relationship in various states in the USA and in Canada. There was also discussion on how a team approach consisting of a consumer advocate, therapist, and lawyer can successfully work to provide sound survivor advocacy as the survivor readies herself for the difficult litigation process should she decide to pursue her case legally. The issues of spouses, other family members and friends of both the survivor and the perpetrator were also discussed.

The conference was successful on many levels. It was an opportunity to listen to and meet with professionals who focus their research on this area. There was ample opportunity at meals and in between sessions to speak with the presenters and to establish ongoing contacts with other participants. It also provided an opportunity for survivors of various kinds of abuse by professionals to meet each other and lessen the isolation which can become an obstacle to healing. Many participants at this conference were both professionals and survivors, and the conference provided a platform for these specific challenges to be brought into the open and discussed. Finally, it provided ample opportunity for discussion of teaching the establishment and maintenance of professional boundaries – something that will be useful in our programs at QCC.

If anyone is interested in learning more of the specifics of the conference sessions and gaining access to some of the hand-outs and materials, please contact me at x4290.

## A Tribute to Jean Smelewicz 1952-1998 *by a friend and colleague, Jean Hollenkamp*

*Note: this is a tribute to Dr. Jean Smelewicz, a professor at Quinsigamond for 18 years and the Coordinator of the Computer Information Systems Department—(until she was recruited for a teaching position at Nichols College which she assumed this past September). More importantly, she was a friend to many of us in the Quinsigamond family. Returning from what she loved to do most—teach—Jean was killed tragically in an automobile crash in Charlton just minutes from her home.*

Dear Jean,

I received an email from a friend just last week which I would like to share with you. There were no credits given in the email, so I searched the net and found that a young poet named Linda Ellis authored it. It's called "The Dash"

### The Dash

I read of a man who stood to speak  
at the funeral of a friend.

He referred to the dates on her tombstone  
from the beginning . . . to the end.

He noted that first came the date of her birth  
And spoke of the following date with tears,  
But he said what mattered most of all  
Was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time  
That she spent alive on earth . . .  
And now only those who loved her  
Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own;  
The cars . . . the house . . . the cash.  
What matters is how we live and love  
And how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard . . .  
Are there things you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left.  
(You could be at "dash mid-range")

If we could just slow down enough  
To consider what's true and real,  
And always try to understand  
The way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger,  
And show appreciation more  
And love the people in our lives  
Like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect,  
And more often wear a smile . . .  
Remembering that this special dash  
Might only last a little while.

So, when your eulogy's being read  
With your life's actions to rehash . . .  
Would you be proud of the things they say  
About how you spent your dash?

Without a doubt, Jean, you should be very proud of the things your friends and loved ones have been saying about you— how you spent "your dash."

I'm so grateful that I told you recently how very much I valued your friendship and how much was missed by those who knew you only as a teacher.

You were extremely intelligent. A true test of intelligence to me is the ability to communicate that knowledge to others in a manner which is not condescending. And you did it so well. Even when I, your friend and peer, asked for your help, you never once made me feel inferior. You were extremely generous—not just with material things, but with your time. There's not enough time to relate all the generous deeds you did for others. I think your motto was "What can I do for someone today?" You were extremely loyal to your friends and family. When your mother was ailing a few years ago, you were with her every minute. Your father Frank, brother Allan, and sister Susan were always your No. 1 concern.

We had so many laughs together. One of the last stories you related to me showed your wit and your generosity. It seems there was an elderly couple who used to live next to you in Worcester. After you moved to Charlton, you heard of the husband's death. During your visit to the wife, you offered any assistance she might need in the future. Not long after, the woman called to tell you that her aged German Shepherd dog died, and she didn't have the money to have him cremated. You traveled to the lady's house, tugged the very dead dog into the back of your car, drove home to Charlton, dug a hole, and buried the dog. Standing back to survey your handy work, you were horrified to find the dog's paw sticking up out of the ground! We were almost asked to leave the restaurant because we were laughing so loudly!

You could do anything—hook the snow plow to your pickup, cook, bake, sew, embroider, rebuild a computer, build decks on your home, and most probably do many things I never knew about.

On the day of the tragedy, you were doing something that was so characteristic. You drove from Charlton to Worcester to help celebrate a friend's birthday. No one

*continues next page*



## What I learned over the vacation, or “Sybil, that’s Brahms *Third Racket*...”

by Patricia Hutchinson (Assistant Professor of Hotel and Restaurant Management—and Program Coordinator)

Many of us seek risk and adventure during our “school vacation week”, and this year, I too, decided to pursue a high-risk experience. Opting out of the typical sport of repelling, and bungijumping, I set off to spend three days and two nights with 100 psychologists. As a lay person, you can well imagine the terror this invokes; the potential for every personal idiom to become fodder for the next researcher, worse yet, classroom discussion. Prepared to take on this challenge, lured by the prospect of gaining ideas for my own classroom, I persevered and decided to attend **The 12th Annual Conference on Undergraduate Teaching of Psychology: Ideas & Innovations.**

The conference is sponsored by the psychology department of SUNY Farmingdale, and always held at the Nevellee Resort in Ellenville, New York. The site of the conference was reason enough for me, as a professor of Hotel and Restaurant Management, to attend. Nestled in the heart of the “Borscht Belt” it is a full service property known for summer retreats of wealthy New Yorkers. The amenities were full scale and the food was all inclusive, and unending. (I hope to return soon as a recreate, perhaps by extending my stay after next year’s conference) There were ten session times offered with two or three presentations during each session. The presentations covered a variety of topics, each focusing on the teaching technique as well as the content material. To me, the measurement of a valuable conference is the extent of knowledge and application I acquire; this conference provided a high degree of both. The workshop **Fictional Characters as Case studies in the Teaching of Psychological Theory** has been adapted, and I have used video excerpts from the restaurant scene in *When Sally Met Harry* to provide discussion of management. I have also borrowed from the characters in *Faulty Towers* and I am now constantly on the “lookout” for other scenarios to emphasize lecture points.

The **Use of Journals to Teach Introductory Psychology** provided an excellent handout of provocative questions to guide the student entries. The model suggested time frames and feedback policies. There were several examples for us to read, and the overall discussion was lively and synergistic. The **Helping Relationship: Students as Volunteers** presented a model course that recruits student volunteers to spend time as friends for adults receiving mental health therapy. The course then develops both helping relationship theory and techniques through student discussion regarding their experience as Compeer volunteers. I was able to use a similar format for one of my semester’s co-op students. I used a Jeopardy Game for the final exam review in my Foodservice Sanitation course. The rules and board were designed and presented as a component of Teaching History and Systems. The *An Introduction to PowerPoint in the Psychology Classroom: What it takes to get started* had the participants “begging for more”. In fact an impromptu session was held in the



*Ideal hotel employee/employer relations as exemplified by Basil Fawlty on Faulty Towers*

evening to accommodate all the inquiries. Very Inspiring! I came back to campus and gave my first PowerPoint enhanced lecture. Another simple idea that I have used frequently since returning was presented in the A Basket: Case for Learning workshop. This instructor frequently arrives in class basket in arm. On test days, the basket is filled with lifesavers or other candy. Sometimes the basket has lottery numbers for selection, other times random questions for the student to select and answer.

Next year’s conference is scheduled for March 17, 18 and 19 (1999). I highly recommend attending. I plan on going, in fact, I have responded to their call for papers and hope to present some insight of my own.

End Note: Both Nancy Donahue-Berthume and I have specific information that we would be happy to share with anyone interested.

### Tribute to Jean Smelewicz, continued

had seen you since the end of the last year except me. Everyone agreed you looked radiant and very happy.

I could go on and on about your generosity, intelligence, kindness, and wit—and I’m sure many of you out there would have many stories to share.

So, Jean, on behalf of the Quinsigamond Family, we thank you. We salute you for your brilliant mind, for your enlightened scholarship, your passion and commitment to friends and family, your nurturing of others, your generosity, your patience and understanding, and your uncritical acceptance of others. We will miss you more than you can know. Good bye, Jean. You should have no regrets about how you spent “your dash.”

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## MRI Provides New Weapon for Cancer Diagnosis *by Prof. Ron Norton*

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According to recent estimates by the American Cancer Society, one in nine American women will be diagnosed with breast in her lifetime. The key to cancer survivability is early diagnosis and treatment. Mammography, soft tissue x-ray imaging of the breast, is at present, medicine's front-line weapon for the diagnosis of breast cancer.

A properly positioned mammogram, performed by a qualified radiologic technologist using state of the art equipment, can locate mammary tumors long before they become palpable lumps. Carcinomas smaller than the head of a common pin can be visualized using this valuable imaging technique. Early detection results in improved treatment options and dramatically increased survival and cure rates.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) and the American College of Radiologists (ACR) recommend a baseline screening mammogram for all women around age 35, follow-up examination every two to three years between the ages of 40-50, and yearly testing for women over the age of 50. Women can ensure that they are receiving the best possible examination by requesting referrals to imaging facilities which are accredited by the ACR. These clinics have strict quality control protocols and employ only registered mammographers.

As valuable a tool as mammography is, it does, however, have some significant diagnostic limitations. Firstly, the dense breasts of younger women are difficult to image due to their x-ray attenuation characteristics. Secondly, mammograms cannot differentiate malignant from benign lesions with certainty, necessitating surgical biopsy once a suspicious lump has been found. Furthermore, x-radiation has the potential to induce breast cancers, although the risk is very small.

Those in attendance at the 67th Annual Conference of the Massachusetts Society of Radiologic Technologists, held at the Springfield Marriott Hotel April 30-May 2, were presented with a view of the future of breast imaging courtesy of speakers Eileen Miksch and Carlain Reynolds, of ANMR Imaging Corporation. The pair gave talks demonstrating the efficacy of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) in diagnosing breast lesions.

Unlike conventional mammography, MRI uses no x-rays to view internal bodily structures. Instead, the modality utilizes a combination of strong magnetic fields and radio waves to produce computer-assembled images. MRI offers superior soft tissue resolution, and can differentiate between cystic and solid tumors. The scanners can also demonstrate some aspects of physiology.



Cancerous lesions are frequently characterized by their blood supply. Unlike benign lumps, which tend to be self-limiting and respect tissue boundaries, cancers invade surrounding tissues and compete with normal cells for nutrients. To do so, they often establish intricate networks of new blood vessels. By injecting patients with gadolinium, a biologically inert contrast agent which enhances certain anatomical structures, and performing timed magnetic resonance scans it is possible to gauge the vascularity of tumors and distinguish malignant lesions from their benign cousins.

In hundreds of clinical trials, it was discovered that cancerous tumors enhanced within five minutes following injection and the contrast agent cleared within ten to fifteen minutes. Benign lesions were not seen to enhance until more than ten minutes post injection and cleared very slowly. Patients in the study underwent surgical removal of their tumors following the imaging trails. Pathological findings demonstrated a 93% positive or negative predictive probability rate for the imaging technique.

Despite the findings in the clinical test, Miksch and Reynolds were quick point out that independent repetition of the experiment and duplication of results are required to confirm the effectiveness of the new technique. Furthermore, both women noted that breast MRI was unlikely to replace mammography as the diagnostic modality of choice due the relative expense of the exam and the scarcity of dedicated breast MR centers. Still the technique seems certain to reduce the number of anxiety provoking breast biopsies performed each year, and will undoubtedly be a valuable adjunct to conventional x-ray imaging.

# Adult Basic Ed Conference in “the windy city” of Texas

by: Margaret Farrey and Jane Shea, Center for Continuing Education



Adult Basic Education educators from around the nation met in Corpus Christi, Texas in early May to explore and to share ways that Adult Educators have learned to collaborate, to build community, and to respond to the needs of the various cultures within their programs. Five days of workshops and plenary sessions provided us with the opportunity to hear current thinking and innovative practices and to share ideas with other adult educators from throughout the country.

Adult Education is broadening its outlook and outreach. We had a two fold purpose for attending the COMMISSION ON ADULT BASIC EDUCATION'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE: to present SABES' new staff orientation activities to our colleagues across the nation, and to hear and to talk about ideas, plans, materials and strategies that will take adult education into the coming century. We recognized how fortunate we are in Massachusetts that we have state leadership that is very forward thinking, appreciated, and viewed as front leaders in the field. The state monies for adult education have increased dramatically in the last four years and this year is looking to be the best yet. Conferences like COABE help us prepare to spend increased funding wisely as we can learn new ideas and confirm our current practices.

Our presentation at the conference was titled “The SABES Orientation for New Staff.” Several years ago SABES recognized that most adult learning centers had staff who were not specifically trained as adult educators and that an orientation to the field needed to be developed. The SABES Orientation allows practitioners in one region to come together, to get to know one another, and to ask questions about their work in an atmosphere that encourages exploration. The orientation is a fifteen-hour training, focusing on participatory approaches to teaching adults. During the past year Central SABES undertook the task of revising and updating the original orientation to better include all of the innovations that have occurred in

recent years such as Curriculum Frameworks, Technology and Distance Learning, and new work in Health, Family Literacy and Workplace. The workshop included an overview, some sample activities, and information on how the orientation is implemented and delivered. We were able as part of the workshop to receive feedback from practitioners from other states and to hear how they address orienting new staff.

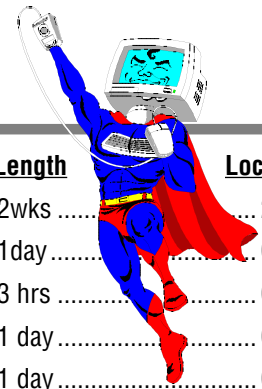
Three other workshops were offered at COABE, which represented current thinking and practice in Massachusetts and New England. Cathy Coleman who has recently joined CENTRAL SABES as an associate coordinator offered one. Her presentation, “We’ve Got the Power: The Process of Practitioner Inquiry for Teachers, Programs and Systems” quoted Susan Lytle and defined research as a “systematic, intentional inquiry into classroom practice.” The five stages include 1) Finding a Question, 2) Designing a Plan, 3) Collecting Data (interviews, teacher journals, student journals, classroom documents) 4) Data Analysis and 5) Reflecting, Sharing and Taking Action. Participants had the opportunity to learn how to use inquiry, to view a newly produced video developed in Massachusetts, and to participate in a brief experience of inquiry. The other two workshops described other initiatives happening in adult education in

Massachusetts to which SABES and the Adult Education Program at Quinsigamond are aligned. “Health and Literacy Community Collaborations” focused on programs integrating health into their adult education collaborating with community agencies. “Leamer Motivation and Persistence in Adult Basic Education Programs” described the current initiative in which Massachusetts is one of three New England partners to focus on what helps and hinders adult learners to persist and reach their goals through adult basic education. This is one of the studies being undertaken by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy which is a collaboration between World Education and Harvard (World Education is the Central Resource Center for SABES.)

In addition to the presentations by Massachusetts, practitioners we were able to attend a GED breakfast at which Fred Edwards from national GED talked about the impact of the changes that will be implemented in the new revision of the test planned for 2001. The changes will cause all adult educators to reexamine our current

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# QCC Staff Development Courses—Fall 1998



<u>Course</u>	<u>Starts</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Location</u>
MS Windows 95—Intro .....	10/13/98	T	6:30-9:30	2wks	229A
Stress Management .....	10/23/98	F	9-4	1day	007S
Word 97—Styles,Outlines .....	10/29/98	R	1-4	3 hrs	003S
Career Planning for SupportStaff .....	10/30/98	F	9-4	1 day	007S
MS Excel97—Intro .....	10/30/98	F	9-4	1 day	003S
Language Skills for ESL Employees .....	11/ 2/98	f1M	9-4	4 wks	007S
MS PowerPoint97—Intro .....	11/ 3/98	T	9-4	1 day	003S
Techniques ofSupervision .....	11/ 3/98	T	9-4	5 wks	007S
Intro to Computers/WindowsNT .....	11/ 5/98	R	9-4	1 day	003S
Integrating MS OfficeApps .....	11/ 6/98	F	9-4	1 day	003S
Professional Skills for SupportStaff .....	11/ 6/98	F	9-4	3 wks	007S
MS Excel97—Intro .....	11/ 9/98	M	6:30-9:30	2 wks	229A
MS Word97—Intermed .....	11/10/98	T	6:30-9:30	2wks	229A
Word97—Intermed .....	11/10/98	T	9-4	1day	003S
MS Access97—Intermed .....	11/12/98	R	9-4	1day	003S
Intro to Computers/WindowsNT .....	11/13/98	F	9-4	1 day	003S
Intro to Computers/WindowsNT .....	11/17/98	T	9-4	1 day	003S
MS Powerpoint97—Intro .....	11/18/98	W	6:30-9:30	3 hrs	229A
MS Excel97—Intermed .....	11/19/98	R	9-4	1 day	003S
ab MS Word 97—Intro .....	11/20/98	F	9-4	1day	003S
MS Excel97—Intermed .....	11/23/98	M	6:30-9:30	2wks	229A
Intro to Computers/WindowsNT .....	11/24/98	T	9-4	1 day	003S
MS Access97—Intro .....	11/24/98	T	6:30-9:30	2 wks	229A
Supervising MarginalEmployee .....	11/30/98	M	9-4	1 day	007S
MS Word97—Intermed .....	12/1/98	T	9-4	1day	003S
Intro to Computers/WindowsNT .....	12/ 3/98	R	9-4	1 day	003S
Word 97—MailMerge .....	12/ 4/98	F	9-12	3 hrs	003S
WorkOrganization .....	12/4/98	F	9-4	1day	007S
Core WritingSkills .....	12/ 7/98	M	9-4	2 wks	007S
Intro to Computers/WindowsNT .....	12/ 8/98	T	9-4	1 day	003S
MS Access97—Intermed .....	12/8/98	T	6:30-9:30	2wks	229A
Web PageDevelopment .....	12/10/98	R	9-4	1day	003S
Integrating MS OfficeApps .....	12/11/98	F	9-4	1day	003S
Transition Office 95 to97 .....	12/15/98	T	9-12	3 hrs	003S
Word 97—Styles,Outlines .....	12/15/98	T	1-4	3 hrs	003S
Intro to Computers/WindowsNT .....	12/17/98	R	9-4	1 day	003S
Intermed SupervisoryPractices .....	12/17/98	R/F	9-4	2 days	007S
Word 97—Headers, Footers,Forms .....	12/18/98	F	9-12	3 hrs	003S
Intro to theInternet .....	12/18/98	F	1-4	3 hrs	003S

# A PowerPoint Collaboration: An Interdisciplinary Venture Between Science and Skills-Building

by Margaret Watson

The first class of Bell Atlantic Next Step students entered the classrooms of Quinsigamond Community College in the fall of 1997. It was a new experience for them and also for their instructors in this new program, at least in part.

Professor Adrian Comeaux, coordinator of the electronics and telecommunications programs and a veteran professor of twenty-plus years at the College, was selected to teach the new students their course in introduction to computers. Margaret Watson, a Professor of Humanities who admits to thirty-odd years of service, was selected to teach the one-module freshman orientation course in skills-building.

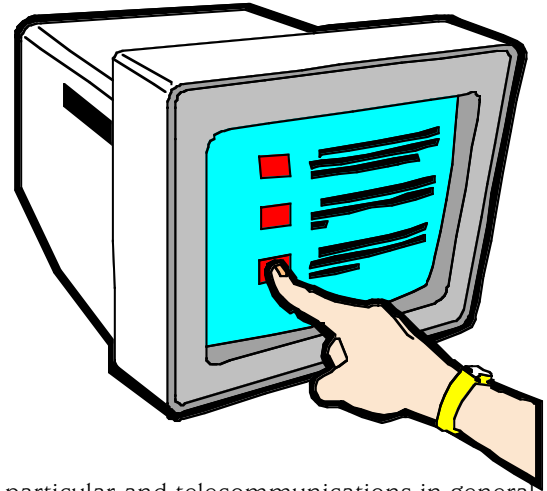
In preparing the student assignments for her course, Mrs. Watson began to confer with Mr. Comeaux to relate the work in skills-building to the telecommunications program. For example, in the library orientation, the students were introduced to the college holdings that related to electronics and telecommunications. They were given assignments using technical periodicals and learned to use the INFOTRACT.

When time came for the students to work on their major projects, Mrs. Watson prepared a list of topics that she thought might relate to the students' interests. The topics included the following:

1. New features in telecommunications.
2. Communication with robots in space. (The landing on Mars prompted this one.)
3. Controlling pornography in telecommunications and on the Internet.
4. Military use of telecommunications (in a particular war).
5. Advertising in the telecommunications industry.
6. The diverse workplace in the telecommunications industry.

Mrs. Watson asked Mr. Comeaux to review the list of topics to ensure that sufficient materials existed for in-depth projects. Mr. Comeaux responded that information on the topics was more than sufficient for the students' needs, and these materials were readily available through service providers. In his class, Mr. Comeaux assisted the students in searching for materials on the Internet.

The students were required to present their findings orally before the entire group. They were allowed to give the presentation individually or in groups in a five to ten minute timeframe, using note cards. Most students chose to work in groups of two or three. The presentations were to be graded according to clarity in presentation, appropriate use of evidence, documentation of sources, and overall organization. The students worked in the college library two periods under Mrs. Watson's supervision, gathering information for the projects. The reference librarian and her staff also provided a library tour tailored to the



project in particular and telecommunications in general. The library staff formed a vital component in this collaboration, and the students expressed gratitude for their services.

Prof. Comeaux suggested that since the students needed to learn the use of PowerPoint, they could make their presentations in Mrs. Watson's class using this technology and thereby developing several skills at the same time in a practical situation. The students would receive two grades: one from Mrs. Watson on content and organization, and one from Mr. Comeaux on the use and mastery of PowerPoint. All the students in the Bell Atlantic Next Step program took advantage of this option. In the thinking of Mr. Comeaux, the student needs to put new knowledge into practice as soon as possible to value the immediate and practical consequences of the acquired skills.

On the two days assigned for the presentations, Mr. Comeaux and Mrs. Watson together viewed and listened to the reports. Although most of the students had expressed much anxiety and anticipatory nervousness to both aspects of the assignment (using the PowerPoint and speaking extemporaneously before a group), the results exceeded the instructors' expectations. The use of the PowerPoint was imaginative and skillful. The presentations were well documented and well organized; the information given was up to date.

The collaboration between the scientific and humanistic sides of the house was pronounced successful in all respects. The students were delighted with their newly developed skills and accomplishments. The collaboration will be repeated, demonstrating once again that barriers between disciplines are often artificial and sometimes counterproductive. Students also benefit from seeing their instructors working together and relating subject matter to the skills they will one day need for their job.

In June, 1998, Professor Adrian Comeaux was invited to present a report on this collaboration to a group of participants and executives from the New York/New England Next Step Program. The conference was held in Troy, New York.

## Windy City Conference, *continued*

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practice and make the revisions needed to help students meet success. At the COABE luncheon Margaret accepted a plaque for Congressman John Tierney who is a Massachusetts congressman from the northeastern region. He received the PALS award for his continued and unwavering support for adult education at a national level.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Carmen Tafolla, a native of San Antonio, Texas, brought to light in her one-woman theatrical performance the real experiences of many learners as they try to move through our often-rigid educational systems. Dr. Tafolla was able to demonstrate visually how thoughtless responses to cultural differences can have a negative impact on the life long learning of individuals, families, and even communities.

Twelve presentations at the conference were dedicated to outlining strategies that focused on successful integration of workforce development into the curriculum of adult basic education programs. Materials presented demonstrated how to analyze career interests and to place these interests into a job cluster. Ever present within the presentations was the impact of welfare reform on our

particular students within the ABE and ESOL programs.

Some workshops addressed the demands of getting jobs and keeping them. It was fairly clear that employers are interested in hiring entry-level employees who have a strong work ethic, positive attitude and good basic skills.

Documentation was presented showing that successful workforce development programs for our learners had strong employer involvement from the beginning of a program. When employers were part of an initial program design, describing their entry-level requirements and curriculum needs, participants more readily found employment in those particular companies. Being on welfare did not stigmatize the potential employee, as long as the work readiness criteria were met. In fact many employers were pleased to be able to hire people off the welfare rolls.

As with all conferences, networking with other practitioners is a major plus and we were provided many opportunities to learn from others. On our return to QCC from the conference we were able to share information with our colleagues at a SABES sponsored workplace education mini-series, and other staff meetings.

## VA Conference Provides Benefits for QCC

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*by Holly Kularski (Staff Assistant/Records, Registration & Veterans Services)*

On September 28 - 30, 1998, I attended the Department of Veteran Affairs Eastern Regional Educational Service Conference at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Buffalo, New York. The Buffalo Department of Veteran Affairs is the Regional Processing Office of Veteran Educational Assistance for 14 states including Massachusetts.

The conference opened with welcoming remarks from the Deputy Under Secretary for Management, Washington DC, the Director Of Education Services, Washington DC, and from the Director and Chief of the Buffalo Regional Processing Office. A short demonstration was then given on the new VA Cert and ECAP computer programs which are designed for the automated processing of VA Educational benefits.

The remainder of the conference was a series of breakout sessions lasting 50 minutes each, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 4:00 p.m.. A total of 15 topics were offered. Also offered was an opportunity to tour the Regional office in Buffalo.

The information I gleaned from the several sessions that I attended will indeed help us to begin processing VA Educational enrollments in a more efficient manner for both the Regional office and for the Veteran. The session I attended on VA Cert (the program for automated electronic processing of enrollments) though not long enough, at least introduced me to and acquainted me with the



basics of how the program operates. I will be requesting help from our computer staff soon in downloading this program from the Internet so that I can begin practicing. I'm hoping to have our Veteran enrollment paperwork fully automated by the end of next year.

The Veteran population at QCC will soon be the recipients of more timely and efficient service. My sincere thanks to the Staff Development office for enabling me to attend.