

wea

SYDNEY

NEWS

September 2011

WEA Sydney's last course with AMES

WEA Sydney is best known for its wide variety of courses in humanities, general courses and foreign languages (what might be called good old-fashioned "lifelong learning"), but we also present a range of top quality VET programs, either co-ordinated with our own trainers, or for corporate or government clients. One such highly valued program took place from April to June 2011, as WEA Sydney delivered an Office Skills course to 18 students from the NSW Adult Migrant English Service (AMES) as part of the Employment Pathways Program funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). The program consisted of four Microsoft Office courses, one course on communication skills and one for resume writing and interview skills. WEA had a whole mix of students from different nationalities including China, Japan, Turkey, Slovakia, Thailand and Vietnam.



**WEA Tutor Ron Lawrence with some of the
2011 AMES students**

Feedback collected from the students during the courses revealed a high rate of satisfaction with the course delivery, contents and the trainers. Ron Lawrence, who has spent a considerable amount of time of his life with WEA Sydney as a tutor, took the responsibility of delivering the computer courses. Ron has a history of making courses enjoyable and is an expert in delivering courses to students from different ethnic backgrounds. Jefferson Lillis, another of WEA's highly sought after tutors, delivered the Communication Skills course and Gavin Redelman, the Managing Director of Red Star Resume, delivered the Resume Writing and Interview Skills course. The students then attended two weeks of work placement with different companies to complement their

classroom study. WEA Sydney thanks Sydney School of Business & Technology, Kent Institute, Education Services Australia, Australian Nationwide College, Parramatta College, City East Community College, TAFE NSW and Department of Education and Training for offering work experience opportunities to these students.

Some of the students already had high level degrees, achieved back in their countries of origin. However, the Office Skills course provided them with the necessary knowledge and skills to help them prepare for the Australian work environment. Fourteen students successfully completed the program and were awarded with a Statement of Attainment from Certificate II in Business.

Success was reaped soon after the completion of the work experience program with one student being offered a part time position by NSW TAFE Ultimo campus in their Student Administration areas. Syed Moniruzzaman, WEA Sydney's Education Manager Business and Vocational Training, has been providing the students with necessary career advice since the completion of the course. Overall, the course was a fitting end to WEA Sydney's long and fruitful association with AMES, as that organisation closed its doors to migrant training in July.

Celebrating Tutors at WEA Sydney!

A wonderful and heart-felt ceremony was held at WEA Sydney on the evening of 15 July, where tutors who have been working with WEA for 15 years or more were honoured. Executive Director Michael Newton introduced the evening by noting that tutors were the true life-blood of WEA Sydney, as they were the recognised representatives to their students of all the values and objectives of the association. Tutors delivered courses of value and quality, and many were so popular and professional that students re-enrolled with them term after term. He said that it was a pleasure and an honour therefore to acknowledge tutors' contribution with a certificate and small gift. The President then presented the following tutors with those items:

- Astrid Boom** (Dutch language and culture)
- Jan Broe** (public speaking)
- Perry Celestino** (anthropology)
- Rosemarie Chen** (computer skills)
- Garry Darby** (Fine art appreciation)
- John Dixon** (Discussion Group Program)
- Yvonne Downs** (literature and study skills)
- Simon Gentry** (Asian studies and culture)
- Frank Langley** (Latin language and literature)
- Joan Lawrence** (local history and tours)
- Ron Lawrence** (computer skills)
- Alison Lyssa** (writing and scriptwriting)
- Pearlie McNeill** (writing)
- Gabriel Newman** (Spanish language and culture)
- Michael Newton** (archaeology and ancient history)
- Fiona O'Beirne** (practical art)
- Pedro Santiago** (Spanish language and culture)
- Keith Suter** (politics and culture)
- Luci Tavener** (computer skills)

Ludmila Tittel (German language and culture)
Graziella Trafeli (Italian language and culture)
Heng Keen Wan (computer and training skills)
Nabil Zakhary (Arabic language and culture)

A similar number of tutors with over 15 years service had been unable to attend the ceremony, but their contribution was acknowledged by all members present. Mahan Ranjbar, tutor of meditation, sent this fraternal message: *"Unfortunately I am not able to attend the WEA Tutor Recognition Ceremony due to my teaching commitments here in California. However, it has been a great pleasure for me to be able to teach at WEA Sydney since 1987. Please convey my thanks and regards to Michael and all WEA long-standing tutors"*. Long term calligraphy tutor Elaine Witton also sent congratulations, and apologies for her absence: *"Thank you for inviting me to the celebration of tutors with over 15 years of service. I am very disappointed that I can't attend. Could you please let Council know that I really appreciate the thought. I have been teaching at WEA for 21 years and I have always valued the professionalism of the organisation and at the same time the warmth and approachability of the staff towards the tutors, not to mention the teaching facilities"*.



German tutor Ludmila Tittel accepting her award at the Tutor Recognition Ceremony

Talks, Talks and More Talks

August and September has been a busy period for lecturers and staff members, especially our general course program co-ordinator, Education Manager Yvonne Downs. Not only has these months seen Winter in full swing, but there have been numerous extra talks to co-ordinate. **Science Week** in mid-August saw WEA Sydney's past president Dr Adam Marchant deliver a well-attended talk on the Biology of Colour Perception (with thanks to the Royal Botanic Gardens for allowing Adam time-off to present this talk), and then **Adult Learners' Week** was upon us in early September, with talks on Wholefoods for Health, Tai Chi, Quick Drawing and Acting. Several of these practical sessions were so popular that they were repeated. There was also a display of artworks on the 3rd floor (outside the Art Room), produced by students of **Deborah Marks' Collage classes**. Many of the pieces were outstanding – congratulations to all in

Deborah's courses! And to add to the entertainment, **History Week** coincided with Adult Learners' Week, with Judy King presenting a most popular talk on Famous Last Meals (as the Week's theme was **EAT History**). Again, this talk proved so popular that it was repeated the following week.

The flow of talks will continue into Term 4. Look out for the annual **George Shipp Memorial Lecture**, to be given by Dr Ray Younis on Wednesday 19 October, on the subject *The End of Humanities (and the Task of Thinking)*, and no doubt **Keith Suter** will be presenting his regular end-of-year review on a Friday morning in December. Most importantly, members will find their invitation to two free talks specifically arranged for them attached to this newsletter, as a way of thanking you all for your contribution to WEA Sydney's success over the past year. The talks will be given by two of our most popular tutors – **Susannah Fullerton** on Friday 11 November on Rudyard Kipling, and **Dr Julian Droogan** on Wednesday 30 November on Temples and Cities – so reserve your seat quickly!

Keep Connected

Don't forget that WEA Sydney's library now operates with a new software system that is web-based and thus allows access and linkage from WEA's own website, with the full catalogue therefore being available online (see www.weasydney.nsw.edu.au and follow the links). One immediate benefit is that students can activate their own borrowing account, via a password, and make bookings for future borrowings. The librarian, Dr Jim Packer, would like feedback from users – he can be contacted via jim.packer@weasydney.nsw.edu.au.

Members can also access WEA Sydney's new **Facebook** account via our website. Tag yourself as a friend, and get immediate access to the latest news and updates on extra courses or additional activities.

Members should also note that from next year, it is our intention to distribute this newsletter, plus any attachments, electronically. So please let us have your email address ASAP. One simple way would be to attach it to the booking form for one of the Members' Talks!

I look forward to seeing you at these talks, or at any other of our Spring 2011 courses.

Michael Newton

Executive Director

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