



# NEWS



Summer 2009

Welcome to the eighth issue of *NEDP News*, an informational newsletter for NEDP directors, coordinators, assessors, and advisors.

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## Sharing Our Vision of NEDP Development

With the support of many NEDP professionals, CASAS is working diligently to introduce some important enhancements to NEDP over the next few years. The NEDP newsletter is one primary way to keep NEDP professionals informed about this ongoing development. Numerous redesign efforts and pilot studies are underway at any given time. Rather than present brief updates providing only cursory information, we will highlight one area under development in each of the upcoming quarterly newsletters. This will allow for a more in-depth discussion than would normally be feasible in a newsletter format.

NEDP Task Development is the next major area of focus, so this issue explores the Task development process with the article “Moving into Task Development.”

Subsequent newsletters will focus on these topics:

- The Role of Technology in NEDP Redesign
- Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training
  - Honors Diplomas
  - Postsecondary Placement Study
- Transition to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Employment
  - Workforce Skills Certification System
- CASAS Written Prompt
- Training Redesign for Increased Accessibility
- Transcript Redesign

Concurrently, NEDP staff will introduce a related discussion topic on the NEDP Forum ([www.nedp.org](http://www.nedp.org)) to encourage a wider dialog among NEDP practitioners. We look forward to your comments about this new format as well as any of our program redesign efforts.

Author: Jim Harrison

## Moving into Task Development

The CASAS NEDP development team is now turning its focus toward new Task development. At this time revised NEDP Performance Indicators (the measures upon which Task activities are based) have been drafted for seven NEDP Focus Competency areas: Cultural Literacy, Health Literacy, Civic Literacy & Community Participation, Geography & History, Consumer Awareness & Financial Literacy, Scientific Inquiry, and Twenty-First Century Workplace. They are undergoing review, in-house and with external subject matter experts, prior to their review by the NEDP Competency Revalidation and Technical Advisory Groups. Performance indicators for the three remaining Foundation Competency areas – Communication & Media Literacy, Applied Math & Numeracy, and Information & Communication Technology – are in development in conjunction with the Focus Competencies to ensure their integration throughout the program.

Meanwhile, the development team has begun the process of updating the NEDP Tasks. The process involves:

- *The organization of Tasks to follow more unified themes and to incorporate new competencies and performance indicators.* The existing Task framework will be enhanced to include assessment of technology skills, better integration of the Foundation Competencies (Communication & Media Literacy, Math, and ICT), and smoother flow between Task activities.
- *Review of the current Tasks to determine where revisions are necessary.* This review takes into account changes in performance indicators, the integration of technology and higher order thinking skills, and feedback from the field. Programs in several states have provided CASAS with comments and suggestions for areas where the existing tasks could be improved, corrected or updated. In many cases Task activities may be improved through simple revisions. Other activities may require significant revision or replacement to bring them in line with 2009 standards. New competencies and performance indicators will entail development of new Task items.
- *Creation of Task activity templates to guide the formatting of both item displays (how a Task item appears on the page or screen) and item responses (how candidates present or demonstrate their response to each Task item).* Standardized templates will help facilitate candidates' navigation of the program and enhance the efficiency of bringing the program online. Examples of item display templates may include visual displays, audio clips, text with embedded URL links, and graphics.
- *Development of multiple versions of Task items to cover the take-home tasks, practice and spot checks, and post-task assessment.* Although each version can be seen as a variation on a theme, they are considered separate items from a test development point of view and each must go through a standard validation process.

## Moving into Task Development (continued)

In addition, NEDP developers will be looking at the source materials identified by PI writers during their research – for potential use in the Task items, Appendix, and candidates learning resources. Many of these are online resources and all reflect changes in content and standards since the last NEDP update. The revised NEDP places heightened emphases on critical thinking, media literacy and communication skills, along with increased relevance to candidates' life and work experience, and it will be important to provide Task activities and learning resources that are both relevant and authentic.

As the revised Task items are completed, they will undergo field testing at NEDP sites so that the validity and reliability of each item can be evaluated across diverse candidate populations and geographic regions. After necessary refinements are made, the new Tasks will be validated and ready for official use. CASAS will announce opportunities for local field testing as they develop during the 2009-10 and 2010-11 program years. CASAS's goal is the rollout of the fully revised NEDP in fall 2011.

Author: Melissa Dayton

## Fifty-Two NEDP Staff Attend Evaluation Workshop

Over the past six months, states have held six evaluation workshops, finalizing certification for 52 NEDP Advisor/Assessors. The grid below details the states where evaluation workshops were conducted and the number of participants completing them:

State	Month Workshop Held	No. of Participants
Connecticut	March	15
D.C.	November and March	14
Maryland	February (2)	18
New York	May	6

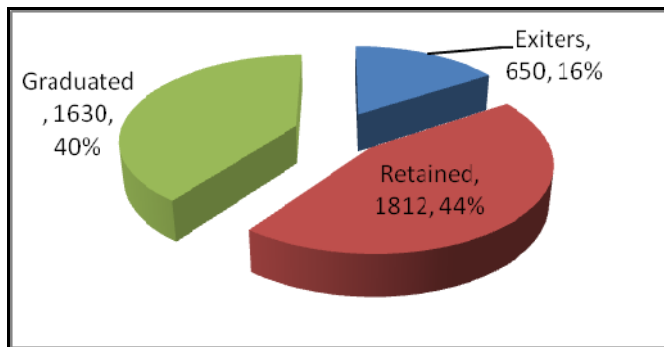
The purpose of the Evaluation workshop is to strengthen staff understanding of the philosophy and procedures of the program and to evaluate individual Advisor/Assessor performance. Participants have the chance to demonstrate their skills for all the phases of the program including consensus moderation and inter-rater reliability. The workshop takes place approximately one year after the initial training and provides an excellent mechanism to ensure that NEDP staff are administering the program consistently according to the national standards. Those who attended these recent workshops reported that the interactive sessions were both enjoyable and informative.

CASAS would like to congratulate all the newly certified Advisors/Assessors! Dedicated, well-trained staff are the reason that NEDP is successfully changing the lives of more than 4,000 new high school graduates each year!

Author: Mary Fox

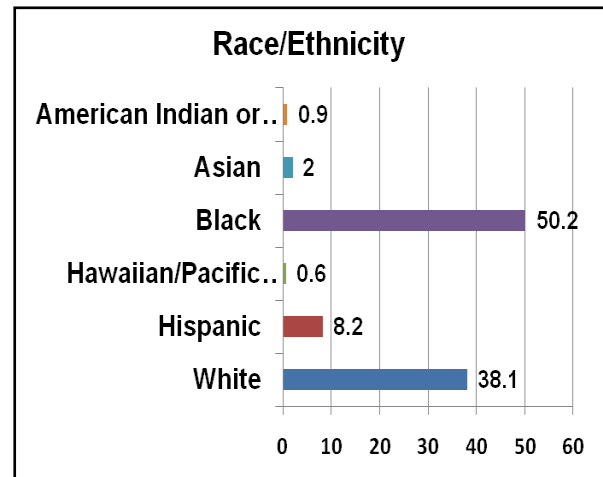
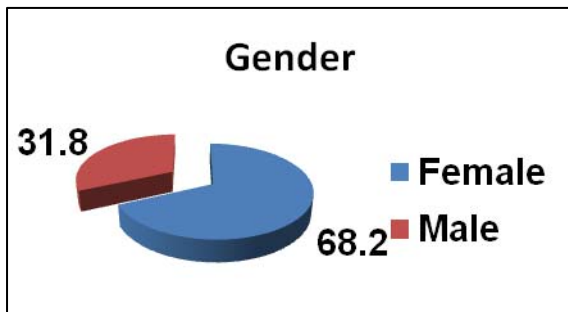
## Yearly Statistical Data Indicates High Retention Rate

As a result of a successful national data collection effort, CASAS is able to report demographic and enrollment data for the 2007-08 school year. Most significantly, NEDP statistics indicate that adults who enter the NEDP program have a high success rate. From the most recent national statistical data in 2007-08, 4,092 students were served in the NEDP program and 84 percent (3,442 students) either graduated or were retained. These data suggest that NEDP is effective in providing motivation for students to stay enrolled and to graduate.

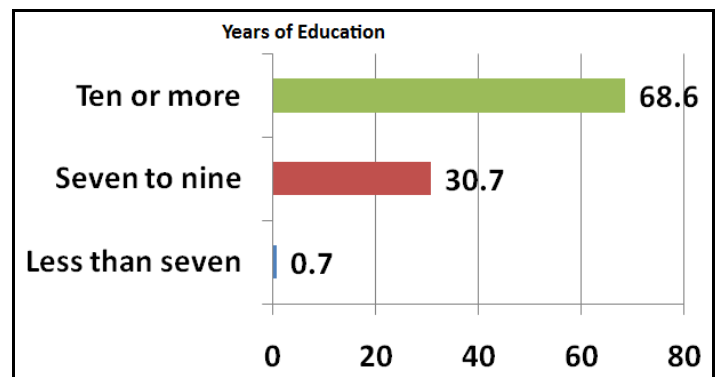
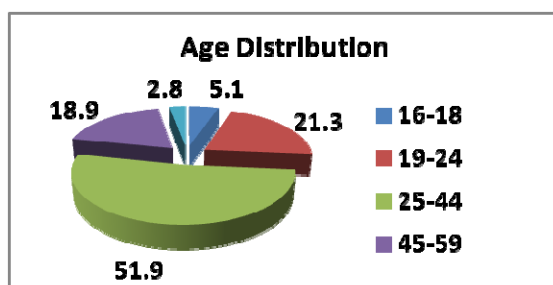


NEDP Clients	2007-2008	Percentage
Exited	650	16%
Retained	1812	44%
Graduated	1630	40%
Total Served	4092	

Similar to 2006-07, the statistics indicate that NEDP is serving a population that is frequently underserved. Sixty-eight percent of NEDP clients are female and close to half the clients are African American/Black.

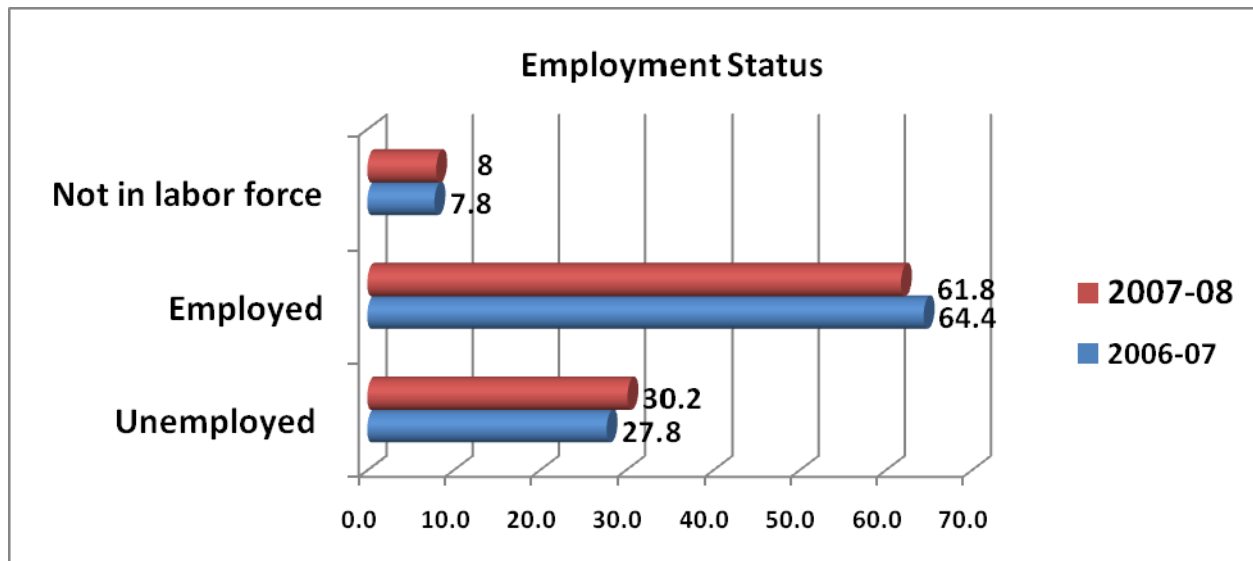
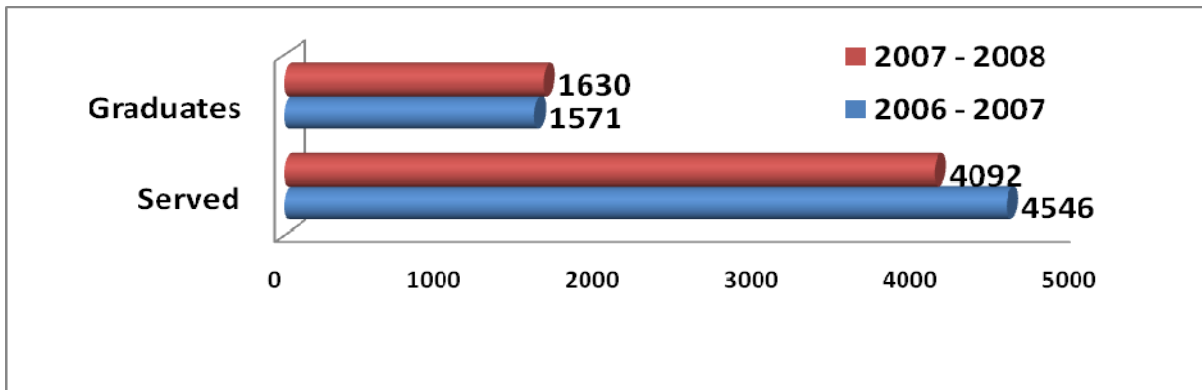


In 2007-08 a large majority of the clients (73.2%) fell within the two age cohorts of 19-24 and 25-44, and completed 10 or more years of education (68.6%).



## Yearly Statistical Data (continued)

When comparing the data from 2006-07, note that although NEDP programs served fewer students, there was an increase in the number of graduates in 2007-08. As expected with the economic times, there was a slightly higher percentage of unemployed clients in 2007-08.



As NEDP continues to grow, it is even more critical to collect more in-depth statistics on clients so the program can be effectively marketed and serve the adult education community more effectively.

Author: Andrew Evans

## CASAS Summer Institute 2009

Thank you to all who attended the 29th Annual CASAS National Summer Institute, June 23 – 25, 2009, in San Diego! The Institute was a huge success with nearly 500 attendees from 27 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, El Salvador, Guam, Northern Marianas Islands, Palau, and Samoa! More than 100 training sessions and workshops addressed key issues on accountability policies, assessment, and linking evaluation systems to national and state content and performance standards.



The NEDP strand at the Institute has become an excellent source of professional development for NEDP staff. The number of NEDP participants attending the strand continues to increase each year. Many participants attended training sessions on how to implement O\*NET and the new CASAS written prompt being piloted this fall. Participants learned about the addition of the Workforce Skills Certification System and attended sessions detailing future NEDP development. To view the NEDP Summer Institute workshop presentations visit our Web site at [www.nedp.org](http://www.nedp.org) and select *CASAS Summer Institute 2009*.

We encourage NEDP professionals to begin planning now to come help CASAS celebrate its 30th year at the 2010 Summer Institute! The Institute is Thursday through Saturday, June 17-19, 2010. Registration information will be posted at [www.casas.org/si](http://www.casas.org/si) in January. Visit the Summer Institute Web site today to get a complete list of workshops provided and to download the handouts from many of the sessions at no charge!

Author: Mary Fox

## Connecticut Shows Enthusiastic Support for NEDP

Connecticut demonstrated its ongoing commitment to NEDP by sending this impressive group of Connecticut staff members to the CASAS Summer Institute. Connecticut made this possible by including attendance at the Summer Institute as a grant requirement for new sites implementing NEDP. The Summer Institute provided a great professional development opportunity for Connecticut staff.

CASAS would like to thank Connecticut for supporting the Summer Institute and NEDP. We are grateful for all the Connecticut State Department of Education has done to encourage professional development for local NEDP staff in order to provide the best possible service to Connecticut clients. We continue to appreciate Connecticut's support of the national program.

Author: Mary Fox



## NEDP Offered in a College Setting

CASAS welcomes the Career Development Academy (CDA) at James Madison University (Virginia), one of our newest NEDP sites. The Career Development Academy was established in 2005 to meet the educational and career needs of immigrant language learners. The CDA now serves all adults in the area with a pathway to a high school diploma, a transition to work or college, and a tool to improve economic and career prospects. Especially with the External Diploma Program addition, CDA is now poised to offer all adult members of Harrisonburg City - Rockingham County a pathway to transition from adult education to higher education or career success.

The Academy provides a rich and supportive environment for potential NEDP clients who need to remediate skills. They offer non-credit courses in English as a second language, math, science, social studies and language arts. Clients are introduced to opportunities for service, study, and research. The college environment also provides an environment for NEDP graduates to transition to higher education or careers.

After completing their training in early May and then advertising and marketing the program in the area, The Career Development Academy just started serving its first clients. Stephen Lambert, a newly trained NEDP Advisor/Assessor, has been actively involved in this marketing. He stated, "NEDP is a vital tool in our mission to transition all adults and especially immigrant language learners from adult education to higher education and to successful employment. NEDP uses a range of performance assessment tasks to measure academic and career achievement. It's a perfect fit [for] adult education. Offering a diploma program gives [CDA] credibility and attention with peers in the College of Education at James Madison University, with the local community college, with [area] businesses."

*Career Development Academy NEDP Staff (left to right) Stephen Lambert (Lead Teacher), Lisa Schick (Director), and Helen Wei (Administrative Assistant)*



Author: Mary Fox

## Contact Us

We are ready to answer your questions and to assist you with your program needs. Please do not hesitate to contact one of us.

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## *NEDP News – Previous Issues*

We hope you found this newsletter informative. You may view previous issues by visiting our Web site at [www.nedp.org](http://www.nedp.org) and selecting *NEDP News*.

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