



# Tech Hub News

Helping Adults Thrive in a Changing World

## Spring PD Events and Updates on New Initiatives

In the January 2019 issue of the Tech Hub Newsletter, we shared our work plan and new initiatives planned for this fiscal year. We are pleased to provide updates on four new initiatives:

- **Learning Pathways** for Practitioner Professional Development
- **Groups** that serve to facilitate communication, dissemination and sharing of resources.
- **Student-led learning circles**
- **Mobile Learning** and a statewide effort to get four mobile apps into the hands of our learners through the XPRIZE Community Competition.

### Learning Pathways and Industry-Recognized Credentials

Three learning pathways will kick-off in the spring of 2019. If this is the first time you are hearing about Learning Pathways for practitioner professional development, click [here](#) for a complete guide including descriptions and schedules.

The three learning pathways we will offer are:

- **Digital Literacy- Microsoft Word and Excel:** This pathway offers the option to earn a Microsoft Office Specialization Certification.
- **Building Blocks of Technology Integration:** This pathway leads to ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education) Coaching Certification.

- **Google Educator:** This pathway leads to Certification as a Google Trainer.

One of the strengths of the Learning Pathways programs is the opportunity for practitioners to earn industry-recognized credentials. These credentials require a considerable amount of time and work. There are fees associated with these credentials. The fees vary. Please refer to the Learning Pathways Guide - *Frequently Asked Questions* to learn more.

Peer mentoring is also an important element of the learning pathways program. We have structured the program to include practitioner coaches and peer-to-peer support.

Orientations for the pathways begin on April 26th.

### Groups

The Tech Hub team has created several groups to facilitate sharing of ideas and resources and to ease the process of dissemination of information to the field. Joining a group will give you access to email messages, calendars, and documents that are shared within the group. You do not need a riadulted.org account to join these groups - any email address will work.

**Who can join these groups?** Anyone! There is an approval process as a measure of privacy and security.

*Cont'd on page 2*

## What's Inside?

- 01 Learning Pathways and Industry-Recognized Certification
- 01 Groups
- 02 Mobile Learning and XPRIZE Apps
- 03 Student-led Learning Circles
- 03 Cate's Corner: Chromebook Tip!

- 04 Technology Integration with Book Clubs
- 05 News from Northstar
- 05 Learning Lounges Welcome Lina Bravo
- 06 Nat'l Digital Inclusion Alliance
- 06 PBS - Free Resources for Educators
- 07 Spotlight on LINCS - Free Resources for Educators and Learners
- 07 Virtual Lessons: Blended and Distance Learning

## Groups

*cont'd from page 1*

If you are in CALIS as a teacher, Director or staff member, you have already been added to one or more groups depending on your role. You can unsubscribe at any time. You can also join any group that you are not enrolled in.

**Joining a group:** Anyone who works in adult education in Rhode Island (with any email address) can ask to join a group. New members will be asked to respond to a question to help verify that the request is legitimate. Requests will be manually reviewed and approved in a timely manner.

The 4 groups that have been created are:

- ALL STAFF: This group is for any staff person working in adult education including directors, teachers, administrative staff, volunteers, advocates, partners, etc.
- CALIS USER GROUP: This group meets face-to-face once a month throughout the year to discuss the adult education database CALIS.
- DIRECTORS: A group for adult education program directors and secondary contacts.
- PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SPECIALISTS: Each adult education program has a designated Professional Learning Specialist. This might include the role of Technology Point Person. PLSs coach practitioners and lead a program professional learning community (PLC) focused on specific instructional demands that assure each individual student's readiness for advancement to the next educational functioning level.

For more information about Groups, visit the Tech Hub website > *Get Connected*. If you need help joining a group, please send a message to [support@riadulted.org](mailto:support@riadulted.org).

Special thanks to Kim Libby for initiating this idea and devoting much time and energy to implementation of the program.

**Call for Action:** Please update your staff information in CALIS. This will ensure we have accurate contact information. Each staff member should be listed with a correct email address.

## Mobile Learning and XPRIZE Apps



In 2016, the Barbara Bush Foundation for Adult Literacy launched the Adult Literacy XPRIZE Communities Competition. This is a national challenge with one goal: to expand access to adult basic education and ESL for learners through the use of technology. The competition has two phases.

The challenge of the first phase was to develop mobile apps to meet the literacy needs of adults. Following development of the apps, they were field tested by approximately ten thousand adult learners over a period of 16 months.

In the second phase of this challenge, based on the results of the field tests, four apps were chosen as the finalists. We are now in the second phase, and it is these four apps that we want to get in the hands of learners, their friends and families.

### The Competition

There are 46 teams around the United States who are competing to get the most downloads and usage. Rhode Island is part of the World Ed team. To get credit for our team, users must download the apps, using the **code 3366**, and access the app on three different days.

### What is the time period?

The competition runs from April 1 - August 31, 2019. However, the apps are available to anyone who downloaded them by August 31 for another full year until August 31, 2020.

The apps are available on Android devices and can be downloaded through the Google Play Store.

*Cont'd on page 3*

## Mobile Learning and XPRIZE Apps cont'd from page 2

Some apps are also available on IOS systems although the usage does not count toward team competition. That's OK! The important thing is to get the apps into the hands of those who need them.

The four apps in this competition are listed below. In addition to the Google Play Store, they can also be downloaded with the URL listed below:

- **Learning Upgrade:** This app won first place! It offers math and reading for levels k-12 in a gamified environment. [abc.xprize.org/lu3366](http://abc.xprize.org/lu3366)

- **Codex-The Lost Words of Atlantis:** This is a game-based reading app that targets emerging readers. [abc.xprize.org/pw3366](http://abc.xprize.org/pw3366)

- **Cell-Ed:** An app for ESOL learners with personalized coaching. [abc.xprize.org/ce3366](http://abc.xprize.org/ce3366)

- **Amrita Learning** - This app targets reading skills for adults. [abc.xprize.org/ac3366](http://abc.xprize.org/ac3366)

To learn more, visit: [www.edtech.worlded.org/team-worlded-xprize](http://www.edtech.worlded.org/team-worlded-xprize). You will find specifications on the apps, Q&As, and coming soon are teaching resources for using mobile learning in blended and distance learning and recordings of the past support webinars. **The next webinar is May 7th**, register [here](#).

The Tech Hub has flyers for organizations to customize and handout to learners and resources for introducing the apps to staff and learners. We will be distributing these in May. For more information, contact Karisa Tashjian at [ktashjian@provlb.org](mailto:ktashjian@provlb.org).

To learn more the XPRIZE and their mission to solve global problems, visit their website: <https://www.xprize.org>.

### Learning Express for Mobile Learning

The XPRIZE apps are fantastic resources and there are others. For example, Learning Express is an online resource accessed through [AskRI.org](http://AskRI.org). This site offers vocational and academic practice tests, exercises, skill-building courses, eBooks, and other information to enhance school, work and life skills.

## Success with Student-Led Learning Circles

In FY18, 15 practitioners completed the Google Educator Level 1 online course in learning circle cohorts. This year, we want to extend this model to students and engage them in online learning.

On March 15, 2019, the Tech Hub collaborated with Peer 2 Peer University ([www.P2PU.org](http://www.P2PU.org)) on a workshop to introduce teachers, administrators and students to learning circles. Participants learned how to find courses on the P2PU website, create a learning circle and plan for implementation and outreach. A total of 22 teachers and students attended.

Kudos to the Aquidneck Island Adult Learning Center who are the first to implement student-led learning circles.

## Cate's Corner



Cate Burlington, the Lead Instructional Technology Specialist at Providence Public Library and member of the Tech Hub team, will be sharing some tech tips in each of our quarterly newsletters. In this issue, Cate shares some advice about Chromebooks:

### Are you using or considering switching to Chromebooks?

To learn more and get helpful tips and tricks, try visiting Google's support page: [support.google.com/chromebook](http://support.google.com/chromebook).

For instance, though most things on a Chromebook require an active internet connection, did you know that you can turn on "Offline Mode" in apps like Gmail so that you can read and compose email even when you don't have internet access? Visit the site for a step-by-step guide to tell you how.

## Technology Integration - Taking Book Clubs Beyond the Book

Contributed by Doug Norris

We would like to use the Tech Hub Newsletter as one medium to share stories of how practitioners are integrating technology. We know many teachers are doing awesome work. Don't be shy! Share what you're doing so others can learn from you and build on your ideas.

In this issue, our featured teacher is Doug Norris who works as an ESOL teacher for RIFLI. Here's Doug's story:

For the past two years as part of a summer adult ESL instruction program at Auburn Library in Cranston, I turned the class into a Book Club Learning Circle. After conducting a readers' interest survey, we learned that a majority of students would be interested in a guided program that encouraged more reading in and outside of class, one that promoted discussion and activities built around the text. Since we were based in a library, it was easy to gather resources from the state public library collection. It would give us a chance to make sure that every student had an up-to-date Rhode Island public library card and would practice using it, which is one of the goals of our program. Additionally, we would be able to integrate technology into the class by utilizing the library's 12 laptop computers for online research and activities tied to the reading.

The first summer, we read "Kira-Kira," the 2005 Newbery Medal winner by Cynthia Kadohata. The book tells its story through the voice of Katie Takeshima, the middle child in a Japanese-American family in the 1950s, who narrates the family's progress as they move to rural Georgia, where the father finds work at a chicken hatchery. The second summer, we read "Esperanza Rising" by Pam Munoz Ryan. The title character lives on her family's ranch in Mexico, but a tragedy just before her 13th birthday changes her circumstances, and what remains of her family crosses the border to seek work at a farm camp during the Great Depression.

The book and a laptop were the primary tools in each class. For about 45 minutes to an hour, students used computers to research topics, themes and details generated from the reading. In some cases, they had to find information and write it down or make a list of details; in others, the information was a prompt for writing or further discussion.

For example with "Kira-Kira," students researched facts about: the state of Georgia; Japanese-Americans in Rhode Island; Orion and winter constellations visible in the northern hemisphere; driving distances between locations mentioned in the story; traditional Japanese recipes and near-equivalents in their native cultures; the etymological meaning of our first names; symbols of Rhode Island and symbols of their native countries; places where people can go camping in Rhode Island; moon legends from their native cultures; President Eisenhower; the poultry industry in their native countries; animals that live in swamps; the Affordable Care Act and hospital care in the U.S. and other countries; English word games; the difference between hunting and trapping, and how (or if) they are practiced in their native countries; a country that the student would like to know more about (using [www.everyculture.com](http://www.everyculture.com)); the term "black sheep" and other English idioms involving animals; laws about the crime of vandalism; funeral customs from the country students previously researched and comparisons to their native countries.

Doug shared a list of research topics for *Esperanza Rising* that is just as rich!

### Benefits of Using Technology

Beyond browsing for information, students learned to be selective in choosing details, and were able to make judgments about content by comparing sources. They recorded their research on worksheets and in their notebooks, then shared their findings with their classmates as part of a whole-class discussion and small-group activities centered on problem-solving, compare-contrast and cause-effect analysis. Many older students, in assessing the book club, told me that it was their first time regularly using computers (not counting their smart phones) and that they appreciated getting more comfortable with the technology. Younger students said that they enjoyed learning more deeply about specific cultures (of Japan and Mexico), while sharing elements of their own throughout the class. One student said that all of the information everyone gathered from their laptop explorations "helped the books come to life." Another said using computers was like "having so many more libraries inside a library." Several have already asked about next summer's book.

## News from Northstar



### Northstar News Release April 18, 2019:

Northstar released the final updated versions of **Information Literacy** and **Career Search Skills** to testing locations, as well as on the public site.

#### Coming soon: Updated Excel and Powerpoint

The beta version of two updated modules, Excel and PowerPoint, have been released. Please provide general feedback by May 1 at <https://forms.gle/J9zkFH7hVGVWe1qFA> Test takers can provide feedback at <https://forms.gle/EjXwpCZu7JbXaeCLA> Note that beta versions of modules are only available via test locations, and are NOT available on the public site - updated modules are released on the public site once they are finalized.

Badging is currently unavailable - Mozilla Backpack is experiencing technical difficulties, and is not providing support. Backpack is unlikely to be fixed, so they are currently considering different options going forward. If you would like Northstar to notify you on updates or changes to badging, please sign up for email notifications.

Northstar was recently selected as one of six semi-finalists for the Lumina Foundation Educational Innovation Award! There were 75 nominations, so the competition was steep. They are really proud of this honor.

**The next webinar is 10 a.m. (Central Time), May 8: Northstar version 2.0. Come learn about the updates in our Northstar 2.0, including the new process for proctoring assessments. Join URL: <https://zoom.us/j/2631736507>**

## Learning Lounges Welcome Lina Bravo

### Meet Lina Bravo

Coordinator of RI Learning Lounges and Learning Resource Centers.



Lina is a professional with a learner-centered mentality and a passion for workforce development. She loves to inspire and engage diverse individuals, encouraging them to achieve learning and career goals! Lina is an electrical engineer who migrated to the U.S. 10 years ago to overcome educational and employment barriers. She is bi-lingual in English and Spanish and she is a workforce professional who loves the mission of the Learning Lounge. In November of 2018, she assumed leadership of the Learning Lounges/Intake Assessment & Learning Statewide Network.

#### Serving over 500 Adults in One Year

Learning Lounges provide just-in-time learning opportunities to adults to assist them in their education and career goals. In the past year, over 500 adults were served in 10 locations throughout RI. With repeat visits, learning lounge staff welcomed about 2000 guests. The services include, but are not limited to, computer skills, employment services & career coaching, academic - reading, writing & math, assessments, tests preparation, English language, U.S. citizenship, and referrals to community services & programs. There are 10 Learning Lounges across the state. Click [here](#) for a schedule of hours and locations.

## Stay Connected

1. Join a GROUP.
2. Subscribe to this newsletter by contacting Sherry at [slehane@provlb.org](mailto:slehane@provlb.org).
3. Don't forget to check [www.adultedri.org](http://www.adultedri.org) for PD events and resources. Our website is getting a facelift! We will send updates as they develop.

## National Digital Inclusion Alliance

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance's (NDIA) annual conference was held in April 2019 in Charlotte, NC. Karisa Tashjian, Director of Education at Providence Public Library, attended. NDIA (<https://www.digitalinclusion.org/>) is "a unified voice for home broadband access, public broadband access, personal devices and local technology training and support programs...who work collaboratively to craft, identify and disseminate financial and operational resources for digital inclusion programs while serving as a bridge to policymakers and the general public."

Among those in attendance with ties to Rhode Island and the Tech Hub were: Libraries Without Borders, Peer2Peer University, and Mobile Beacon. Karisa presented as part of a panel with Connected Nation, ByteBack, and the City of Philadelphia's Office of Adult Education on "Digital Inclusion Funding Through Workforce Development including Certifications".

Amazing work on digital equity is happening across the country. Here are some of the many organizations worth taking a look at:

- Tech Boomers: <https://techboomers.com/>
- Human I-T: <https://www.human-i-t.org/>
- Ashbury Community Services in Ohio: <http://www.asc3.org/>
- Hack & Hustle Academy: <http://www.hackhustleacademy.org/>

The conference concluded with information about a new bill introduced by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) called the Digital Equity Act of 2019. The bill would authorize more than \$1 billion in federal grant funding over the next five years to support digital inclusion programs throughout U.S. states and territories.

Senators Whitehouse and Reed are co-sponsors of the bill. Stay alert to the progress of this bill moving through Congress.

## PBS: Free Resources for Educators

Rhode Island PBS Education Services provides content and resources to support teaching and learning for educators, students, parents and learners of all ages in our community. Resources are distributed free-of-charge and leverage high-quality public media content adapted for instructional use, supported by outreach efforts and in-person trainings. In addition, they offer community engagement screenings and events to ensure that they reach their region's entire diverse audience.

Their featured resource is Rhode Island PBS LearningMedia – an online PreK-12 content library that provides FREE access to media-based instructional resources for educators, students and parents. Resources cover the full range of subject areas and grade levels, and include video from PBS broadcast content and original interactives, supplemented by standards-aligned lesson plans, teaching tips, activities, handouts and assessments to facilitate classroom use.

Currently there are tens of thousands of resources on the site, and over 1.8 million registered users nationally, including ~2,600 registered RI educators. FREE registration for new users is easy at <http://www.ripbs.org/education>.

For thorough information on Rhode Island PBS Education Services, visit [www.ripbs.org/education](http://www.ripbs.org/education), sign up for their free monthly Ed Services e-Newsletter here, and follow them on Facebook (EdServRIPBS) & Twitter (@EdServRIPBS).

## Spotlight on LINCS

<https://lincs.ed.gov>

LINCS is an online professional development resource for adult educators and learners. There are three groups of resources: a community of practice, online courses, and research studies, materials and products.

**The LINCS Community** is a community of practice (COP) for adult education practitioners. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). This COP is a place where practitioners can seek help from experts and peers, collaborate, network, share knowledge and resources, participate in special events, and grow professionally. There are currently 11 focus groups on a range of topics including technology integration, correctional and re-entry, disabilities and equitable education, math and numeracy, etc.

**The Learning Portal** offers over 20 online, self-paced courses covering topics such as career pathways, technology integration, ELA, ESL, science and more.

**The Resource Collection** contains 640 publications and products for teachers and learners! For example, *Cash Course* is an interactive website devoted to helping students build money management skills, survive in a touch economy, and prepare for success.

Another example is a *Hyper Docs tool kit*. This toolkit contains tutorials, templates and sample lessons that help teachers create documents that use hypertext to help students learn key concepts independently.

There is a wide variety of interesting resources. Put this on your summer to-do list!

**Student Learning Portal** offers free courses in English and some are offered in Spanish. Course topics include reading, math, science, English, citizenship and career exploration. To learn more, visit their website: <https://learner.lincs.ed.gov>

## Virtual Lessons: How one teachers supports students with blended learning

Betty Tavares teaches digital literacy skills at the Providence Housing Authority. To support her learners outside of class, Betty uses Google Hangouts to offer mini lessons by sharing her screen, offering explanations and guidance in response to students' questions. Betty admits that finding the time is challenging, but the payoff is very rewarding.

**How can organizations support teachers in offering blended and distance learning? Respond through Groups!**

## Call to Action!

**How do you use technology for teaching and learning?  
What are your favorite online resources?**



We are certain that many of you are using technology creatively and effectively. Please share by sending a copy of a lesson plan, a link to a resource, a short blurb or even a video describing what you do. Share your ideas through the ALL Staff Group.

## Questions or Comments?

**Contact us:**

**Sherry Lehane at [slehane@provlib.org](mailto:slehane@provlib.org)  
Cate Burlington at [cburlington@provlib.org](mailto:cburlington@provlib.org)**