

## WE LEARN

### Women Expanding – Literacy Education Action Resource Network

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### WE LEARN 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GATHERING & CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND LITERACY

**Cranston, RI – February 11, 2010:** Empowering women to action is at the heart of the **WE LEARN 7<sup>th</sup> Annual (Net)Working Gathering & Conference on Women and Literacy, “Community, Leadership, Activism.”** On Friday and Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010, an anticipated 200 students, teachers, community organizers, literacy workers, and professors will gather at the **University of Rhode Island – Feinstein Providence Campus** (80 Washington St.) to share resources, insights, and research.

The topics of panel presentations and workshops cover a significant range of social, political, technological, and economic issues seen from the vantage points of the stakeholders connected to adult literacy programs. These views from the field of literacy education address special needs of adults as disparate as international good practices in education in Mexico and Belize, to exploring leadership role models and specific civic participation strategies, to writing from various contexts for all types of purposes, and the role education plays in improving the quality of women’s lives. Teaching strategies for English as Second Language students and leadership and empowerment development strategies as well as ways to address the social dimensions of personal and community health are examined through the lens of the education process. **Co-Sponsors include:** University of Rhode Island College of Human Science and Services, Rhode Island Department of Adult Education, Rhode Island Adult Education Professional Development Center, Citizens Bank, and the BankRI.



**Community, Leadership, Activism: Economic Justice, Cultural Alliances, Good Health responds to current events and moves our attention towards using literacy for action in our communities.** In addition to coming to deeper understanding of leadership development through education and the qualities one needs to be a leader, participants will explore how women learners can use their literacy and educational accomplishments to create better communities through active participation. **Committed to empowerment for women in all aspects of their lives, this WE LEARN event promotes civic participation as those who come together share their knowledge and experiences to draw connections between literacy, leadership, empowerment, and liberation.**

Featured speakers include **Margaret Doughty**, Founder and Director of Literacy Powerline based in Texas, **Jeniffer Herrera-Andújar**, Student Leader for FUTURE NOW at Bronx Community College in New York, **Klare Allen**, Community Organizer for Massachusetts Senior Action in Boston, and **Kira Neel**, a bilingual theater practitioner from New York City. Additional presenters will be coming from Belize, Mexico, Canada, and several regions from across the United States. Speakers and facilitators will explore themes related to moving beyond survival to develop economic justice; strengthening relationships and alliances among people from different cultures, backgrounds, and diversities; and supporting good health and wellness (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual). Activities include interactive workshops, art-making, stretching and yoga, networking and caucus groups, and the Annual WE LEARN Membership Meeting. **Student and educator leaders at the conference will emerge with newly identified strategies and good practices for supporting educators as they shape the discourse about women's needs in literacy education.**

WE LEARN is known for its innovation in women-centered literacy materials and curriculum resources, which will be exhibited along with the work of publishers and literacy organizations dedicated to this field. **The conference will also feature the Annual Celebration of Student Writing to honor the writers published in *Women's Perspectives #5: What Would You Do? Creative Ideas for Difficult Times*.** Published annually in March, the journal features writing and artwork by adult learners from across literacy abilities. It showcases a variety of genres (poetry, essay, memoir) and the perspectives and voice of writers typically not visible to the reading public. Student writers in attendance will read their writings. The reading is March 5 from 5:00 - 6:30 pm and followed by a reception. It is open to the public. Donation requested.

WE LEARN offers registration rates for members, non-members, and adult basic education students on-site. **Pre-registration ends February 29, 2010.** On-site registrations accepted. Registration includes light breakfast and lunch for participants, and entrance to all conference activities.

Based in Cranston RI, **WE LEARN (Women Expanding Literacy Education Action Resource Network) is a community promoting women's literacy as a tool that fosters empowerment and equity for women.** An educational non-profit membership organization, it remains the only national U.S. organization directly addressing the issues of adult women's literacy and the needs of women in adult basic/literacy education.

For more information about WE LEARN and for conference registration, visit the WE LEARN website (<http://www.litwomen.org/conference.html>) or contact Dr. Mev Miller at 401-383-4374 or [welearn@litwomen.org](mailto:welearn@litwomen.org).

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