



Volume 1, Issue 1

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For more information contact:  
Mr. Ronald D. Froman,  
Executive Director  
Florida Human Resources  
Development, Inc.  
816 Leopard Trail  
Winter Springs, Florida 32708  
Voice - (407) 699-9622  
Fax - (407) 699-8774  
E-mail: [natrain@aol.com](mailto:natrain@aol.com)

*"Providing additional instructional options that may allow students to be reached that otherwise would not, is (in my mind) considered to be the principal benefit"*

*Respondent to the Statewide Distance Learning and Technology Survey*

[www.floridatechnet.org](http://www.floridatechnet.org)

# T E C H B Y T E S

A newsletter published monthly by TechNet  
Florida's Distance Learning and Training Project

Welcome to the first issue of Florida's TechNet Project.

TechNet was created out of the results of a statewide Distance Learning and Technology Survey that was conducted in the 1999.

Results of the survey showed that adult and community educators do not have direct links to vital information because of a host of local problems, i.e.:

- Lack of equipment
- Lack of knowledge of the benefits
- Lack of training
- Lack of internet access
- No interagency collaboration

The current demand to meet the learning needs of adults in education and industry is unprecedented. Adult learners, as well as teachers of adult learners, literally **demand** curriculum that not only stimulates their thinking processes but also allows them to buy-in to the meaning of the instruction. Let's face it, adults only participate in activities they feel will contribute to their life experiences.

Furthermore, Florida employers demand competent employees. Personal or professional limitations may restrict their ability to participate in traditional instruction or staff development. For this reason, distance learning and other multimedia technologies have become one of the most widely used venues for adult and literacy education in the past three years.

One goal of the TechNet project will be to provide online staff development training for adult education teachers, administrators and staff.

## Goals of TechNet



The goals of the TechNet project are to:

- Develop a statewide infrastructure that focuses on
  - Education/Training
  - Career preparation for Florida's Citizens
- Address program needs through certified staff/professional development training for adult educators
- Provide information opportunities for Florida's citizens relative to employment

*"Development of a statewide infrastructure that will enable all adult education and literacy administrators, providers, teachers and students the ability to access information, communicate and share ideas and learn new ways of solving problems."*

## TechNet Project to offer a wide range of services

TechNet will encompass a variety of services targeted to adult educators, literacy providers, libraries, workforce development boards and Florida's citizens.

**The Web Training Resource Center** - a webpage on the TechNet site that will be devoted primarily to offering web-based training to adult education teachers, literacy providers, staff and administrators. Participants will be able to register for a variety of web-based inservice programs.

**TechNet Resource Center** - Look to the TechNet Resource Center for links to sample curriculum



on the web, references to developing technology plans, and information on TechNet's Certified Staff Development Training and the Certified Computer User Specialist programs. The Resource Center will provide information and support for the planning and implementation of new technologies in the adult education or literacy classroom.

Participate in online discussions, real time conferencing (chat sessions) listservs and forums. Take a look at our reference collection, you may find just what you're looking for.

We're even thinking about designing a Tech Mentor program!

**TechLink** - TechLink will be Florida's gateway that links Community Colleges, school systems, libraries, community-based organizations, Dept. of Education, Dept of Corrections, Dept. of Labor and others in a collaborative environment. This intranet will allow users to access information from all the partners to enhance the delivery of adult education programs and services.

TechNet supports adult education programs which are initiating or expanding the use of instructional technology by providing a wide variety of support services.

## TechNet to Offer Certified Computer Specialist Training

One of the objectives of the TechNet collaboration will be to design, develop, and rollout the first DOE approved Adult Education Certified Computer Specialist Training Program. This program is designed to create a standard of competence in computer technologies.

## There's Something for Everyone!

The objectives that drive the development of TechNet are to:

- Create an infrastructure with which to link agencies across the state

who collaborate with adult education centers, literacy providers and community service organizations.

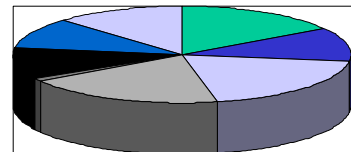
- Create a technical assistance initiative that will provide on-going technical assistance on implementation of instructional technologies in the adult education or literacy education classroom.
- Establish a state-approved delivery system for providing adult literacy and adult education instruction through a variety of distance learning technologies.
- Promote the education of Florida's Adults through collaborative partnerships.

## Look for the next TechNet Orientation

Florida Literacy Conference  
March 1-3, 2000  
Daytona Beach, Florida

“the survey said...”

Support services that respondents listed as necessary for Distance Learning to be successful



- Information Support (14%)
- Tech Support (10%)
- Financial (17%)
- Training/SD (17%)
- Satellite (1-way) (1%)
- Interactive (9%)
- Audio Tapes (9%)
- Video Tapes (11%)

## Distance Learning and Technology in Florida

According to the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) report *Adult Literacy and New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime*, computer-assisted instruction and distance learning opportunities not only allow learners to proceed at their own rate of speed, but also breaks down geographical barriers that may otherwise limit instruction.

Furthermore, the report states, many literacy programs in the country today have barely realized the potential that new technologies can offer. There is a need for technology assistance and distance learning opportunities in adult and literacy programs in Florida.

Luckily, the Florida Department of Education has recognized this opportunity for instruction and is taking the necessary steps to insure that all adult educators in Florida have access to high quality adult and literacy education.

A Technology and Distance Learning Survey was conducted in the Spring of 1999 by Florida Human Resources Development, Inc., a non-profit corporation, to assess the current level of technology usage and distance learning opportunities in Florida.

**Florida TechNet**  
**816 Leopard Trail**  
**Winter Springs, FL 32708**  
**Voice (407) 699-9622**  
**Fax (407) 699-8774**  
**To subscribe send email to**  
**Webmaster@floridatechnet.org**

The philosophy behind TechNet was grounded in the results of this distance learning survey.

*Distance learning and other multimedia technologies have become one of the most widely used venues for adult and literacy education in the past three years.*



- 30% of the respondents said they were involved in Distance Learning, primarily Crossroads Cafe.
- 71% responded positively that Distance Learning and/or alternative education delivery systems can have a positive impact on programs.
- 73% of respondents had computers with more than 16MB of memory, a CD-ROM drive and modem.
- 79% had computers at home.
- Only 43% of computers for student use had more than 16 MB of memory.
- 17% of respondents listed both Training/Staff Development and Financial Support as the top two needs for support services.
- Over 60% of respondents commented that they would be willing to pay a small fee to attend a technology-based workshop if it meant sharpening their technology skills.

Only 4% considered themselves "technophobic" (lacking computer confidence). In fact, the majority stated they were either "very confident" or "confident" in their capabilities.

## What can we do for you?

The success of TechNet will rely on the services that we provide. In a effort to design training programs and online services and programs that are reflective of your needs, please peruse the following questions and email your responses to our webmaster.

1. What technology-based training programs would you like to see offered in your county?
2. What agencies would you like to see as part of TechNet's infrastructure? (i.e., Dept. of Education, Dept. of Labor, Local Libraries, Unemployment offices, etc.)
3. What types of online activities would you like to see on the TechNet website? (i.e., chat rooms, listservs, online lessons, web-based training, forums by topic, searchable databases, etc.)
4. What resources would be beneficial to you to download from the TechNet website? (i.e., Grant funding guide, Technical Assistance Papers, Facts and figures for grantwriting, etc.)

**Send responses to:**  
webmaster@floridatechnet.org