

# Project Finish Receives National Recognition, More Sites

**P**roject Finish's success in involving volunteers to supplement the work of paid teachers in English-as-a-Second-Language classes



Magda Lugo-Blas, case manager/office coordinator, El Centro, and Susan McCabe, program director, ABE/GED/ESL, prepare for Project Finish ESL classes at El Centro, 75th and Metcalf.

has earned it a role in a national project funded by the UPS Foundation and ProLiteracy America, the U.S. program of ProLiteracy Worldwide. Project Finish is the Adult Basic Education program sponsored by Johnson County Community College and the Johnson County Library.

During the next 18 months, Project Finish and nine other

adult education and literacy programs will share their experiences to create a national best practices guide to help publicly funded adult education programs recruit, manage and support volunteers.

Last year, Project Finish served more than 2,100 students at its nine locations throughout Johnson

County. Project Finish has 140 active volunteers. Janet Daley, volunteer coordinator, attributes the success of Project Finish, in large part, to its dedicated volunteers. Adult students come to Project Finish to improve their reading, writing and math skills; to study for the GED exam in order to receive a Kansas High School Diploma from the Kansas Board of Regents; and to learn to speak English in one of the 35 English classes offered through the program.

Susan McCabe, program director, reports that the number of students enrolling in ESL classes has doubled in the last seven years. In the fall 2006 semester, 920 students enrolled in ESL classes. To meet the growing demand for services, three new ESL locations have recently been added to the Project Finish program.

In October 2006, the Emmanuel Family Outreach Center, 71st and Quivira, agreed to accommodate evening classes for 150 people on an ESL waiting list. In January, Project Finish and El Centro, at its new location at Metcalf Bank, 75th and Metcalf, partnered in daytime ESL classes. Also in January, a new venture between Project Finish and the Shawnee Mission School District began with 10-week evening ESL classes offered to parents of Briarwood Elementary School students. SMSD provides childcare and Project Finish ESL classes.

"By opening these two new sites in January, we should be able to serve at least 200 more people," McCabe said.

Project Finish provides four levels of ESL classes. Kansas requires students to pass a state test to progress to the next level. When students complete four levels of ESL classes, they can enroll in a transition class that equips them to study for the GED.

In addition to volunteers, Project Finish has 55 part-time staff and four full-time staff including McCabe. For more information about Project Finish, contact McCabe at 913-829-8742. 🌸



El Centro is one of three new sites for Project Finish ESL classes.