

Program Performance and GED® Statistics

This is our second year preparing students for the new computer-based GED® tests. The new format has been challenging for adult education programs in Virginia as well as nationally, with some regions reporting as much as 75-80% declines in enrollment. Our instructors have adapted well to this change, and it shows in the extraordinary performance of our students.

Since July 1, 2015, the beginning of our school year, we have had 18 test takers. Of those, eight completed all GED® tests, with seven passing. Our pass rate for the first quarter of this year is 87.5%. We are encouraged by the perseverance of our students, and we hope to add many more GED® and NEDP® graduates in 2016.

The Surprising History of Algebra

- * The word "algebra" is a Latinized form of the Arabic "al-jabr," a term used by a ninth-century mathematician from Baghdad.
- * Variables were not always a dominant feature of algebra. In its early forms, algebra resembled what we now call formal logic or word problems.
- * Numerical concepts such as a base of ten, negative numbers, irrational numbers, and the validity of decimal fractions did not fully emerge until the 16th and 17th centuries.
- * Modern algebra, based on complex polynomial equations, is called "structural algebra."

Source: Britannica

CONTACT MRRAEP AT
www.mrraep.org
 or
call 1-800-322-7748

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MRRAEP NEWS

MOUNT ROGERS REGIONAL ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 2015

What's Your Story?

Three Brothers, One Dream

By
 Scott Zagorski

Serving the following localities:
 Bland County
 Carroll County
 Grayson County
 Smyth County
 Washington County
 Wythe County
 City of Bristol
 City of Galax



I was motivated to go back to school because my son was making good grades and he and my daughter challenged me to complete my education. Mrs. Heath had informed me that Mount Rogers was going to offer a welding class and I knew that a certificate in welding would give me a chance to provide a better life for me and my children. I wanted to be a good role model to them.

I also wanted my brother, Greg, to join me in attending Mrs. Heath's class and getting our GED®. I guess I be-

came his support system. He wanted to further his education so that he would feel better about himself. Greg had thought about attending a culinary school, but none was available in Bristol. So he and I started working on our GED® together. The morning of the test, Greg was too nervous to eat, although he was hungry. The test required us to write an essay, so he wrote about how to make a hamburger. He obviously wrote a good essay, because he passed. We have laughed over his essay.

We both earned our GED® and I joined the welding class. Greg had a health problem and decided to work on his weight and succeeded in doing so.

Graduation was held at Virginia High School and it was a great moment in our lives. My children were so proud of their dad and Uncle Greg.

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Scott Zagorski



Greg Zagorski



Daniel Zagorski

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Note from the Program Manager

Shirley Carlson

This year brings major changes to adult education, as well as to our program. We have strengthened our staff with the addition of new instructors, who are introduced in this newsletter, and we are in the early stages of implementing the National External Diploma Program, an online, self-directed alternative to the GED®. We are better equipped than ever before to serve the needs of adult learners in our region. Thank you for taking a moment to read about the latest developments at MRRAEP.

Welcome, New Staff!



Meagan Bradshaw: Meagan has taught in the classroom for 15 years, primarily math and more recently Earth Science. She teaches GED classes at Bland High School.

Victoria Smith: Victoria has taught first-through-fourth grade at Rhea Valley Elementary for eleven years (currently teaches third grade). She recently completed a Master's in TESOL from Regent University. Victoria teaches ESL.



Sandra Sharp: Sandra worked in administration for Carroll County Adult Education before earning teaching licensure. She teaches fifth-grade math and adult education classes at St. Paul Elementary School.

Stan Barringer: Stan joined MRRAEP as Data Specialist and NEDP Assessor in July 2015. Stan completed undergraduate studies at Liberty University and an M.A.R from Reformed Theological Seminary.



Gloria Wadle: A chemical engineer by trade, Gloria has taught calculus and trigonometry in her native Colombia, and teaches ESL classes at Bristol Public Library when she is not working at her "day job" as a quality control engineer in Bristol.

Annette Terry: Annette brings valuable experience in both K-12 and adult education to MRRAEP. She taught as a substitute in the Carroll County program before coming on as a regular instructor this year. She teaches GED and developmental students at the RAE Center in Hillsville.

Charles Brumfield: Charles has taught secondary-level math and earth science for Carroll County Public Schools since 2003. He joined MRRAEP in January 2014 as a math tutor, and he recently moved into the instructor position at the Galax VEC.

Josh Stamper: Josh is the most recent addition to our staff. He comes to us with an extensive background in education and tutoring. Josh teaches English at John Battle High School and will serve as an MRRAEP instructor in Washington County.

Smyth County Graduates May 14, 2015



Congratulations to our summer GED® graduates! These three were awarded their certificates at the Smyth County Alternative Education Center in Marion. Pictured from left:

**Myran Felts
April Greer
Erin Maynard**

National External Diploma Program

Mount Rogers Regional Adult Education Program (MRRAEP) will begin enrolling students in Bristol and Washington County in the National External Diploma Program® (NEDP®) in October. This program is an alternative to the GED® track and awards an adult diploma upon completion. The primary differences between NEDP® and GED® include self-directed online studies, and assessment that does not include testing.



NEDP® students will complete 70 modules, or units of related tasks, for a total workload of about 400 assignments. Students study for assignments individually, using primarily online resources, and complete them on a computer wherever and whenever they want. Students will

meet with an assessor to "grade" assignments and receive new tasks to complete. Program completion typically takes 6-12 months. When all modules are complete, students' portfolios are submitted for review. Successful completion awards an adult diploma issued by a school district Superintendent.

NEDP® offers numerous benefits to students. The program is flexible in both scheduling and timeline. Students are not required to take tests either during the program or at completion. NEDP® does, however, require exceptional self-motivation, ability to manage a complex workload, and reliable access to a computer and internet.

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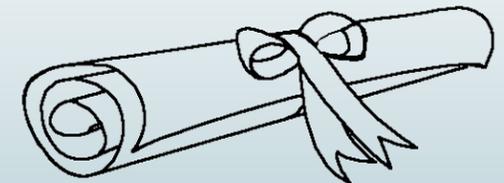
The next year, our young brother, Daniel, had a life-changing experience with a near fatal health issue. He lost everything he had - his wife, stepchildren and his home. He moved to Bristol to start his life over.

I completed the welding program and plan to continue my education; Greg is enrolled in the Diesel Mechanic Program at VHCC and Daniel has been accepted in the new welding program next year.

With Greg's and my help we got him home with family. In order to regain his life, he lost fifty pounds, went into therapy, and, with encouragement from his family, he entered the Mount Rogers Regional Adult Education Program.

I guess the lesson behind this story is that you can be your own worst enemy when it comes to bettering your life. You will find excuses why you are not good enough, strong enough, afraid of failure or just plain scared. You have to find it within yourself to reach your goal. If we three brothers can do it after 21+ years, you can do it also.

Then he met Mrs. Heath, who realized what he was going through and offered him an understanding ear. She inspired him to stay with the program. She told him that he had what it takes to succeed and to be able to meet his goals. Daniel had previously dropped out of school to take care of his grandmother, who was dying of cancer. He made a promise to her that he would return to school and complete his education.



Sincerely,
Scott Zagorski

Since that time he has held down jobs but always knew that something was missing. Daniel is a smart person and someone once told him that he was not uneducated, he was just unschooled. When he began to attend GED® classes, he began to feel empowered.

When he earned his GED® on May 18, 2015, he became the last of us brothers to do so. We, all three, earned our GED® with Mrs. Heath at her little house at 1723 Euclid Ave in Bristol. It became our second home.

Mount Rogers Regional Adult Education Program offers free classes for the following:

- GED® Preparation for NEW Computer Based Test
- College Placement Test Preparation
- Improving Reading and Math Skills
- Career Readiness Certificate Preparation
- English as a Second Language PLUGGEDINVA

Career Coaching Available

If you would like to learn more about free adult education classes in a location near you, please call MRRAEP at (800) 322-7748 or visit www.mrraep.org