

Student Success Stories



Issue 10

Helping Nevada adults improve basic skills and get jobs through GED, Career Pathways, Literacy, ESL, Civics, Citizenship, & Transition to Postsecondary programs. Nevada Adult Education services are federally funded through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act.

www.NevadaAdultEducation.org

Norbel navigates path to citizenship

By GBC ESL/Citizenship Instructor Hal Hibbert, harold.hibbert@gbcnv.edu, 775-753-2230

Norbel Uribe was born in Mexico in July 1983 and immigrated to the United States with his family when he was three months old. When Norbel was six years old his parents worked with a lawyer to submit his paperwork for legal residency. His family was scammed twice by lawyers and paid over \$10,000 to obtain the proper paperwork for residency. This money was paid with no results.

Finally, after 15 years of frustration, the family met with a lawyer who took no money unless Norbel got his residency, which he finally received in February 2004. In the meantime, Norbel's siblings were all born in the United States and therefore U.S. citizens.

Norbel was educated in the United States and graduated from Elko High School in 2002. In July of 2005 he got a job as a janitor at Great Basin College. As he worked, he saw people graduating from the college and wondered if his janitorial job was worthwhile for the rest of his life.



To effectively participate in education, work, and civic opportunities, immigrants and those with limited English proficiency must not only master English but also be able to understand and navigate governmental, educational, and workplace systems, as well as key American institutions, such as banking and health care.

Nevada's eight federally funded programs (<http://nvedu.org/abepgrams>) provide integrated English literacy and civics education services. They emphasize contextualized instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation, and US history and government, helping students acquire the skills and knowledge to become active and informed parents, workers, and community members.

These programs also receive federal funds to provide English literacy, basic skills, GED, and career pathways classes. They serve approximately 7,500 adults throughout the state.

He began taking classes in criminal justice and diesel technology and transferred to the Security Department in 2007. He received his certificate in diesel technology, but while he was taking criminal justice classes he decided he wanted to become a police officer, a dream he's held since childhood. His position as a security officer at GBC helped convince him that law enforcement was the field for him.

Norbel faced challenges to reach this goal. First and foremost he had to obtain citizenship status. He enrolled in the citizenship classes in the ABE/ESL Department at GBC (<http://www.gbcnv.edu/alc/>). He attended regularly, studied very hard, and asked many questions. His persistence and dedication paid off when on January 8, 2013, he had his interview with USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) in Reno. The interview process includes answering questions about the United States. There are 100 questions that each candidate must study. Ten of these questions are drawn randomly for the test, and the applicant must answer six of these questions correctly. Norbel answered the first six, so he didn't have to answer any more. There are also tests on reading and writing in English, which Norbel easily answered.

Norbel left GBC employment in December 2012 for a job with the Nevada Highway Patrol as a maintenance technician. This is the foot in the door he needed to help him reach his goal as a peace officer! If Norbel maintains a high level of performance he may be eligible to go through the hiring process as a patrolman and attend Nevada's POST (Peace Officers' Standards and Training) Academy.

Norbel is married and has three daughters. He is grateful for a family that strongly supports his efforts.

From humble beginnings, through a fifteen-year battle to obtain his residency, to getting his citizenship and gaining employment with an agency that he has dreamed of working for, Norbel has proven that hard work and dedication can help make your dreams come true.

GED recipients offer advice

Call CALL



I'm writing to let you know how much I appreciated the outstanding service that the CALL Program provided. In the beginning, I was apprehensive about attending the course. However, I quickly became comfortable with the classes and my teacher, Eugene Lang.

The CALL Program staff was very knowledgeable about helping with everyone's individual skills. I was able to improve my weaknesses and grow my strengths. I would recommend this cohort learning environment to all seeking to achieve a goal. For instance, if you want to learn English, reading, writing, or obtain a GED, which I did on January 16, 2013, attend classes with the CALL Program.

I will never forget the journey and the overwhelming support from the CALL Program team. Thank you for your hard work and dedication. —Troy Hoggard

Literacy Trainer Rhea Watson wrote: Troy Hoggard was a General Education Development (GED) student in the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District CALL Program's GED preparatory class, an intensive eight-week course where students met five days a week for three hours daily. Troy was the only student in his class to earn perfect attendance! Following the GED class, Troy took the official GED practice test and due to his exceptional scores earned a free voucher for the GED test from the Center of Adult Education Services at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Troy is another successful CALL alumnus and a proud recipient of the GED.

Find more information about the CALL Program at <http://lvccld.org/cardsservices/call.cfm>, 702/507-3530.

Push yourself

By NNLC GED/ABE Instructor Marianne Rasmussen, marianner@nnlc.org, 775/356-1007

Jesus Hernandez never felt comfortable in school, "So I just left," he said. He got a job as a union painter, but when the construction industry slowed in Reno, he decided to do something for his future.

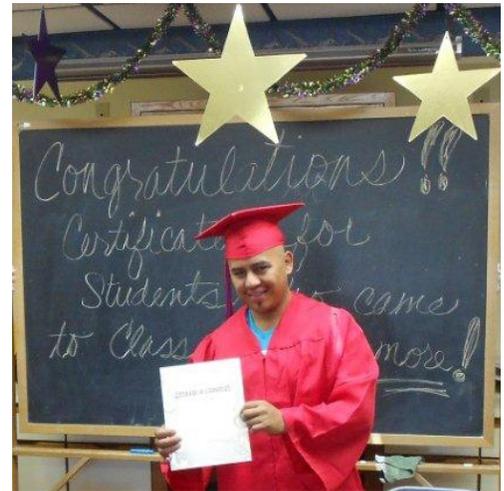
His wife had taken English classes at the Northern Nevada Literacy Council (www.nnlc.org, 775/356-1007), so he decided to try their GED classes. Unlike his earlier experience with school, Jesus felt comfortable at NNLC. He didn't feel intimidated by teachers or classmates. "I wasn't embarrassed to raise my hand in class," he remembers. Jesus was a good student who participated in class and had good attendance, sometimes turning down jobs to come to class.

Before long, Jesus was ready to take the GED. He was nervous at first, but then, "I began to see that the questions were about things the teachers had taught me." He passed the test after studying for about nine months.

When asked what difference having his GED diploma has made in his life, Jesus is quick to answer. "It made a difference to my kids. They were challenging me to get my GED, and now they're so proud of me!" His three children weren't the only ones who were proud of his accomplishment: Jesus is the first member of his extended family to earn a diploma or GED. The whole family celebrated with a huge party.

Now that he has his GED, Jesus plans to continue with NNLC's Career Pathways program.

Asked if he has any advice for someone who wants to earn a GED, Jesus advised, "It's never too late. Push yourself to do it!"



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For more information: Brad Deeds

Adult Education Director

bdeeds@doe.nv.gov 775/687-7289