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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

TWO LOCAL RESIDENTS TO SHARE SUCCESS OF LITERACY PROGRAM

CHARLESTON, IL-While not much can match the excitement of teaching others how to read and write, two Eastern Illinois University staff members say being selected to speak at a state-wide conference on literacy comes close.

Partners in Adult Literacy (PAL) program volunteers Ramona Wise, a technical assistant in Eastern's Booth Library, and Redith Campbell, a transcribing secretary in the journalism department at Eastern, will share their success in team teaching adults with hundreds of literacy program coordinators, staff and volunteers from throughout the state attending the "Partnerships for Literacy" conference Feb. 2-4 in Chicago.

The conference is sponsored by the Illinois Network of Literacy/Adult Educational Resources (State Resource Center), the Secretary of State's Literacy Office and Illinois Community College Board.

Their topic, "The Herman Method for Reversing Reading Failure: Small Group Tutoring--A Team Approach," was selected from a written proposal they submitted to the Secretary of State's Literacy Office. Proposals were accepted from the

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Illinois literacy network and national network of state literacy resource centers.

"We felt honored our proposal was selected from among many proposals," said Wise and Campbell. They spend approximately 70 hours a month team teaching four adults, ranging in age from 30 to 50, who need remedial help in reading, writing, spelling and math.

Wise, who was named PAL Volunteer of the Year this past spring, has been a volunteer for six years and is now on the Project PAL staff as a tutor trainer.

She said, "When my husband and I moved to Charleston in the late 1970s, I was not able to find a teaching job. Because I had prepared for a career in teaching and was a speech therapist for 15 years in public schools in Illinois and Wisconsin, I was disappointed when there were no teaching positions here. I felt a real loss in my life," she said.

Campbell, like Wise, became a Project PAL volunteer to fill a void in her life. "After my father died four years ago, I felt an emptiness and the need to help others. I wanted to find something to do where I could make a difference in people's lives and thought Project PAL could meet that need," she said.

The program, coordinated by Pat Hemmett, is a cooperative effort by the college, Mattoon Area Adult Education Center and the Pana Adult Center. It is funded by a grant from the Secretary of State's Literacy Office, with additional help from the Illi-

nois State Board of Education.

Hemmett commented, "I am very pleased that Ramona and Redith have been selected to participate in the conference due to their excellent work with students in Project PAL."

Two years ago, the Charleston PAL program won a second place award in the General Category of the Governor's Hometown Awards, competing against four other volunteer organizations from towns with similar populations.

Both Wise and Campbell do one-on-one tutoring with students in Charleston, and this past May, they began to pilot a team teaching effort with a group of students in Mattoon. Although the program is still in its early stages, it has already had positive results.

"We have a partnership with these students. We are not only their teachers, but their friends too. Because all of us learn in different ways, we model our program to the learning needs of individual students. That may include putting pictures with words or organizing "working" games. We also extend our regular weekly class meeting a half hour to work on things the students specifically request. It's exciting to see that they are already making significant accomplishments," said Wise and Campbell.

Wise noted, "Because we are such a close group, we seek input from group members before accepting a new participant. It's very important that everybody feels comfortable with each other."

Individuals interested in becoming a Project PAL volunteer or student should call the Project PAL office at Lake Land College at 1-800-252-4121 or 217-234-5240.