



Beyond the Newsletter: Stay in the OTAN Loop

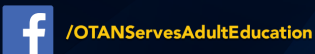
This month's theme, Ctrl + Alt + Evolve: Refreshing the OTAN Approach, marks our transition to digital-first communication. We are retiring our long-standing print newsletter to make room for dynamic new streams.

Don't worry: you can still stay connected via our monthly Digest, website news posts, email blasts, and social media (LinkedIn, X, and Facebook). Coming soon: podcast-style videos, microlearning, and an expanded presence on Instagram and Bluesky! To stay current, ensure your [free OTAN membership](#) is up to date and follow us on your favorite platform. The future of OTAN is just a click away!

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The Revised Digital Learning Guidance is Now Available!

First published in the fall of 2022, the *California Adult Education Digital Learning Guidance* (or DLG) serves as a practical resource for individuals who support adult learners – teachers, classified and support staff, counselors and transition specialists, and administrators – in designing and implementing digital learning experiences with adult learners in mind. OTAN is excited to share that, after a year of revision and in consultation with numerous adult education experts in and outside of California, the updated DLG is now published!

Our goal was to build on the 2022 version and make the DLG more relevant, practical, and accessible. You can find the revised DLG on this [updated OTAN DLG home page](#), where you will find the full PDF, web-based versions of each chapter, and a brand-new chapter on Generative AI.

In the coming months, we will continue adding resources to support implementation, including short videos highlighting digital learning in practice, an updated self-paced online course, and a new facilitator guide aligned with the AI chapter. (Note that the

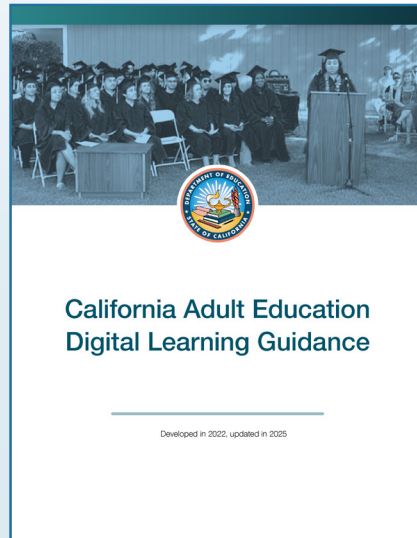
Explore Key Resources section of the website is live and includes tools from the 2022 version. It will be updated as new materials are finalized.)

We also are excited to share two professional learning and outreach efforts and hope you will consider participating and helping spread the word. First, we have been running a ten-week facilitated course cohort that began in March. The course, which is free and open to all California adult educators, is designed to help educators and staff engage with the DLG and build practical resources. It blends asynchronous activities with live

sessions and requires about one hour per week. Look for future courses next school year!

In addition, we want to add short video and podcast-style recordings that showcase digital tools and strategies in action. You can find details about participating [here](#); this is open to instructors, tutors, navigators, support staff, and administrators.

Finally, OTAN can customize and provide in-person or virtual training for your staff on any topic within the DLG. Email us at support@otan.us to learn more! 🌐



Inside This Issue:

- ★ Learn more about DLAC!
- ★ Upcoming OTAN Projects
- ★ TDLS 2026 Highlights
- ★ OTAN Staff Updates



Learn more about OTAN's Digital Leadership Academy!

OTAN's Digital Leadership Academy (DLAC) is a signature, two-year professional learning experience designed for adult education leaders, instructional staff, and support personnel who are ready to become leaders in digital instruction and program implementation at their agencies. Through a collaborative process with school teams, OTAN training staff, and experienced technology and leadership coaches, DLAC provides a cohesive, sustained approach to developing digital leadership capacity across programs.



Those recordings eventually will be available for all to watch and learn from after being posted on the OTAN website as well as the OTAN YouTube Channel.

OTAN is now accepting applications for the 2026–28 DLAC cohort, and applications are due August 10, 2026. Applicants must be part of a team, have the support of their agency administrator, and be willing to learn and share growth with their colleagues. More information about the Digital Leadership Academy, past cohorts, and the application process can be found on the OTAN website at: otan.us/ProfessionalDevelopment/Dlac If you have questions or would like additional information,

please contact support@otan.us with the subject DLAC Information. And please consider joining OTAN's next DLAC cohort! 🌟

Our current 2024–26 DLAC cohort will be reporting on overcoming challenges and successes they have experienced over the past two years this May as they wrap up the program.



Upcoming OTAN Projects

Following the release of the updated *Digital Learning Guidance* (DLG) in February, OTAN is hard at work on three major projects designed to streamline and enrich adult education across California.

Course Outline Builder

Set for a July 1 launch, this web-based tool simplifies the creation of CDE-compliant course outline documents. Developed in consultation with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with extensive administrative experience, the Builder is designed to streamline and simplify the process of course outline development. We need your feedback! To ensure this tool meets the field's diverse needs, we are seeking participants for focus groups and user testing during May 2026. If you'd like to provide input, please email support@otan.us.



DLG Podcast Videos

In partnership with Community Learning Partners, we are piloting a microlearning interview series. These short, conversational videos feature California educators sharing practical strategies and tools for meaningful digital learning. This peer-to-peer series is designed for quick, actionable professional development and is tied to our new DLG. Stay tuned for the official release later this year!

California Adult Education History Website

The Adult Ed History site is undergoing its first major overhaul since 2005. A team of SMEs is currently bridging the 20-year gap, drafting four new chapters to bring the narrative up to date. By June 30, 2026, the site will feature a modern interface and new video vignettes highlighting perspectives from past and present adult educators, the CDE, and the three state leadership projects (CASAS, CALPRO, and OTAN). 🌟

Technology and Digital Learning Symposium Highlights

TDLS concluded this year on March 7th at Monterey Adult School; here's what you missed if you couldn't join us!

270 attendees joined us for two days of edtech professional development along with plenty of opportunities to collaborate with fellow adult educators. TDLS was hybrid again this year, with 38% of attendees joining us online from across California and other states.



Our keynote address, led by author and international speaker Roni Habib, kicked TDLS

off with a gripping, SEL-focused session including active participation from the audience throughout. Afterwards, attendees set out to experience over 60 professional development sessions spanning topics including: classroom uses for edtech and AI, data-informed hybrid teaching, hands-on edtech tool demonstrations, and a variety of other, more niche, topics.

As always, TDLS closed with our Tech Slam, a popular event where any attendee (in-person or online) can get on the mic in front of the audience and share their favorite tech tool or tip they learned at TDLS!

Next year's TDLS will be in SoCal at Torrance Adult School, March 5th–6th, 2027. As in previous years, the call for presenters and registration will open in October of this year. We hope to see you there! 🌐

OTAN Staff Updates



Jeanna Borges joins OTAN after having served for many years as Principal of a private school for children from infancy through age five. After taking time away to raise her two children, she felt called back to education and is thrilled to support the field as OTAN's Administrative Assistant. She enjoys camping, traveling, and baking for friends, colleagues, and family.

Senior .NET Application Developer Conner Jackson brings eight years of programming experience from the South Dakota Department of Transportation, where he developed web and desktop applications. Now building OTAN's web tools, he values doing meaningful work that benefits the public. His hobbies include programming, gaming, and traveling with his family.

Ana Mendoza-Santiago, OTAN's new Technology Projects Coordinator, has over 15 years of adult education experience across several adult schools. An Indigenous Mixtec educator from Oaxaca, Mexico, she holds two bachelor's degrees and a master's in English focused on adult education. Currently an Ed.D. candidate, her research explores the generational impact of adult education on

families. She is passionate about technology's role in transforming students' lives.

Elvira Harris joins OTAN after three years as a Career Technical Education Principal supporting instructors and launching programs. As Project Specialist II, Technology Projects, she will assist educators, manage communications, and design trainings. Outside of work, she enjoys gardening, sci-fi reading, and outdoor adventures with her three young children.

Nada Anasseri recently accepted a position with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), where she will help bridge K–12 and adult education and elevate community and family voices. Congratulations, Nada! We look forward to seeing you continue to make a positive impact in this next chapter.

After 25 years with OTAN, Yolanda O'Shea is retiring. Her contributions as Database Designer included the Technology Plan, Lesson Plan Builder, Course Approvals, CAEP TAP Registration, the OTAN Business site, Students Succeed, and the CA Adult Ed Professional Development Calendar. Thank you, Yolanda, for your decades of service! 🌐



Jeanna Borges



Conner Jackson



Ana Mendoza-Santiago



Elvira Harris

Accessibility Tip

Accessibility by Design: Building Content Everyone Can Use



Creating content that meets universal accessibility needs is essential for inclusion, equity, and usability. Accessible content ensures that people with disabilities can equally access information across websites, social media, videos, presentations, and documents, while also improving clarity for everyone. Utilizing

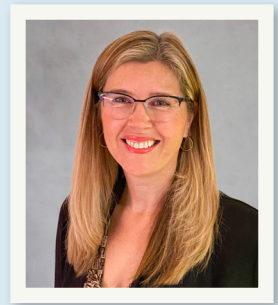


guidance like WCAG helps navigate accessible design, such as using clear headings, sufficient color contrast, keyboard navigation, and descriptive alt text. Videos should include captions, transcripts and audio description, while presentation slides should follow logical reading order and accessible templates.

Tools make accessibility achievable: WAVE, axe DevTools, and Google Lighthouse check web content; Microsoft PowerPoint and Word include built-in Accessibility Checkers; Adobe Acrobat scans PDFs; and platforms like YouTube and social media channels support captions and alt text. Building accessibility into every medium from the start reduces barriers. 🌐

From the Adult Education Director

As this chapter of OTAN's newsletter closes, I want to thank each of you who have followed, contributed to, and supported the OTAN newsletter over the years. While this marks the end of this form of communication, it also opens the door to new ways for us to connect, collaborate, and support you and your program.



At OTAN, we are committed to helping teams create relevant, practical, and sustainable change through technology. One of the most impactful ways we do this is through our signature, two-year Digital Leadership Academy (DLAC). Participants often describe DLAC as a "game-changer." Teams grow together, build confidence, and develop sustainable technology solutions that continue well beyond the program.

Applications for DLAC Cohort 6 opened April 1. Who should apply: Teams of 2–3 individuals who represent a range of roles, can advance agency goals, commit to the full program, and want to build leadership and technology skills.

The DLAC experience supports agency technology goals and continuous improvement. We encourage you to apply early - space is limited! Questions? support@otan.us.

Thank you for being a part of our OTAN community. We look forward to continuing our work together in new and meaningful ways. 🌐

Renee Collins
Adult Education Director



Scan these QR codes to learn more about these exciting OTAN resources!



There are many ways to stay connected to OTAN throughout the year! Read our news items, get our monthly Digest, and follow us on social media!



Join our next two-year Digital Leadership Academy cohort! Learn more about organizing and submitting your DLAC application which is due by August 10!