

## GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE

# Special Issue on Advancing Innovative Technologies and New Concepts in Adult and Community Education

*Valerie C. Bryan, Florida Atlantic University, USA*

The intent of the *International Journal of Adult Vocational Education and Technology* (IJAVET) is to challenge its readers to take a look at a host of issues, practices, and even principles, in a myriad of agencies and organizations using the lens of scholarly research with quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches. The following articles reflect the diverse perspectives of IJAVET and will encourage the reader to look from several frames of reference at seemingly unrelated topics to find moments of clarity, affirmation, and perhaps intentional confusion.

The authors vary by their training and their disciplines: Adult and community education, human resource development, vocational education, school leadership, public administration, research methodology, organizational development, library science, fire and emergency services, and the list goes on. The locations and research study settings vary. Yet, you will continue to hear similar terms across the articles, such as transformational leaders, disorienting dilemmas, strategic thinking, visioning and re-visioning, cultural shift, lifelong learning, social justice, dispositional barriers, linguistic isolation, nonformal and informal learning,

self-directed learning, holding environments, disenfranchised learners, adult learners, capacity building, high performing institutions, cadre of learners, role of mentors and change leaders, recruitment and retention, engagement, technology and communication tools and techniques, collaboration, online learning and digital tools. As you take the journey, reflect on the common elements in our fields and the unique differences that serve as challenges and opportunities for future research and scholarly endeavors.

The various authors are taking us on a journey. First we will look at a university and a corporation as learning organizations using a case study approach. The journey will continue with a snapshot view of public libraries as safe havens for adult learning, language acquisition and technological exploration using interviews, case studies, narrative research, concept mapping, and document analysis. We then get to take a side trip into emergency systems and view the impact of communication technologies in this environment and assess how different populations are impacted by the role of social justice. The next article asks us to look at a school system as it identifies how it best can meet the leadership needs and maximize the potential

for learning using new strategies of selection and training to meet its manpower needs using various resource development tools. The last article asks us to determine how we can best encourage retention in online environments when the tools of engagement are exponentially changing before our very eyes. The article as does several other articles looks at the impact of future trends in information technologies and the value of learning communities even in online settings.

Sit back and enjoy the journey. Then reflect on how your own agency, or views, or training may alter the discussions and findings in these articles. Become a participant in the work presented. Contact the authors and engage in collaboration across states or continents and share your own research.

*Valerie C. Bryan*  
*Guest Editor*  
*IJAVET*

*Valerie C. Bryan is Professor in Educational Leadership and Research Methodology in Adult and Community Education at Florida Atlantic University and was selected as the Charles Stewart Mott Eminent Scholar in Community Education, an endowed position that was established in 1981.*