

**Words Create Worlds®
January to March 2009
Certified AI Facilitators**



Congratulations to newly certified Appreciative Inquiry Facilitators **Tom Quinn**, Kirkland Community College, **Dawna Vance**, Contra Costa Health Services, **Jeanne Walker-Johnson**, Contra Costa Health Services, and **Frances Trant**, Contra Costa Health Services.

The AIFT schedule is updated as new trainings are added. We invite you to visit our new registration page: <http://register.companyofexperts.net>. You can check out all of current offerings and register online!

You will find all past issues of Words Create Worlds and our 20th anniversary edition with great stories on the Resources section of our blog: <http://companyofexperts.net/biz/>. We will be adding more stories of success. Let us know if you have a case study or success story that we may want to profile on our blog!

We are planning our 2010 schedule and are looking for locations for our program listed below. If you have recommendations, please let us know.

Appreciative Inquiry Facilitator Training (AIFT)

Our successful four-day program designed to train facilitators and more. Please visit the Center for Appreciative Inquiry for more information.

Leadership Development Institute (LDI)

A series of one-half day programs offered on-site to your leadership team. A two-day leadership program based on appreciative inquiry is also available.

Department Chair Institute (DCI)

The DCI has outstanding content and has the same high quality as the AIFT.

If you would like to talk about a program on-site or if you would like to attend one of the trainings, email Kathy@companyofexperts.net or call us at (702) 228-4699. We are looking to add to our schedule currently under development.

Book on Appreciative Inquiry

Nancy Stetson's book has received great reviews and available for purchase! Nancy has worked closely with community colleges engaging them and encouraging them to look toward the future and build on their strengths using an Appreciative Inquiry approach.

Stories of Positive Change in the Community College: Appreciative Inquiry in Action published by the Company of Experts, Inc is now available as a soft-cover book and as a download. Nancy captures AI in action and produces outcomes using the stories of community colleges. This translates into an easy to read book that provides step by step answers to How Did They Do That! For more information or to purchase this new book, visit <http://www.companyofexperts.net>.

Newly Certified AI Facilitators

TOM QUINN attended the AIFT in Houston, Texas with the intention of using Appreciative Inquiry for Kirkland Community College's strategic planning. Tom is the President of KCC and he told us that "A major goal was to develop a plan that would generate a collective vision for the immediate future, building on the college's strengths. It was also a goal to move the college beyond the issues of the previous administration into a more positive culture." They began the inquiry with the focus as ***KCC At It's Best!***

FOR THE INQUIRY: On September 12, 2008 after months of planning (including a pre-summit inquiry) all 175 employees of the college attended the summit. Using their modified interview guide and the face to face paired interviews, the summit included an introduction to Appreciative Inquiry. The group worked throughout the day, developing provocative propositions and planning for the future.

TOM REPORTS: AI fits very well with the AQIP process for accreditation (something I worried needlessly about), that AI works really well for planning, that the process is mentally exhausting for participants (maybe a good thing if it demonstrates learning), and that this is a fast moving process that requires preparation, especially if a large group summit is part of the inquiry. If I were to change anything, I would spend more time creating better provocative propositions because that would make writing a strategic plan easier.

I really appreciated the warm comments received from employees after the summit and in the weeks following. I was especially happy that the members of the community and the trustees fit in with the groups of employees and came away very happy that they participated. I think that AI lends itself to this very well. It was fun to see some socially members of the board and other community leaders singing and acting in the visual (skit) portion of the inquiry

TOMS'ON-GOING EFFORTS: I had personal commitment and a lot “riding” on the planning summit. I wished for a process to bring people together to create a vision for the future, a process that would help employees move from past complaints to building on our strengths, a process that would concentrate on the positive, a process that would incorporate members of the public and make them feel welcome, and a process that would help employees think strategically. AI worked for us. Mission accomplished.

“Please let me list a few comments taken from the end of inquiry evaluation that indicate a willingness to change. The listing is in response to the question “from what you have learned today, what is one gift that you can apply in your role at KCC?”

To participate more with KCC activities
Give to the students the power to be positive
A smile
Positive thinking
Help out more
A positive attitude is larger than I thought
Thinking big
Provide encouragement and praise.

TOM QUINN attended the AIFT at Houston Community College with Nancy Stetson and Lane Glenn as the Trainers/Facilitators.



FRANCES TRANT, DAWNA VANN, AND JEANNE WALKER-JOHNSON attended the Reno AIFT and report that this as a group submission. They are the three core trainers who typically conduct facilitations as a team for Contra Costa Health Services Department (CCHS). We three represent the Office of the Director, Ambulatory Care Services, and Personnel Services. CCHS has 3,500+ employees ranging over 10 distinct divisions that provide integrated health services, including a county hospital and nine health centers, mental health, public health, a federally recognized HMO, and other ‘safety’ divisions such as emergency medical services, environmental health, hazardous materials, and administrative divisions supporting the county’s health system. They report that the department provides basic and legally mandated health care to a county population of almost one million.

FOR THE INQUIRY: California Children Services (CCS) is a program within Family Maternal Child Health (FMCH) in the Public Health Division of Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) Department that ensures the provision of medical services and durable medical equipment to children of underinsured Contra Costa County families. The inquiry group included clerks, clerical supervisor, public health nurses, a nurse manager, eligibility workers (who determine if families are allowed state medical benefits), social worker, physician all reporting to a program manager.

The core group that they met with included the FMCH Director, union Business Agent, union shop steward, and the CCS Program Manager. They identified topic was **team building**. This topic came about due to dissention amongst the staff. Through coaching and communication workshops initiated by Frances Trant of Personnel Services, it became clear that there was a lack of appreciation and respect for the various activities performed by each component within the program. The facilitators modified the AIFT generic interview format due to the intensive work we were performing with the group. The CCS team is a dynamic group committed to providing exceptional service to our clients and our co-workers while embracing open communication, trust and respect in a collaborative work environment. The CCS possibility statement through this inquiry was: *The CCS team is a dynamic group committed to providing exceptional service to our clients and our co-workers while embracing open communication, trust and respect in a collaborative work environment.*

FRANCES REPORTS: I learned to be a more collaborative co-facilitator, as this was the first time I had *jointly* designed and collaboratively delivered a workshop in a very long time. I now do my best to model and support the use of 'appreciative' language during all interactions, workshops, meetings, discussions, etc. My personal best experience related to this workshop was because I had knowledge that this group did not function well as a team prior to this workshop, despite my best efforts with other team based communication support workshops. When we began to introduce **appreciative** concepts during the workshop, participants put aside their differences and began to collaborate in creating a new dream for their team.

DAWNA REPORTS: I learned that as a co-facilitator it is important to model the appreciative process amongst the facilitator team as a way of delivering the best possible team support to our participants; particularly when things do not go as planned during the workshop. I have also learned that I need to assume goodwill with my colleagues and wait for the end of workshop debrief to discuss issues that arise. My personal best experience related to this workshop was linking their possibility statement with creating a word world and having them 'get' the power of words they choose, and make the distinction that their words are appreciative.

JEANNE REPORTS: I learned that I have a true passion for appreciative communication and conversations, and during facilitation process I must be aware of the most appropriate time to regain control of the discussion to support and maintain an

appreciative focus. My personal best experience related to this training was the moment that I **completely** engaged and connected with everyone in the room about appreciative conversations.

FRANCES, DAWNA AND JEANNE'S ON-GOING EFFORTS: After the inquiry, it was reported that one member of the organization who had been unable to attend the inquiry initiated a change in process. Using their newly acquired appreciative skill set the organizational members worked through and resolved the conflict and feel that the appreciative skills have become embedded in their daily interactions. The trio also has periodic check-ins with the program manager, nurse manager, clerical supervisor for success stories.

FRANCES, DAWNA AND JEANNE attended the 2007 Reno AIFT with Charles Miller and Jeanie Cockell as the Trainer/Facilitators.

BRINGING TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS TO YOU – ONLINE

Company of Experts will soon be offering workshops and training online! By offering customizable training solutions, cost efficient learning and training on demand, you will have the same great workshops, saving you time and money. We have partnered with Fintelo (a learning management software), which opens new doors for the Company of Experts providing us the opportunity to design and deliver quality online programs. We can support your current staff development services.

Wishing each of you hope, health and happiness.

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