

## A Brief Introduction to the International Side of CDFs

BY MARY ANN POWELL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

*Did you know that CDF training has gone global? In addition to Singapore, Kenya and Egypt, other trainings have occurred in Qatar, Japan, and Taiwan, and discussions continue with several other countries (including Peru), as the NCDA CDF project expands internationally.*

### SINGAPORE....

Sing Chee, MA (Education and Counseling Psychology, University of Missouri, Columbia), pioneered and was the Director of the NUS Career Centre at the National University of Singapore until 2008 when she retired. She is now actively sharing her knowledge and experiences in career counseling with others in Singapore. She developed the Singapore Occupational Card Sort (adapted from the Missouri Occupational Card Sort) so that Singaporeans can have an Asian flavor when using career assessment tools. She was accredited as a NCDA Career Development Facilitator Instructor in 2009 (the first from Singapore). Sing Chee writes the following about Singapore:

I have just completed conducting my first CDF course in Singapore, and it was a success! My participants work at Singapore's Workforce Development Agency Career Centres, and many of them hold senior positions there. They assist the unemployed in Singapore, mainly the older and less educated citizens, as well as some younger professionals. (Singapore's unemployment rate is about 2%).

It was an interesting experience for me, sharing the contents of the Career Development Facilitators (CDF) course with these participants who are experienced practitioners, but may not have undergone formal training in career development. While many theories recommended in the CDF curriculum were generally applicable across cultures, there were some topics in the curriculum which required modification to suit Singapore's context. Additional topics were also introduced, like "Life Career Themes", "Life Career Assessment" and "Work Alliance" discussed in the book "Career Counseling – Contexts, Processes, and Techniques" by N. C. Gysbers, M. J. Heppner, and J. A. Johnston.

The participants were also introduced to Singapore's very own card sort, the "Singapore Occupational Card Sort" with which they readily identified and adopted for use among their clients. A Chinese version of this instrument would be available to them to assist their older clients who are more fluent in the Chinese language.

It was a gratifying experience for me when the participants demonstrated their ability to apply the knowledge and skills propagated in the CDF course through the regular case study presentations, as well as in their group projects on "The Ideal Career Centre".

I look forward to sharing my career development facilitation knowledge and career advising experiences with more interested participants in Singapore!

### EGYPT...

ElNamaa (meaning growth and prosperity in Arabic) is an Egyptian youth-led non-governmental organization (NGO). ElNamaa was established by Ahmed Mostafa who has been certified as the first Arab Career Development Facilitator Instructor and as a NCDA CDF eLearning Instructor. ElNamaa is the first and only Arab Association in the entire Middle East and North Africa (MENA) catering to career development programs. ElNamaa earned NCDA affiliation in May 2010.

One of ElNamaa top agenda items is the Career Development Facilitator (CDF) Program, delivered via ACDA-MENA (Arab Career Development Academy in the Middle East and North Africa). ACDA-MENA provides all career counseling programs (social, psychological, professional, cultural, thoughtfulness, and wellness) and offers comprehensive educational opportunities including career, general, developmental education, lifelong learning, and community services.

In order to achieve its mission, ACDA-MENA developed these goals:

- NCDA CDF program prepares students for certification, and upon completion, CDFs seek CCE (The Center for Credentialing & Education) GCDF Credential. As of September 2010, Ahmed Mostafa has trained 67 GCDFs.
- Society Developmental education prepares diverse community members to survive, act, and share in lifelong learning.
- Occupational skills developed through tailored training, bridge academic education and modern labor-market demand (marketing, sales, leadership, management, education, etc).

Hind Ghanima, an NCDA member and GCDF who provided the above information, is one of the few Arab and Egyptian NCDA members and licensed GCDFs. Since



enrolling in the GCDF program in January 2010, she has exerted her best effort combined with her 17 years of versatile professional experience in adapting the NCDA curriculum and code of ethics to contribute to this newly introduced field to the whole Middle East in the broadest sense and to the much needed women development sector in the most exclusive distinguished sense.

Ghanima's background is in translation (English/Arabic), editing, sales, administrative, Information Technology, etc... She now heads the International Committee, and been in charge of communicating and corresponding with NCDA, CCE, assessment tools providers, international NGOs, etc.

Roberta Floyd, MA, NCC, NCCC, LPC, NCDA CDF Master Trainer, writes this about Egypt: "In 2009, I had several messages on my answering machine from a gentleman from Egypt. He was attending a career coaching training in California and wanted to get trained as a CDF Instructor as well. Ahmed Mostafa was a persistent man. He was determined to bring CDF training to Egypt. With the approval of NCDA, I began the CDFI training that week and arranged to complete the training at the NCDA conference later that year in St. Louis. As a CDF Instructor, Ahmed

accomplished in one year, four CDF trainings, plus established a professional non-profit organization that is now affiliated with NCDA. Not bad for one year! I was able to attend the graduation of one of his CDF classes, and was extremely impressed with his students. Most of those I met were from the education and social work arena and already had plans of how to use the NCDA CDF Competencies in their work settings."

On a related note, Roberta explains, "While all of Ahmed's CDF students work in Arabic with students who will be working in the middle east labor market, I have also trained seven career center staff members at the American University in Cairo. All of their instruction and counseling is in English and their students are preparing to work in American and multinational organizations."

Ahmed Mostafa, NCDA CDFI, JCDC, JCTCI, wrote to NCDA recently after ElNamaa became an NCDA International Affiliate: "I felt so good and proud that all of us, NCDA, Bobbi (Roberta Floyd), and my colleagues here in Egypt, shared in this great achievement in that short period. Thank GOD for driving me to that path and career and thank GOD for having such a wonderful people like you all. Please, be aware that what happened till now and our future plan and agenda is based on our belief in the NCDA CDF program and how it is positively affecting people's life."

### KENYA...

Five career practitioners in Kenya, East Africa, have completed the Career Development Facilitator (CDF) curriculum through an online training provided by Career Development Leadership Alliance (CDLA), the non-profit arm of the Career Development Alliance (CDA). Prior to the training, manuals and DVDs were sent directly to participants. Initial training for CDLA's online instructors was provided by Dr. Judy Ettinger. The asynchronous training was then delivered through the Yahoo Groups platform by Julie Kasten, M.A., CDFI, and Elda Schwartz, M.S., CDFI and Master Trainer. Participants worked through the curriculum in a weekly project format designed according to the core competencies. Case studies were altered to reflect Kenyan names and typical career scenarios in East Africa.

"While the students' eagerness to learn and their enthusiasm for the curriculum were certainly highlights of the experience, we also encountered numerous challenges," said Elda Schwartz. "These included a seven-hour time difference, divergent views on career assessments and time, and unexpected disruptions." Violence spawned through civil unrest in Kenya in 2007-2008 caused significant delays in the training and seven of the original participants were no longer able to continue. The participants who persisted with the training were excited to be the first in their country with GCDF certification. "In short, it was an extraordinarily rewarding experience," Elda continued, "and I am proud to have been a part of it."

CDLA plans to provide in-person instructor training in Kenya within the next 12 months.

*Contributors to this article included Sing Chee, Hind Ghanima, and Barbara Suddarth.*