



# eCoaching Success Story

**Foothill College Krause Center for Innovation  
Earn While You Learn Institute 2004 - Linda Ullah, Director**

## **Background of Earn While You Learn Institute**

Each summer for the past four years I have run an institute for teachers that focuses on effective technology integration through project-based learning. The teachers spend three weeks learning how to use technology tools, create technology rich projects, and gain an understanding of the pedagogy and issues involved in effectively educating students using technology. The teachers are also required to attend follow up sessions throughout the school year for ongoing face to face support, and I provide online mentoring and coaching for them to assure the success of their projects with their students. The teachers are required to complete the projects they've planned during the institute with their students by April 1 and enter those projects into the California Media and Multimedia Festival.

## **Integrating My eCoach® Online**

For the past three years I've used a variety of tools for online support such as Etudes (Foothill Colleges Online Courseware interface), Yahoo Groups, etc. When I was introduced to My eCoach® at the Spring 2004 CUE (Computer Using Educators) Conference in Palm Springs, CA, I immediately recognized that it contained the tools I've been looking for. It provides the threaded discussion capabilities of Etudes, the listserv capabilities of Yahoo Groups plus much more. The project planning templates are quite similar to the ones I've developed for the institute. This was an exciting and very useful discovery. It allows my teachers to keep online Web Resources Lists (just as do TrackStar and ikeepbookmarks.com which I've used in the past). My eCoach® has a wonderful library or projects for teachers to use as models, and an outstanding and very useful resource library.

I had my teachers set up their My eCoach® accounts on day 1 of the institute. They used My eCoach® to plan their projects, to get feedback on their projects, to engage in online discussions on a variety of pedagogical issues based on the readings section of their institute binder, and to get ongoing help from me and each other. Immediately, the fifty-two teachers in this institute fell in love with My eCoach® and were excited to learn that they will have use of it throughout the school year not only for ongoing, online support and help from me, but for their own uses such as exploring and using the resources and planning other projects and curriculum units.

## **Ongoing Coaching Post-Institute**

I am looking forward to continuing to use My eCoach® throughout the school year with these teachers. I have required them to check in once a week. Each week I

will post a discussion topic designed to help them as they complete their yearlong institute requirements. They will also have online access to me and to each other for ongoing support and peer coaching. This has allowed me to find out which project plans still need to be completed, and which teachers have concerns and needs that I need to take care of. I find this exciting, because I can give anytime, anywhere support to these teachers in a timely and efficient way, and they can help and support each other as well. I am particularly excited to see that the communication is not just one-way (me broadcasting information), but collegial and collaborative.

One outstanding feature of My eCoach® is that I've been able to review project plans in progress. I really feel that this year I've gotten higher quality projects from my teachers that will better engage students in inquiry based projects that encourage students to use problem-solving and higher order thinking skills. I feel that this year's institute teachers have taken project-based learning with technology to a higher level. The ongoing My eCoach® follow up will assure that the student projects are of the highest quality.

### **Next Steps**

My next endeavor will be to establish a pilot Fellowship program for our EWYL Institute graduates. The application process for this institute is underway. Former institute participants have the opportunity to apply to be either a mentor or a mentee. The mentors will participate in a three-day mentoring and coaching institute then they will work with their mentees to design a collaborative (all three teacher's classrooms will collaborate) project that uses PDA technology. All participants in this program will have previously participated in the three-week EWYL institute. Mentors will be selected from past participants who have gone on to pursue or get their Master's Degree in Instructional Technology. Each mentor will work with two mentees. This first pilot year three mentors and six mentees will be selected to participate. Each participant will receive a PDA. I anticipate using My eCoach® with this group to plan their projects to provide a venue for ongoing collaboration, mentoring and coaching.

To date, I am extremely pleased with my experiences with My eCoach®. Both Barbara Bray and Leilani Carbonell Pedroni have been phenomenal eCoaches and mentors for me as I've learned to be an online eCoach. They have provided helpful and timely feedback for my teachers on their project plans. I've really appreciated and been extremely pleased with my experience with this outstanding tool. Thank you.

Linda Ullah, M.A. M.Ed  
Teacher in Residence  
Foothill College Krause Center for Innovation  
Director, Earn While You Learn Institutes