MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

For many of us, Fall marks the start of a new school or program year. It often brings with it new students, new schedules, and new challenges. For those implementing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) mandated requirements, challenges may include a change in what we teach, presenting us with new opportunities as we prepare students to move to careers or college.

One of those opportunities is centered on “Employability Skills”. In looking at the research and in conversations with the private sector, we hear that phrase a great deal. Business owners and leaders say that, while they can teach the technical aspects jobs require, finding and training workers in employability or soft skills is proving to be a serious problem. Adult Education programs are expected to address that issue.

What we also find is that many in our field are not clear on what employability skills are. Very broadly they include skills such as the ability to work in teams, leadership, integrity, professionalism, customer service, and communication skills. Frequently less clear is how to assess which of those skills our adult learners possess, and how to integrate the teaching of the skills they need into lessons.

After surveying a sample of our membership, AALL has identified Employability Skills as the theme for our 2019 Spring Conference. The conference will be held on Friday, April 26 and will be hosted by Central Arizona College at their campus in Apache Junction.

We are thrilled to have Amanda Bergson-Shilcock, Vice President of Upskilling Policy for the Washington, D.C. based National Skills Coalition (NSC) as our Keynote Speaker. NSC is a “broad-based coalition seeking to raise the skills of American workers across a range of industries.” I urge you to visit their website at www.nationalkillscoalition.org to check out the wealth of information available, including specific information regarding workforce issues in Arizona.

I’m offering an advance shout-out to Central Arizona College for agreeing to host the AALL Spring Conference, and to our new Professional Development Chair, Maricela Reed (Friendly House). We have a dedicated committee of volunteers serving on the 2019 Conference Committee: Katy Brown (Pima Community College); Kathy Budway (Pima Community College); Heather Paterson (Friendly House); Maria Johnson (Adult Literacy Plus); Jesse Figueroa (Adult Literacy Plus); Dr. Pat Phupaibul (Queen Creek Adult Ed); and Carrie LaBier (Queen Creek Adult Ed). The Conference Committee is supported by AALL’s Board. If you are interested in joining the Conference Committee, please reach out to Maricela at Maricela.Reed@Friendlyhouse.org

So, please mark your calendars for Friday, April 26, 2019. And stay tuned for more information on registration and Calls for Proposals!!!!!
Blair Liddicoat Retirement
by Philip Suriano and Lily Beth Brazones

Blair Liddicoat retired in June after a long and valued career in adult education.

Blair’s career in education began in South Korea where he started as a Peace Corps English teacher and 10 years later was a full-time lecturer at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. He moved into adult education in 1990 as a Lead Teacher for Rio Salado Community College and has been a transformational leader during his tenure. As Associate Dean, Instruction and Community Development, the Rio Salado College Adult Education Program became the College Bridge Pathways program which provided services to over six thousand students at six locations last year. Blair also implemented and oversaw the National Adult Education Honor Society induction for over 24 years at Rio Salado College. Blair has served as a Board member and President of both the state and regional adult education associations, Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning and Mountain Plains Adult Education Association.

Please join us in wishing Blair the very best as he begins a new adventure!

SAVE THE DATE FOR MPAEA’S 2019 CONFERENCE

Hello AALL members. It was great seeing everyone in Phoenix for the 2018 COABE conference sponsored and supported by our state association, the Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning. Now I would like to remind everyone that MPAEA is working with Nevada Adult Educators to bring you their 2019 regional adult education conference in Las Vegas, Nevada from March 5th to March 7th at the SLS Las Vegas Hotel and Casino. Save the date for what promises to be a great set of presentations showing off best practices, ideas and innovations taking place in the region. The MPAEA conference is also a great way to meet, network or catch up with other adult educators in the MPAEA region. For future updates on the conference, please visit:

The Nevada Adult Educators Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/nvadulted

Nevada Adult Educators at http://www.nvadulted.org/

Or, MPAEA’s 2019 Conference page at https://mpaea.wildapricot.org/page-18048

Thank you for the work you do and your support of adult education. See you there!

Philip Suriano
AALL Past President/MPAEA President
EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS AND SOAR TO NEW HEIGHTS AFTER THE 2018 COABE CONFERENCE IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA

In March 2018, AALL and the state of Arizona had the exciting opportunity to host the 2018 COABE Conference in Phoenix, Arizona at the Sheraton Grand Phoenix Hotel and Phoenix Convention Center. 322 attendees from Arizona and 1,685 from across the country came to participate in more than 440 sessions on Adult Basic Education, Workforce Development, College and Career Pathways, Career and Technical Education, Family Literacy, College and Career Pathways, Career and Technical Education, Family Literacy, Digital Literacy, Learning Difficulties, Immigrant Integration and many, many more topics. What an amazing wealth of information it was!

We are especially proud of all the local features that AALL and Arizona programs brought to the conference from the first ever COABE Student Engagement conference strand to the offsite location visits to the Botanical Gardens and Rustler’s Rooste. Pima Community College Adult Education Student Ana Chavarin received the COABE Outstanding Adult Learner of the Year Award, and AALL received the COABE Outstanding State Innovation of the Year Award. The AALL Awareness Committee is already planning to present again on the Student Ambassador Training during future COABE Conferences. Great work to Laura Porfirio, Diane Jackson and Regina Suit who have led the now nationally recognized Student Ambassador Training.

Special guest appearances were made by Arizona Governor Doug Ducey who submitted a welcome video to conference attendees, and Arizona Superintendent Diane Douglas and Arizona State Adult Education Director Sheryl Hart who welcomed attendees on behalf of educators in our state. Arizona Adult Educators generously came out as volunteers to support our local presence, and 68 adult education students attended, many of whom were presenters for the Student Engagement Strand. Arizona and AALL are pleased to have shown such a professional and warm presence as a state host.

Many thanks to the volunteers, AALL Board Members, local speakers and Arizona Conference Coordinator Miriam Kroeger who worked tirelessly to bring the details of this even together! We are lucky to have such a great adult education community in Arizona!
This year, the Coalition on Adult Basic Education and Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning held a national conference in Phoenix Arizona on March 25 to 28. The conference offered many sessions demonstrating best practices from all areas of the field of adult education as well as a couple of firsts such as a student strand and student ambassador presentations. These student-centered efforts were the result of lots of hard work from one of MPAEA’s member states, Arizona. Just one example of the many great projects and pilots taking place in MPAEA member states. Though it was rewarding to have some of these efforts presented at a national conference, it was also rewarding to recognize some of the people helping to make a difference in the region during our annual awards luncheon. This year’s luncheon was held on Tuesday, March 27th and was a joint recognition from the state and regional associations, AALL and MPAEA.

The AALL/MPAEA Awards Luncheon had close to 300 attendees from the 9 MPAEA member states as well as a few attendees from across the nation. MPAEA and AALL both presented their annual awards at the luncheon which included the awards and recipients on the next page. The awards luncheon this year was very well received and was an opportunity to recognize professionals in the field. Thank you to all the sponsors who helped to support the luncheon and to all the people who put forth a nomination for the awards!

Philip Suriano
MPAEA President
AALL Past President

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Frances Smith, a student at Queen Creek Unified School District’s Adult Education Program, was recently featured in an article by KJZZ for her efforts towards achieving her high school equivalency. Frances’ story is an inspiration to other student who may be concerned they are too old to pursue their dreams.

For the full story, visit kjzz.org.

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**Administrator Strand and Adult Educators Strand**

*Over 50 break-out sessions*

**Featured Keynote Speakers:**

Sheryl Hart, AZ State Director of Adult Education

Trevor Stokes, AZ Office of Economic Opportunity

CT Turner, GED Testing Service

Dr. Janet Zadina, Brain Research and Instruction
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<th>Award Category</th>
<th>Recipient 1</th>
<th>Recipient 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>MPAEA Award of Excellence Arizona</td>
<td>Philip Suriano</td>
<td>Jocelyn Dustan of Rio Salado College</td>
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<td>MPAEA Award of Excellence Montana</td>
<td>Drew Uecker</td>
<td>Sara Haghini of Friendly House</td>
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<td>MPAEA Award of Excellence Nevada</td>
<td>Dave Pollard</td>
<td>Latina Watkins of Rio Salado College</td>
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<td>MPAEA Award of Excellence New Mexico</td>
<td>Jamie Trujillo</td>
<td>Pete Yonsetto of Pima Community College</td>
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<td>MPAEA Award of Excellence Wyoming</td>
<td>Carol Bourland</td>
<td>Maybelin Rodriguez of Queen Creek Unified School District</td>
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<td>MPAEA Educator of the Year Arizona</td>
<td>Heather Patterson of Friendly House</td>
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<td>AALL Award of Excellence in Honor of Gary P. Tang</td>
<td>Aida Jimenez Uselton of Friendly House</td>
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<td>AALL Lifetime Achievement Award in Honor of Gary A. Eyre</td>
<td>Lily Beth Brazones of Rio Salado College</td>
<td>Maria Alvidrez of Queen Creek Unified School District</td>
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<td>AALL Volunteer of the Year</td>
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<td>AALL Student of the Year</td>
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<td>COABE Learner of the Year</td>
<td>Maybelin Rodriguez of Queen Creek Unified School District</td>
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COABE’s Student Engagement Strand (in partnership with AALL) promoted the notion that engaged learners become leaders in their classrooms and community. Student attendees had the opportunity to network, and learn about what works in adult basic education along with professional educators and fellow student presenters. Learners who play this kind of leadership role at a national conference persist to success because they transform the way they see themselves - key stakeholders and experts in the field of adult basic education. This gives them a boost in self-esteem along with knowledge, skills, and abilities for their future endeavors in transitioning to higher education and careers.

There were about 20 sessions in the Student Engagement Strand - a very large number for a brand new strand! A total of 68 students attended this conference - a record! The costs for 12 of those students were entirely covered by COABE when they were accepted as members of teams from around the country to participate in the Ambassadors Train the Trainer pre-conference session. There were 37 participants total from 14 states in that ambassadors training session who will bring our brand of "representational leadership training" for student voice and advocacy back to their states.

On March 26, 2018, Adult ACE presented at the COABE 2018 conference. COABE is one of the largest national Adult Education organizations, and it was a great honor to be selected to present. The session was well attended. Participants learned about the Adult ACE program, listened to Valentina Robles and Sabrina White, two Adult ACE alumni (completed in 2011 and 2016 respectively) talk about their experiences, challenges, and successes. Kate Packer, the Adult ACE Program Director, shared the unique features of Adult ACE and built new connections to share Rio Salado’s expertise with other colleges. The student presenters talked about their journeys from being high school dropouts to now a Vice President of Money Laundering Prevention division at Bank of America for Valentina and a Youth Counselor at UMOM for Sabrina. It was both inspiring and humbling to see the value of receiving direct student feedback and to hear about other schools’ endeavors. Many administrators stayed after the session to ask about the program. I have received an email from WNC, Nevada, requesting more information regarding the format of the program. They are considering duplicating the effort.

By Kate Packer, Program Director, Adult ACE & Workplace Education at Rio Salado
I would like to thank everyone for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to attend the COABE conference in Phoenix, AZ. I had such a wonderful experience working with the staff of Pima Community College Adult Education on doing an Ambassador Training Train the Trainers. It was a wonderful feeling knowing that I was able to give information and assist others with starting an Ambassador program. It was wonderful to get to meet so many caring staff and other students at the conference. I am always so moved when I see how many people care about Adult Education. I am honored that I am able to share my experience and show the positive results of all the work that goes in to these programs. I was honored to be on a panel with AZ. State Senator Bradley, and speak on how to approach and make allies within the political community. As he and I spoke to one another I learned that he sits on La Frontera’s Board, I communicated that I am a Family Support Specialist at La Frontera and how Pima College Adult Education has played such a huge role in my career path. Going to the COABE conference has given me so much confidence in myself that I am going down the right path. I can never thank everyone enough for seeing something in me that I use to not see in myself. I now see what others were able to see. Thank you again for giving me the chance to share all my experiences and to learn and experience new ones.

By Linda Langston, HSE and IBEST graduate from Pima College

Participating in the COABE Conference was one of the most beautiful and greatest experience I have had in my life. It was a big challenge to speak in public and let the people hear my voice through my writing. I felt nervous however I accomplished it. I controlled myself, breathed deeply, and concentrated on what I was doing in that moment. Thanks to everyone that helped me and continuing to help me, I am really appreciative of it!

By Luz Elias, COABE student presenter and HSE graduation speaker for Pima College

Wendy Finlayson from Mesa presented on “Building College and Career Readiness Skills and Increasing Student Engagement through Student Leadership” with three student leaders from her program:

Alfred Riveros, Beatriz Vega, and Judy Wu
The Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning (AALL) would like to give a special thanks to the local sponsors who made our AALL Awards Luncheon and state professional contributions possible. Thank you for supporting adult education in Arizona!

Technology Sponsorship, AZ Conference Strand Sponsorship, and support of programs attending the conference

Arizona Department of Education—Adult Education Services

AALL State Awards Luncheon Sponsors:

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