

IN THIS ISSUE

- Letter From Our President
- Meet Our New President and Board Members
- COABE 2022 Students as Leaders Strand
- Recognition for AZ Leaders Who Support Adult Education
- It's AALL in the Past
- Completing a Two-Year Program - Pandemic or Not!
- Scholarships Are Making a Difference!
- Awareness Update
- Save the Date for the 2022 Arizona Adult Education Institute!
- Mesa Adult Education Program is HIRING

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hello, Everyone. It has been a wonderful year.

Summer has arrived. Our regular school year programming is wrapping into our summer sessions, and all too soon, we will be heading, once again, into our new fall season.

I want to take this opportunity to reflect on the past year and the amazing, activity-filled time that it has been for Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning and Arizona adult education programs.



Katy Brown - AALL President FY22

AALL continues to have close working relationships with programs both within and outside of Arizona.



MPAEA/AALL
2022 REGIONAL
HYBRID CONFERENCE

Facing a Changing World: Skills for the Future
April 28th, 29th, 30th, 2022 | Tempe · Arizona

MOUNTAIN PLAINS ADULT
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

AALL ARIZONA ASSOCIATION
FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

www.mpaea.wildapricot.org/aallconference



2022 MPAEA-AALL Conference Committee

This year we collaborated with Mountain Plains Adult Education Association (MPAEA), our nine-state regional organization, to host a successful hybrid conference in Arizona in April. It was a full year effort that resulted in a dynamic learning environment as we took advantage of new skills learned teaching during the covid-era to bring attendees and presenters together both in-person and virtually in 60 breakout sessions.

AALL once again sponsored the Student Engagement Strand at COABE 2022 in Seattle, bringing the strength of the Student Ambassador Program, student voice and perspective to the national level.



Katy Brown - AALL Past-President, Gretchen Holmes of ARIZONA@WORK and Tammie Hickey - MPAEA Past-President.

During the national Adult Education and Family Literacy Week in September, as well as the Arizona Adult Education Week in February, AALL promoted visits to our state legislators and outreach education about adult education and its participants.

At the Arizona Department of Education Adult Education Institute in September, AALL hosted a virtual Open House. We also took the opportunity to present yearly awards to educators, students, volunteer and staff who have helped to build and exemplify adult ed excellence. Be ready to nominate your winners soon for September 2022.

At MPAEA/AALL 2022, we instituted two new awards - the Advocate of the Year and Community Partner. This year's Advocate award went to Mayor Paul Deasy of Flagstaff for his city-wide Proclamation during AEFL week. The Community Partner award was presented to Gretchen Holmes of ARIZONA@WORK for her work with our adult education programs.

Our AALL Board is strong with 17 members from eleven different programs. We are always looking to include and engage programs, large and small, in the work that we do for students around the state.

Our AALL Board includes adult educators who also hold positions on state workforce groups. We are working to strengthen this connection.

AALL continues to promote and advocate for adult education. We work to keep abreast of issues that affect us in the legislature, both state and Federal. We spread the good word of our programs and successes through social media.

It was a fast-paced, productive year that I was proud to be part of. Now, I will be handing the reins of the organization over to a new president for FY23 - Nicole Sabino Coker of Rio Salado College-College Bridge Pathways. We are in good hands.



Tammie Hickey - MPAEA Past-President, Nicole Sabino Coker AALL New President, and Katy Brown - AALL Past-President.

Thank you for your participation in AALL. Together we can build a stronger community, supporting the dreams and goals of adults around the state.

Sincerely,

Katy

Meet Our New President and Board Members



Nicole Sabino Coker - President FY23

Nicole Sabino Coker is an experienced people-centered educator with over 25 years of experience working with and supporting at-risk populations. She takes pride in the positive steps her students and colleagues make on their goal paths.

Currently Nicole is an Instructional Services Supervisor with Rio Salado College-College Bridge Pathways. Previously, she has served as an instructor, faculty member, student services coordinator, academic coordinator and director in both the public and private educational realms. She has also worked as a vocational rehabilitation counselor and a youth corrections officer working in partnership with K-12 schools.



Tania Hinojosa

Tania Hinojosa is currently a Refugee Education Program Instructor at Pima Community College and the Bilingual Learning Engineer at Make Way for Books in Tucson, Az.



Tom Kho

I have been working in Adult Education for 7 years. I first started out with Rio Salado-Avondale and now with Literacy Volunteers of Maricopa County. I'm a facilitator (teacher) with both the ELAA and ABE Program.



Trish Udell

Trish was inspired to pursue a master's degree in Education & ESL while living in the Middle East. She then taught for 15 years in the Intensive English Program at Missouri Southern State University.



Jesse Figueroa

Jesse Figueroa is Program Director at Adult Literacy Plus of Southwest Arizona (ALPS). He opens the lines of communication between students, teachers and community partners to provide adult education services in Yuma County.



Harshika Bhatt

[Click here to read our new members full bio](#)

COABE 2022 Students as Leaders Strand

By Laura Porfirio, ALL board and awareness committee member



Ana Chavarin, Keynote Speaker, 2022 COABE Conference

Since its inception during COABE's national conference in Phoenix, AALL has been the sponsor of the Students as Leaders conference strand. The goal of our strand is to promote the notion that engaged learners become leaders in their classrooms and community. Student attendees have the opportunity to present alongside teachers and administrators, grow their 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 confidence along with knowledge, skills, and abilities for their future endeavors in transitioning to higher education and careers. The range of topics covered in this strand is aimed at audiences from across the field of adult education with student perspectives and voice as the central focus. A phrase that came up in one of the workshops this year was: Nothing about us without us. That speaks to the goal of COABE's Students as Leaders Task Force which oversees this conference

strand along with many other initiatives that COABE is developing and sustaining. We amplify the voices of the true "VIPs" in the field - our students with their lived experiences. We have much to learn from them.

For more info: <https://coabe.org/programs-succeed-when-learners-lead/>



Students as Leaders Strand Highlights:

- * Free membership & conference registration for students!
- * Virtual Networking event that included students and staff from adult education programs in Arizona, New York and a few others in between.
- * Arizona Student Ambassador Ana Chavarín provided a rousing keynote address during the General Session. <https://youtu.be/UCVFA8ml0fc> She also got to connect and share information with Marlene Gutierrez, COABE's Learner of the Year award winner who has been working to organize her adult education community in Washington DC to promote health care issues and benefits for working immigrants. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NegY0ThSeA>
- * Strand workshops included these themes and topics: Civic engagement, Student voice on Podcasts, Climate sustainability and justice, Student ambassador panel, Ambassador training implementation, Distance learning, Advocacy, Student services internships and more. AALL member Donya Meggs from Pima College presented a panel with her students on "Teaching Climate Change to Develop and Empower Student Leadership."



Marlene Arias Gutierrez and Ana Chavarin, 2022 COABE Conference

The legacy that AALL started over 10 years ago - when we supported and scaled Pima's ambassador representational student leadership training to make it a statewide effort - is still going strong and growing in new directions with the support of COABE. <https://coabe.org/ambassador-training/>

I'm proud to continue serving AALL and COABE as Coordinator of the Students as Leaders strand.



2022 COABE Conference-Virtual Networking



Laura Porfiro, COABE Chair-Student Strand; Sara Haghighi, COABE Fellow; and Jenni Ryan, Pima Community College.

Recognition for AZ Leaders Who Support Adult Education

By Laura Porfirio, ALL board and awareness committee member

We had a fantastic awards conference at the regional MPAEA/AALL 2022 conference in Tempe on April 29. Along with the Mountain Plains awards going to adult educators, administrators, and staff for outstanding contributions to the field, our state association was given the opportunity to add 2 awards of our choice to the line-up. The AALL awareness committee created two additional award categories to recognize leaders in our communities who deserve a spotlight on their advocacy and support of adult education in Arizona.



One was Community Partner of the Year and that award went to Gretchen Holmes from ARIZONA@WORK in Maricopa County. Gretchen is an outstanding workforce partner working with adult education at Rio Salado College Avondale. Gretchen has been in her position with Maricopa County Workforce as a Career Advisor for almost 10 years. She has worked with both adult and youth clients and has been involved with all areas of the county workforce department. She has assisted hundreds of clients in getting education, training, employment and more. She assists clients all over the county with finding employment and maintaining employment. She has a passion for helping people, especially youth, in meeting their goals and becoming successful in life. Since moving to the Phoenix area in 2003, her career path has been in a service capacity. She just could not have it any other way. Giving back and helping folks is what she is most passionate about and has been very fortunate to be able to do just that.

The other award was Advocate of the Year and Flagstaff Mayor Paul Deasy was bestowed that honor this year. Mr. Deasy was elected as Mayor of Flagstaff, Arizona in 2020. He is passionate about creating educational environments where children and young adults can achieve their full potential. In September of 2021, Mayor Deasy issued a proclamation recognizing Adult Education and Family Literacy (AEFL) Week. The Proclamation acknowledged Flagstaff's adult learners' resilience and accomplishments in literacy education, second language learning, and postsecondary education and training. This is the first time that a Mayor in Flagstaff has issued a city-wide Proclamation for AEFL week. As a token of our deepest gratitude to Mayor Deasy for recognizing AEFL week in Flagstaff, AZ, we honored him with this award of Advocate of the Year.



A heartfelt THANK YOU goes to all our community and workforce partners who help the students and staff and teachers raise awareness and support Adult Education.

It's AALL in the Past

By Dr. Jodi Decker, Ed.D

When I saw the solicitation to write an article for the AALL newsletter, I decided to get up out of my rocker and write one. You see, I'm a past-president of AALL, now teaching in higher education. I thought, hmm, maybe I'm finally in a position to offer some sage advice and perspective to you "young-uns" who don't have one foot in retirement, yet. Perhaps I can share a few memories, too.

A little bit about myself: After I earned my M.Ed in higher and adult education, I taught ESL and literacy for many years and for many programs, while raising a young family. I won an Outstanding Arizona Adult Educator award one year, but I think the deck was stacked, because I was working for 3 different programs at the time. I then started teaching a variety of courses at the community colleges and at a vocational school, and then I went back to school to earn my Ed.D in Higher Education Curriculum and Instruction. I'm also a contributing writer to the newly published book *Poems From the Asylum* (2021), by Martha H. Nasch, about insanity and insane asylums in the 1930's (and no, I'm not making that up.)

How does this connect me to AALL, now? Well, for one, I hope some of your successful ESL and GED graduates have transitioned into my courses. While perhaps not the goal of all students, access to higher education is to the credit of many of you in the trenches. Secondly, I want to affirm that all those years in adult education taught be about being student-centered, forever giving me the skill set of "teachable moment." Third, adult educators, that quirky lot, have been some of my lifelong friends. And finally, the principles of lifelong learning emboldened and inspired me to tackle new projects and endeavors, such as pursuing my doctoral degree, crying all the way, and then collaborating on a book project.

I'm not convinced adult ed has changed all that much over the years. That's not a slight—it's reality. There are still the same passionate, dedicated teachers; there's still the scramble to cobble together part-time jobs at odd hours; and there's the never-ending initiatives to increase

funding. What has changed is the increased incorporation of technology, including online learning, providing even more accessibility to students and meeting the objective of computer literacy. While I managed a LEARN Lab for awhile, I reluctantly admit it was before smart phones even existed.

What I remember most fondly are the stories of the students. There was Bill, an elderly African-American man who strove to improve his literacy skills, so he could read the Bible in church. There was Jesus, a one-armed mechanic who wanted to improve his English skills for his job and family. And then there was my female Chinese student, whose name escapes me, who gave me a box of cereal for Christmas—truly one of my most memorable gifts, ever.

What stories and memories are you in the process of cultivating in your adult education careers? How is what you're doing impacting those students' lives? Yes, there are those measurable gains—the test data—the ESL level promotions—and the GED earned. All of that deserves a hearty congratulations. Yet, never lose sight of the human connection we have with those students, whether teaching in adult or higher education. It's those stories that motivate us to keep going. In my case, it's the occasional email, thanking me for the class. Appreciate, too, the friendships you are creating with your fellow adult educators, the break room chit chat, the shared lesson plans, the ones who sub for you when you're in a pinch, the shared laughter at the holiday potlucks. Continue to pursue your own lifelong learning goals, whether they're academic, professional, or personal—or in the expression one of my fellow adult educators coined, keep learning from lust to dust.

Someday you, too, will be sitting in your rocker contemplating your storied education career. I would hope you would be both eternally grateful, and satisfied, with the worthy endeavors you have accomplished.

Completing a Two-Year Program - Pandemic Not!

By Kate Packer, Rio Salado College

On May 19th, Rio Salado College celebrated the achievements of 30 Adults Achieving a College Education (Adult ACE) scholarship recipients who completed this rigorous two-year program. The journey of any adult student is hard – they combine going to school with caring for families, jobs, and putting out fires thrown at them by life. These students had a pandemic added to the mix. They went from in-person classes to hybrid/virtual in a matter of five weeks. They continued learning and became our Lewises and Clarks as the program team developed and troubleshooted the new formats.



They did it gracefully, patiently, and with great success. Five of these students obtained college credentials before they completed the program; 23 of them completed the program with the Honors level GPAs; all of them are quickly approaching their academic and life goals.

They did not do it alone. The program is developed with embedded support mechanisms to help adult learners succeed while juggling multiple responsibilities. Our students receive a scholarship, mentorship, and training making a college experience significantly less intimidating. They take classes one at a time, so college can be woven into the fabric of their busy lives.

They meet with the instructors virtually twice a week for one hour and do their reading and assignments online, so they can be present for their families and efficient with time and money, without compromising the quality of learning.

I am constantly amazed and inspired by what our students achieve and how much they are able to grow when given a few kind words and proper support. Adult ACE and Rio Salado are invested in adult learners' success. Rio Salado shows it by funding this program. Learn more about the program and how to apply at:

www.riosalado.edu/aace

Scholarships Are Making a Difference!

By Christine Niven, Mesa Adult Education



Graduating Students at Mesa HSE Graduation Ceremony

On May 6, 2022, HSE students participated in the Mesa HSE Graduation Ceremony, having passed all 5 GED tests to earn their High School Equivalency Diploma. The two students pictured were the first to have all of their GED subject tests paid for by the AALL Adult Student Scholarship in honor of Linda Mead.

To date, the scholarship has covered the cost of 34 GED tests – totaling \$1,190 to adult students in Arizona. Anyone is eligible, they don't have to be enrolled in an adult education program to apply. The only requirements are to fill out the application which includes writing a paragraph about why they are working toward their HSE,

and submit a copy of their GED Ready practice test score in the subject area indicating they are in the 'green zone' or ready for the official GED test. For more information on the scholarship and eligibility please go to the link on AALL's website: https://aall.wildapricot.org/Linda_Mead_Scholarship.

The Scholarship was created in honor of Linda Mead, former director of Mesa's Adult Education program. In retirement, Linda created a church-based adult school which provided free classes in GED, ESL and Citizenship preparation. The scholarship is specifically for students who are taking the GED tests or working to become citizens. So far, only applications for GED test vouchers have been received, but the scholarship will also help cover the cost of citizenship preparation classes and/or fees associated with becoming a citizen.

If you know someone who could benefit from the scholarship, please direct them to the link to review eligibility requirements and get the link to the application.

The scholarship is funded solely through donations and is running low. For more information and if you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the scholarship fund, please click on the link above.

Paying for the GED tests and citizenship fees shouldn't be what holds people back from earning their high school diploma or US citizenship!



Adult Student Scholarship in honor of Linda Mead

This scholarship fund was created in Linda's name to keep her spirit, legacy and passion for adult education alive in our memories and deeds.

[Click Here for More Information](#)

"Empowering Learners for Life"

"Empowering Learners for Life"

aall.wildapricot.org

Awareness Update

By Amanda Whatley, Central Arizona College



It has been an interesting legislative season and we hope that by the time this summer newsletter has been published, there will be a state budget. For now, it's all happening behind closed doors. There has been a lot of movement on education funding without much transparency, so if the budget has been published by the time this reaches you - it is time to read from the local and politics pages on azcentral.com or the weekly newsletters provided by Civic Engagement Beyond Voting <https://www.cebv.us/>

In other very important legislative news, check your voting district! Arizona's independent redistricting commission approved new congressional and legislative districts in January, and it is possible your district has changed. It is incredibly important you know where to go on primary and election day so you are not turned away or forced to cast a provisional ballot.

Check your new district here

We set an example of civic engagement for our students, and the first step in engagement is voting!

Please share with your classes and students as a strong understanding of and participation in civics is one of the foundations of a well-informed Adult Education Student and citizen.

Save the Date for the 2022 Arizona Adult Education Institute!

By Beverly Wilson, Director Professional Learning
Arizona Department of Education-Adult Education Services



September 7-10, 2022 - El Conquistador Resort and
Conference Center – Tucson, AZ

'Learning Together for Student Success'

Pre-Conference Sessions-September 7

Full-Day Sessions:

- Be Your Own Boss: Help Students Use Math to Take Charge of Their Decisions
- Digital Storytelling for Better Writers
- 2022 STAR Training Series – Year 1

Half-Day Session:

- Teaching Civic Engagement with the AZ Adult Education Literacy Through Social Studies Standards

Full Institute-September 8-10

Over 75 concurrent sessions for administrators, teachers, and support staff!

Featured Keynote Speakers

Fred Brown, CEO and President, Learning Forward

Dr. Ian Roark, Vice President of Workforce Development & Strategic Partnerships, Pima Community College

Dr. Ellen Beattie, Center for Intentional Learning

Dr. Carmine Stewart, President and CEO of Aspire Consulting and Educational Services

Special Events

Boots -n- Bling: Join your colleagues for an evening of fun-dinner, dancing, and Karaoke on Friday, September 9th!

Joint Celebration Awards with ADE-AES and AALL on Saturday, September 10th.

The institute registration and schedule will be available the week of July 11!



is Hiring!

Mesa Adult Education program has full time openings for the following positions:

- Instructional Support Specialist
- Educational Technology Facilitator
- College and Career Transitions Coordinator
- Records Clerk

Full time positions include benefits. All positions (except for the Records Clerk) require adult education teaching certification.



We also have part-time, hourly adult education instructor positions available in the following areas:

- ELAA
- Science
- Reading Language Arts

For more information or if you'd like to apply, please check the Mesa Public Schools Human Resources website at:

<https://www.mpsaz.org/hr/careers>

or contact

Christine Niven
clniven@mpsaz.org
480-472-7262

