

# Iowa Literacy Connection

*It is everyone's business!*

ilc.coabe.org

December 2021

## Upcoming Conferences

### IN IOWA

#### **Winter Conference** - February 2 and 4, 2022

This year the winter conference will look a little different. The Department of Education is leading the conference. To best support AEL programs, two topics have been selected – Teaching Skills that Matter and Workplace Engagement. The ILC Professional Development committee will assist with the conference and ILC will be a prominent partner.

#### **Summer Conference**

It's already time to think about summer!! We are hopeful that this conference will be in person. The committee is already planning for summer 2022. There will be six committees: Sessions; Marketing Logistics; Special (prizes, awards, survey); Vendor and Sponsors; Registration; and Technology.

### OUTSIDE OF IOWA

National Community Schools and Family Engagement Conference; Uniting for Every Child's Opportunity in Los Angeles, California, June 1-3, 2022 [More info](#)

COABE's conference will be held in the hybrid fashion, both in person in Seattle, WA in April 2022 and also virtually. [More info](#)



## Welcome



Welcome to the first edition of the Iowa Literacy Council Newsletter! We are excited that you are part of a growing number of individuals dedicated to supporting and learning about adult literacy in your communities, the state, and the country.

We will publish the newsletter quarterly and include important updates about professional development opportunities, advocacy needs related to adult literacy, updates from our partners- COABE and the Barbara Bush Foundation and much more. Rather than send you many emails with one or two key pieces of information, we will put it all together in the newsletter for one stop reading.

However, we need your help to make the newsletter intriguing to readers! We want news from YOU! Send photos of adult literacy events, short success stories, highlights of new initiatives at your organization, job openings, retirements, awards and anything else other adult literacy professionals might find interesting.

As we continue to enjoy the holiday season, please stay safe and healthy, enjoy time with friends and family, count your blessings, and continue to support YOUR state association- Iowa Literacy Council.

Helene Fein  
Executive Director  
Iowa Literacy Council





## Worth Reading

### **Remote-Ready? How Low-Income Older Workers Might Gain From and Contribute to Emerging Remote Job Opportunities**

Low-income older workers have largely been left out of the dramatic shift toward remote work, potentially cutting off valuable opportunities for greater productivity, flexibility, and economic advancement. This paper explores how to make remote work more accessible to low-income older workers as part of the new economic landscape evolving due to the COVID-19 pandemic. [Learn more](#)

### **States' urgent push to overhaul reading instruction**

Delaware is one of several states that made revamping early literacy a priority, especially after the pandemic set kids further back [Learn more](#)

### **Chicago-Area Community College Launches Initiative to Boost Student Success with Latinx, Adult Learners**

With support from a \$3 million U.S. Department of Education grant, Waubensee Community College plans to improve support for Latinx and adult learners through coaching and advising. [Learn more](#)

### **Daniel Boone Regional Library offers online program for adult high school diplomas**

The Daniel Boone Regional Library offers adults the opportunity to earn a nationally accredited high school diploma online through the Excel Adult High School (EAHS) program.

The library provides a limited number of EAHS scholarships and Chromebooks to qualified adult learners who are looking to expand their career opportunities, prepare for workforce entry or continue their education. Applicants who successfully complete the online self-assessment, the prerequisite course and an in-person interview will be considered for free enrollment.

[Learn more](#)

## Survey Results

Recently, a survey was sent to all ILC members asking for input about how we can be more responsive. Here are some highlights:

### **How do you hope to benefit from ILC membership? (Check all that apply)**

- Networking with other members 21 (70%)
- Registration cost reduction 16 (53%)
- Participation in webinars 20 (66.7%)
- COABE benefits 9 (30%)

### **How can ILC be more helpful to you in your role?**

- Leveled reading resources
- Collaboration and discussion on resources and tools
- New Hi-Set teaching ideas
- Innovative practices
- More PD opportunities

### **How would you like to get more involved in the ILC?**

- Serve on the professional development committee - 5 (38.5%)
- Help or present at Winter Conference - 7 (53.8%)
- Help or present at the Summer Conference 8 (61.5%)

### **What would you like the Executive Board to know?**

- Face-to-face conferences are so much better than virtual conferences. Please plan an in-person conference as soon as you're able - I'm "zoomed out" and welcome in-person interactions as often as possible!
- Iowa International Center would be interested in conversations with ILC on how we can work together, in whatever way makes sense. We want to keep the channels of discussion open to opportunities that make sense and benefit ELL adult learners.
- For any employee to be able to help with this, they would need the full support of their administration and I am never sure if that support is there or not. Time would need to be allotted.

# Success Stories

**Quinton Jensen**  
**Kirkwood Community College**



Meet Quinton Jensen. Quinton is currently a Kirkwood CC student and former student in our secondary program. Quinton has made great strides in accomplishing his goals. This is a great success story. Here is Quinton's story in his own words.

Dropping out of high school was very scary. In 2018, I had nothing. When I say nothing, I mean it, I did not have a high school degree, I did not have a job, I didn't have a car, I didn't have a good path in life. I was pulled in by my school counselor and she told me to get my HiSET through Kirkwood. I am so glad I took that advice because it changed my life. I went through the program at Kirkwood and took my placement exams for college. I scored high on those exams for Kirkwood and started my dream of becoming a teacher so I can be that change in students' lives. Now I am at Kirkwood coming off two straight Dean's Lists averaging a 3.5 in those two semesters. I have started working a dream job as a Lead Teacher at a before and after school program for elementary school students. Now, I am now applying for universities to continue my academic dream of becoming a teacher. I attribute all my success in life to the amazing people at Kirkwood Continuing Education; without them pushing me to be the best I can be, I have no idea where I would be in life.



## News from Our Partners



BARBARA BUSH  
FOUNDATION for  
FAMILY LITERACY

Conceived and convened by the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, the National Action Plan for Adult Literacy seeks to address the urgent and entrenched crisis of low literacy in the United States.

Grounded in partnership and a commitment to evidence-based practices and practical solutions, this collaborative plan will be transformative. It has the potential to redefine how American society supports not just adult literacy but adult education in general, thereby improving the lives of individuals, families, and communities living in vulnerable circumstances.

[National Action Plan for Adult Literacy 2021](#)



As an ILC/COABE member, you have access to the COABE Journal. The fall edition is Technology and Adult Learning. [Learn more](#)

COABE membership includes options for a variety of insurance programs. Visit the [website](#) to learn details about each time of insurance plan offered.

*Continued on next page*



Led by an [Advisory Committee](#) of business leaders with [Coalition on Adult Basic Education](#) and [SkillsUSA](#), Behind Every Employer strategically connects companies with educational leaders across the country to provide solutions for the workforce talent challenges they face both today and in the future. Adult education and career technical education (CTE) can be highly effective in preparing students for the world of work by teaching them contextualized workplace competencies.

Employers across the nation have found that by partnering with their local educational leaders they can tap into [services and solutions](#) to grow their current workforce skills and the future workers that are desperately needed to stay competitive.

Here are ways to engage with our educational leadership to keep your business competitive.

- **Workplace Literacy Programs** employee training programs that focus on developing essential literacy and other foundational skills needed for the workplace. Read our [Get Started Guide](#).
- **Talent Recruitment** – Tired of wasting money on recruitment efforts that take too much time? Let us help you match our students with your open positions for hire and for work-based learning such as internships and apprenticeships.
- **Advisory Boards** – Your voice counts! Our advisory boards give you an opportunity to make sure that our educators design curriculum that teaches students they need to keep your business competitive.
- **Apprenticeship** – Our education network receives special funding to support employers in designing a highly effective apprenticeship program to groom your workforce talent. Let us take care of the details and collaborate with you on the type of apprenticeship experience that best works for your business.
- **Internships** – Your participation in internships means you get to try out the latest talent in your industry, a cost-effective workforce strategy for finding the perfect match for your company.
- **Mentorships** – Building a pipeline of talent takes highly effective partnerships between education and industry. Mentorship get your company's brand in front of the next generation of workers.
- **Worksite Tours** – Do you think that your company needs to be seen by the up and coming workers who can help you compete? Worksite tours are a way to share the exciting things you are doing at your company to gain interest by our students.

[Learn more](#)



## Iowa Literacy Council

### Become a Member

Not currently a member of the Iowa Literacy Council? We would love to have you as part of our growing team of educators, students and administrators.

What are the benefits of being a member of the Iowa Literacy Council?

- Educational Tools
- Access to legislators
- National awards
- Adult educator resources
- COABE conference discount
- Professional development
- Journal access
- And much more

What are you waiting for? Hop over to the Iowa Literacy Council [website](#) to join today!

[Learn more](#)





## Meeting Notes

The Region 3 meeting was held on November 8, 2021.

### Ambassador Training: Become a Change-Maker

The Ambassador Program is a student-centered advocacy training that empowers adult learners and the programs that support them. The training has four components:

1. **Awareness:** This module answers the questions: what is Adult Education, and who are Adult Learners? What are data and statistics, and why are they important? Why is Awareness part of Advocacy?
2. **Storytelling:** In this section, we discuss what a story is, how to write it, and why it is the most powerful tool to effect change.
3. **Sharing Your Story:** Here, we explore how to identify your audience and the different ways of sharing your story: public speaking, digital storytelling, letter writing, and more!
4. **Meeting with People with Influence:** In the final module, Ambassadors learn and practice all the parts of meeting with public officials: identifying and contacting them, setting up the meeting, facilitating the meeting, and following up.

After the training, graduates join a national network of Ambassadors working towards excellence in Adult Education.

This award winning Ambassador Program continues to grow in Iowa. Join SECC and NICC in empowering student leaders through the Ambassador program. [Learn more](#)

---

### Amazon's Upskilling Program

Amazon's partnership with COABE enables adult learners with their high school equivalency to apply for jobs available across the country. Working at Amazon can be the path to a degree in a high demand field or the growth opportunity to become a leader at Amazon and beyond. Entry level jobs pay a minimum of \$15 per hour. [Learn more](#)

Amazon strives to maintain an environment where people can learn, adapt, and excel. To do so, Amazon provides programs for employees to learn new skills and build their career – whether that means at Amazon or elsewhere. [Learn more](#)

### Advocacy – Urgent Call to Action!

*Legislators need to hear from educators and students!*

Let our elected officials know that adult education is important. By sending an email, you can tell lawmakers why you think it's important that adult education is funded. Please write today to share your story and let them know how their policy impacts you.

We need to make our collective voice heard before it's too late. Just a few minutes out of your day can make all the difference if you call your representatives and share your opinion. It's time to take action, and that starts with you. Make a call today.

Visit the [website](#) to access legislative talking points and a media outreach toolkit. Share the "take action" link with adult learners, teachers, and administrators.

---

### Programs Succeed When Learners Lead



Programs Succeed When Learners Lead – COABE knows that Student Leadership is critical to learner, program, and community success. This is why we work to support you, adult learners and program staff, in becoming leaders and building leadership

opportunities in your own programs.

We are excited to introduce our first-ever Programs Succeed When Learners Lead Incentive Grant! The inaugural \$2500 grant is split into \$1500 to support a Student Leadership project at one adult education program and \$1000 to facilitate travel to and registration for COABE 2023, where the grant recipient will present on the process for creating and the results of their Student Leadership initiative.

We encourage all types of programs to apply – workforce, corrections, ESOL, etc. Adult Education is everywhere – and so are Student Leaders! The due date for the 2022 grant cycle is January 31, 2022.

More information can be found in the Grant Application below. If you have any questions, please contact [ambassadorcoordinator@coabe.org](mailto:ambassadorcoordinator@coabe.org) and or [visit the website](#).

## COABE IBM SkillsBuild

IBM SkillsBuild is a free digital platform that connects adult learners with a curated path of job-focused learning. The platform has been customized for COABE so that our members can track their students' progress as they make their way through the badges and credentials. Users will be able to showcase their badges and credentials on LinkedIn, their job transcripts, and resumes.

[Learn more](#)

---

## Professional Resources

COABE is pleased to offer a series of professional development webinars which are led by presenters that have received excellent ratings from workshop participants at our national COABE conferences. COABE professional development webinars are generously sponsored by BurlingtonEnglish.

[Learn more](#)

---

## Move Ahead with Adult Ed

The purpose of the campaign toolkit is to provide outreach materials and language to help adult education organizations with proactive tools to communicate the value of adult education and how they can support adult learners during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many state directors and local program providers have expressed a need to let students and partner programs know that they are open for business and that they have a variety of ways for students to participate (virtual, face-to-face, or a combination of the two). [Learn more](#)

## Other COABE Opportunities

### Apply for a COABE Award: Honoring excellence in adult education

- \$10,000 for Teacher of the year, student of the year, administrator of the year
- \$2,000 for State innovator of the year, workforce development, individual scholarships, local excellence in advocacy
- Up to \$2,500 for incentive grants, Programs Succeed When Learners Lead

[Learn more](#)

### Serve on the COABE Board

COABE is seeking dynamic leaders to serve on its Board of Directors to help provide leadership for the adult education field. Elected COABE board members meet in person two times per year, and serve on various committees and task forces meeting in person and via teleconference throughout the year.

Nominations for **Vice President for Membership** will be accepted through **January 15, 2022**. [Learn more](#)

### Connect with us!



The Iowa Literacy Connection is a publication of the Iowa Literacy Council which was established to help coordinate literacy programs statewide. The ILC administers funds to support advocacy and resources that enable Iowans to access literacy building opportunities.

*Have a safe and healthy holiday and year ahead!*