

Iowa Literacy Connection

It is everyone's business!

ilc.coabe.org

September 2023



Dear ILC Members,

Where did the summer go? I don't know about you, but I want it back!!!!

Our summer started with a great conference and despite the heat and dry weather, it turned out to be an interesting summer for me. Following an exciting, life-changing trip to Alaska, I came home with Covid (not fun), recovered, and went to Florida with old friends to relax on the beach. I hope your summer had some adventures too, but definitely not Covid.

Here we well into fall classes across the state, and we have some fantastic opportunities for ILC members coming.

- **MARK YOUR CALENDARS** for the 2024 Adult Education and Literacy Conference - July 17 and 18. We will have pre-conferences on the morning of July 17 and begin the conference at lunch on that day. The conference will conclude in the afternoon of July 18.
- Join us for a **ProLiteracy General Membership Webinar** on Thursday, October 19, 10:00-11:00 or 2:00-3:00. Learn about the benefits of being an ILC/ProLiteracy member. Webinars will soon be scheduled for **News for You** and **New Reader's Press**. These webinars will be recorded for those who can't attend.



Educate & Elevate is a collaboration between the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) and the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education (NCSDAE) to promote adult education.

The organization's website:

educateandelevate.org provides a plethora of information and resources for adult education leaders. Visitors to the site have access to innovations and successes taking place across the nation, a campaign toolkit and, much more.

Interested in state data analysis, fact sheets, and success stories? Check out Iowa's page at:

<https://educateandelevate.org/iowa/>

News For You

As a member of the Iowa Literacy Council, you have access to News for You

(newsforyouonline.com). This amazing resource will be enjoyed by your students as they learn about current events. One of the greatest characteristics of this resource is that you can have the articles read aloud, perfect for beginners.

The teacher's guide is very helpful, and it will help you use the information creatively. Please only share with ILC members. The passcode for your NFYOL subscription **099112**

Access the online newspapers at www.newsforyouonline.com

A letter to the editor of the Des Moines Register on 9-17-2023:

The Iowa Literacy Council (ILC) is a state association affiliated with the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE*) and ProLiteracy, two highly respected, national organizations.

Our mission is: Every Iowan has the literacy skills to reach their personal and professional goals. We have over 500 members statewide.

Two simple but important facts related to adult literacy are: adult literacy is good for the economy; lack of literate adults is bad for the economy. Here are some statistics from the Coalition on Adult Basic Education:

Iowa statistics are concerning. As reported by the Iowa Dept. of Education to COABE, over 140,000 adults (ages 18-64) are without a high school credential, almost 39,000 adults do not speak English fluently, and almost 9,000 adults are without a high school diploma and are unemployed. Our learners have significant barriers to employment and literacy, yet we receive limited funding of \$725 per student compared to the \$10,000 per pupil received by elementary education. The importance of adult literacy in Iowa cannot be denied for several reasons.

Adult Education can train students to fill the jobs industry needs today. By 2024, 48 percent of job openings will be middle-skill and 32 percent will be high-skill. This means that in less than 3 years nearly 80 percent of all job openings will require more than a high school degree. We already have a problem filling labor market need, and the situation is only projected to worsen.

The return on investment into adult education is undeniable. The adult education graduate can typically earn close to \$10,000 more per year once they get their diploma! And the economy is impacted as well. For every 400,000 adults who earn a high school diploma, we gain \$2.5 billion back in tax revenue and reduced expenses. That's \$6,250 per person! And on top of that, the estimated value to our economy in reduced costs for public support programs for low-skilled, low literate adults is \$200 billion annually!

English language learners are important to the job market. By 2030, it is estimated that nearly one in five U.S. workers will be an immigrant. However, nearly 20 million adults have limited English proficiency. We must train and educate these adults by increasing their English language proficiency, improving their basic skills, and helping them achieve a high school diploma or equivalent, so that they are prepared to join and contribute to the future workforce.

We must direct more attention and resources to adult education, so workers are trained, and jobs are filled. Given the rapidly changing economy, we must direct more attention and resources to adult education, so workers are trained, and jobs are filled. We recommend:

- Significantly increase our investment in adult education to prepare more of our adult learners for a changing workplace.
- Ensure that the voice of adult learners is represented in decision-making at the Federal, State, and local levels.

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2023 Conference Summary

Another successful Iowa Adult Education & Literacy Conference was held June 28-30 at the DMACC FFA Center in Ankeny. Lots of hard work went into planning and delivering relevant programming for conference attendees. We had nearly 170 participants that attended 48 sessions over the 3-day period. Sessions delivered information on ELL programming, equity & accessibility, learner success, corrections, digital teaching, and much more.

A huge shout out to vendors and who were on hand to provide information on learning solutions. Vendors included: Act Workforce Solutions, Burlington English, Cambridge, CASAS, COABE, ConnectAble, DiplomaSender, Essential Education, Gemma Open Door for Literacy, Tim Ferry, National Geographic, New Readers Press, and PSI (HiSet).

Mark your calendars now, and plan to attend the **2024 conference** July 17 – 18, 2024



Top Educator Celebrated

Nancy Davis, an adult education coordinator from Western Iowa Tech Community College was named the Archie Willard Award recipient as Iowa's top adult education and literacy educator at the 2023 Adult Education and Literacy Conference this summer.

Named for Archie Willard, a pioneer of and advocate for adult education and literacy, the annual Archie Willard Award honors professionals who are making an impact in adult education and literacy programs. To qualify, awardees must currently work in an Iowa adult education and literacy program and have at least 12 months experience.

Davis has been an educator at WITCC for 15 years and has fulfilled numerous roles in the adult education and literacy field, including instructor, tutor, Adult Basic Education (ABE) specialist and education coordinator.

"Nancy is a valued leader in the English Language Learners (ELL) department," said Pamela Woolridge, WITCC's director of English Language Learners and Adult Basic Education and one of three colleagues who submitted the nomination for Davis. "She means so much to our program and deserves to be recognized for her incredible contributions. The Western Iowa Tech ELL program wouldn't be the same without her."



Outstanding Adult Learners Recognized

Two adult learners were recognized at the 2023 Adult Education and Literacy Conference in June for their exceptional student achievements, perseverance, and commitment to furthering their education.

Mohamed Mohamed, a student at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and Micah Price from North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) were award recipients.

The Outstanding Adult Learner Award is sponsored by the Iowa Literacy Council and Burlington English. Winners of the award are selected from nominations submitted by staff in adult education and literacy programs across the state of Iowa.

Mohamed and Price each received a certificate of recognition as well as a cash prize of \$250. In presenting the awards to the students, Helene Fein, executive director of the Iowa Literacy Council said, "We are proud to highlight Mohamed and Micah for their achievements. They are a great representation of Iowa's adult learners."

Great New Benefit of Joining the ILC

The Iowa Literacy Council is excited to announce that a new benefit to belonging to the ILC is access to the COABE Journal. The COABE Journal is an excellent publication emphasizing innovative ideas, resources, and research for adult education practitioners. Our partnership with ProLiteracy provides ILC members with all that is offered by this incredible organization including membership and excellent teaching materials.

Full membership benefits can be viewed at the ILC website: <https://ilc.coabe.org/membership-2/> and COABE website: <https://coabe.org/membership/>.



Direct any questions regarding membership should be sent to Helene Fein at ilcexecutivedirector@iowa.gov

Iowa Literacy Council Membership

Becoming a member of the Iowa Literacy Council is easy – and it is a great way to stay up to date about the latest in the world of adult education.

As a COABE state association affiliate, Iowa has adopted the COABE membership structure shown to the right.

There are many benefits to being a member of COABE which can be viewed at <https://coabe.org/membership>. Iowa Literacy Council membership benefits include reduced conference registration, connections to professional development, and access to the COBE Journal. In addition, ILC members are also members of ProLiteracy.

MEMBERSHIP TYPE (ALL INCLUDE COABE AND ILC)	COST
Individual Membership	\$45
Non-Profit	\$50
Adult Learner	Free
Small Organization (up to 5 people)	\$150
Small Organization (up to 10 people)	\$300
Medium Organization (up to 25 people)	\$700
Large Organization (26+people)	\$1,200

Letter to the Editor *(continued from page 2)*

- Advocate for adult educators to be included in the State and local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) planning processes and for adult educators to be included in other policy making efforts including hearings, legislative development, etc.
- Support certification policies for adult education educators that improve their career pathways and ensure effectiveness.
- Provide support for professional development for adult educators and technical assistance to adult education programs to build pathways to the future of work for all adult learners.
- Ensure that data collected on adult education program outcomes are reported in a timely fashion and disseminated in an accessible manner.

** The Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) represents the system of 65,000 adult educators, administrators and mentors working to improve educational outcomes for adults in the U.S.*

Dr. Helene Fein

Executive Director, Iowa Literacy Council



We want YOU on our Team!

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!

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.

Connect with us!

