



Media Contact:
Sharon Bonney
Chief Executive Officer
888.44.COABE
info@COABE.org

COABE Welcomes 2023 State Advocates for Adult Education Fellows

Washington, DC, March 2023—The Coalition on Adult Basic Education’s State Advocacy Fellowship focuses on the development of leadership, advocacy skills, research capacity, and network of influence for adult educators, educational staff, and/or administrators. The purpose of this fellowship is to help build a robust network of leaders and advocates focused on the advancement of adult literacy across the country.

During the part-time, year-long fellowship, fellows will engage in national and regional policy discussions and join a growing number of peers dedicated to building advocacy. The COABE State Advocacy Fellowship comprises a series of federal- and state-related training sessions focused on building advocacy and leadership skills.

“This program has proven success increasing funding and visibility at the state level”, said Sharon Bonney, Chief Executive Officer for the Coalition on Adult Basic Education. Bonney cited the recent Collective Impact Report that was published by COABE noting the outstanding accomplishments of the Fellowship.

“I am thrilled for the 2023 SAAEF Fellows as they spend the next year learning how to become better advocates for adult education across the country and better leaders, with the ultimate goal of providing the best adult education systems for our students. We are mindful that legislators do not make policy, the stories of our students and our teachers do,” says Jeffrey Abramowitz, Chair of the SAAEF Fellowship Program.

Special thanks to program sponsor, Essential Education, for supporting this effort.

Congratulations to the 2023 Fellows who have been selected for the State Advocate for Adult Education Fellowship (listed on next page).

For more information about the SAAEF program, visit <https://coabe.org/legislative-center/state-advocates-for-adult-education-fellowship/>.

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About COABE

COABE’s mission is to inspire educators so adults succeed and communities thrive. The Coalition on Adult Basic Education exists to provide leadership, communication, professional development, and advocacy for adult education and literacy practitioners to advance quality services for all adult learners. COABE represents the field of 79,000 adult educators and provides a variety of services, including professional development through annual, state-of-the-art national conferences, more than 50 webinars annually, and a peer-reviewed journal. Learn more at COABE.org.

2023 State Advocates for Adult Education Fellows

Alabama

Stuart Lee

Alabama Association for Public Continuing and Adult Education

Arizona

Ana Bedoya

Pima Community College / Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning

Arkansas

Wakesha Clay-Williams

Arkansas State University Mid-South Adult Education Center

California

Philip Villamor

Huntington Beach Adult School

Colorado

Traci Cullins-Clark

The Learning Source

Connecticut

Christine Valdez

Middletown Adult Education

Delaware

Joyce Warrington

Organization of Adult Alumni & Students in Service

District Of Columbia

Luis Chavez

The Family Place Public Charter School

Florida

Miranda Cole

Gadsden Technical College

Georgia

Debra Tavaras

Atlanta Public Schools

Idaho

Sarah Strickley

College of Western Idaho

Illinois

Heather Martin

Elgin Community College

Indiana

Daniela Mancusi-Shreve
Center of Workforce Innovations

Iowa

Abby Zegers
Des Moines Area Community College

Kansas

Karen Ulanski-Swank
Paola Adult Education Center

Kentucky

Dustin Grooms
Maysville Community & Technical College Adult Education

Maine

Cassidy Christine Marsh
Maine School Administrative District #54

Massachusetts

Darla Lamanna
Northern Essex Community College

Michigan

Marisol Adelman
Michigan Association of Community and Adult Education

Minnesota

Anton Jones
Literacy Minnesota

Mississippi

Chelia Thompson
Holmes Community College

Missouri

Dana Downs-Kuritz
Independence School District

New Hampshire

Tammy Gluck
Exeter Adult Education

New Mexico

LD Lovett
The University of New Mexico - Gallup

New York

Karen Dispo-De Boos
Literacy Volunteers of Clinton, Essex, and Franklin Counties

North Carolina

Nicole Worley
Richmond Community College

Ohio

Cori Lupton
Cuyahoga Community College - Ohio Options

Oklahoma

Beth Williams
Essential Education

Oregon

Genevieve Halkett
Chemeketa Community College

Rhode Island

Bonnie Taylor
Genesis Center

South Carolina

Donna Hill
Newberry Adult Education and Continuing Education

Tennessee

Synnamon Taylor
HopeWorks

Texas

Marissa Teager
Austin Community College

Utah

Robert Prince
Garfield County Adult Education

Vermont

Karen Harker
Vermont Adult Learning

Virginia

Marilyn Macdonald
Virginia Association for Adult and Continuing Education

Washington

Kerry Urquizo
Centralia College

West Virginia

Lucy Lester
Southern Educational Services Cooperative

Wyoming

Michelle Smith

Laramie County Community College

Thomas Lear

Laramie County Community College