

United States Conference on Adult Basic Education and Literacy
2010 Chicago
Summary Report
Kim Olson, Cornerstones Career Learning Center

I was very fortunate to attend the COABE conference this year. I was one of the best trainings that I have gone to in a long time. I was looking for new vision and answers to specific questions and I received both.

Many of the conference handouts and presenter notes can be found at:
<http://coabe.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=proDev>

TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2010

Conference Opening Session – Key Note Scott Simon, Host of Weekend Edition Saturday on National Public Radio, Writer, and Novelist.

Concurrent Session I – Finding Funding Through Collaboration

Karen Williams, Director of Stanislaus Literacy Center and Stanislaus County Library Literacy
www.readingworks.net

Discussion Points:

- ✓ The importance of connections and how to establish them
- ✓ Using your boards to multiply connections
 - Get the board involved
 - Have them read nominations
 - Give them information on the demographics of the people served
- ✓ Build recognition for your cause
 - Work with your newspaper to supply a guest column
 - Literacy Matters
 - What is Literacy
 - Adult Literacy
 - Financial Literacy
 - Health Literacy
 - Distribute your annual report
 - Include a learner success story in your report
 - Fact sheet that includes: national, state, local data
 - Make presentations to service clubs
 - Hold or participate in events
- ✓ You are who you have as a partner. Protect your reputation and that of your partner
- ✓ Find Champions

Concurrent Session II – Why Marketing Makes a Difference

Josephe Thornton and Todd Moore

<http://cae.bartonccc.edu>

This was an excellent session. These presenters were out of Kansas. The Kansas Board of Regents partnered with Kansas State University in the summer of 2006 for a new training initiative that provided a Leadership/Management program for Directors/Coordinators from their 30 AEL/ESL programs as well

as the state's director and 2 associate directors. Components of one semester addressed the need for effective Marketing and Public Relations strategies.

I was looking for more information on how to actually put a marketing plan together for our program and this presentation really gave some practical ways of making that happen. I have requested that they share their actual plan with me. Cornerstones is currently working on their marketing plan and will be glad to share it with other programs when it is complete.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2010

Plenary Session – WIA and Adult Education Opportunities and Challenges

Sandra Hastings, www.sandrahastingsassociates.com

Blog: <http://sandrahastings.wordpress.com>

This session talked about organizational development and how occupational adult education would best position itself with the occupational growth sectors. Review IBEST and ARRA Funding. Check out www.nationalskillscoalition.org. There was discussion about working learners and serving nontraditional students. There was serious concern expressed about using Pell grants to pay for remedial education in Community Colleges. We need to look at the job creation bill for potential funding. There is a lot of people looking hard at a shift toward Life time Career Counseling and career development plans for post employment. They are also getting away from the quick fix and looking harder at long term skills development.

The presenter stressed that change happens with or without reauthorization. They will push for Career Development and job hunting moving into ABE.

Other notes:

- ✓ Look at TEGL for competitive grants
- ✓ Look at Jane Oats work about utilizing ABE as the pipeline to Community College
- ✓ We need to bring to the table that we provide digital literacy as a basic skill
- ✓ One of the new AEL attainment measures proposed is that students complete at least one semester of education or training. This will replace the entering post secondary measure.

Concurrent Session III – Lakeside Chat with Cheryl Keenan

- ✓ The new administration has much AEL representation in power positions
- ✓ Focus on spur innovations
 - Race to top funding for charter schools
 - Recognition that research & evidence are important but so is innovation that can collect and document data
 - Completing credentials as part of transition
 - Focus on teachers of quality
 - Funding – innovation funding – possible discretionary funding in AEL for workforce innovations in Title I,II, VR
- ✓ She made an interesting comment about needing to speed up learning. The TABE hours issue was alluded to.

Concurrent Session IV – The High-function Board of Directors

Don Block, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council

He provided some interesting insight into boards and how they should work for AEL.

Discussed:

- ✓ Board recruitment
- ✓ Board orientation
- ✓ Management of board members' time
- ✓ What happens at the board meeting
- ✓ Board members' role in fundraising
- ✓ Avoiding micromanagement by the board
- ✓ The chairman-executive director relationship
- ✓ Evaluation of board members
- ✓ Responsibilities of Board
- ✓ Board Manuals

THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2010

Concurrent Session V – Creating Online Learning Communities

Kristine Marane Gongora

We looked at free and low-cost technologies that can be used to extend learning beyond the classroom by creating online environments.

Concurrent Session VI – Dollar General: Conversation with Funders

Denine Torr

It was very interesting to hear tips write from grant funders and hear the funding stories from their end.

Some of her suggestions included:

- ✓ Give numbers not percents
- ✓ Hard data like hours of instruction and academic gain
- ✓ Budget narratives should include hours of instruction, cost per participant
- ✓ BE SPECIFIC

She gave away \$10,000 worth of grants at the end of her presentation. I did not win won

There are a few Dollar Generals in SD.

http://www.dollargeneral.com/dgliteracy/Pages/grant_programs.aspx

Concurrent Session VII – Real-world Adventures in Online Curriculum Development

Todd Jorns and Crystal Hack

The session was interesting. What I learned is that we do not have the resources or expertise to provide a true online learning, yet anyway. There is a lot to research before this could ever work for us. It

makes purchased curriculum look better and better. Here is a website to checkout <http://www.ged-i.org/index.jsp>

Concurrent Session VIII – WIA Updates

Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary of Education, OVAE; Cheryl Keenan, Director of Adult Education and Literacy, OVAE

This became a heated discussion about what state administrators report is happening in AEL and what instructors say is happening. There was a lot of “dirty laundry”.

Concurrent Session IX – Guide to Adult Education at Work

Bill Walker

Discussion focused on the “Guide to Adult Education at Work” a project sponsored by Wal-Mart. You can Google to get the report or check out the national Center for Adult Education and the Economy.

Things discussed

- ✓ 12 million Americans in the workforce have no high school diploma
- ✓ Common Core Standards for K-12 education will be same for all 50 states
- ✓ Goal should be post secondary education with no remediation required upon entry
- ✓ Creation of a career pathway system
- ✓ 1.3 million students dropout of post secondary every year
- ✓ 45% of jobs in the next decade will require post secondary (25% now)
- ✓ 3 million people are in AEL programs
- ✓ Discussed NCRC – employers have to buy in or it will not work
- ✓ National Chamber of Commerce is supporting Equipped for the Future (EFF)
- ✓ Alliance for excellent ed – www.all4ed.com

Concurrent Session X – Go Green! What’s It All About

Rebecca Metternich

This was my least favorite session. It was really and “eco trip”

If you are looking for a timeline of the environmental act check out www.ecotopia.org
www.Animalvegetablemiracle.com

<http://www.edf.org/article.cfm?contentID:8466>

Biting the Land That Feeds Us Jim Scharplaz

FRIDAY, March 19, 2010

Concurrent Session XI – Computer assisted Learning in ESL

Stephen Alderson, Instituto Del Progreso Latino

This was an interesting session. This program works with 14,000 people annually. It has 200 funding partners. It provides computer classes and uses www.usalearns.org as one of its training components.

This is a free online training software. They researched all types of software both free and fee based and found this the best one to meet their needs. In their program 56% of students have a computer in the home and 42% have internet access. They described the program as English For All on steroids. Each student has to have an email account. They set one up for each student on gmail because it is not blocked by most of their programs. This is a multilevel software where teachers can track student progress.

www.learnerweb.org

<http://www.idpl.org/>

Conference Closing Session – Byron Pitts, CBS new Chief National Correspondent & Contributing Correspondent 60 Minutes

He was an excellent motivational speaker. [Step Out On Nothing: How Family and Faith Helped Me Conquer Life’s Challenges](#)

The 2011 Conference is planned for San Francisco April 16-20