Knowledge Up

A CCC Adult Education Quarterly Update

Spring 2016 News and Updates

A letter from Union President, George Roumbanis:

On behalf of the Officers, Executive Board and our communities, I commend you for your ongoing passion and excellence. You work among 500 outstanding educators, and I’m extremely proud to represent you. I’m writing this letter to update you on a number of crucial issues but also to meet notification requirements as per the AFSCME constitution.

Your leadership is committed (and I believe our record thus far proves it) to bringing solid and real union representation to your workplace. We are also committed to extending ourselves beyond the space of the union bargaining table into what should be a healthy professional life. We are very much interested in presenting the real person behind the work title, and we want to regularly publish interviews with our colleagues. Please contribute to the quarterly “Knowledge Up” newsletter. We are also active on our Facebook page Afscme3506.org. We are committed to and will defend the pride and dignity in yourself and in our trade; you earn it every day by showing up to teach our students.

If you are pleased with our efforts, tell a friend; if you have objections let us know; if you know how to do it better join us; if you become discontented with your job, tell me. Call me anytime at 773-744-7603. We stand united because we believe in what we stand for.

Fraternally and Sincerely,

George Roumbanis
President AFSCME 3506

(See the complete letter here.)
**In Their Own Voices: Featured Student Essays**

**A Summary Response Essay by Laura Antonio, recently completed level 7 student, Daley College**

*What is Success?*

*To laugh often and much;*

*To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children;*

*To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; To appreciate beauty;*

*To find the best in others;*

*or a redeemed social condition;*

*To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived;*

*This is to have succeeded.*

In his poem, “What is Success,” Ralph Waldo Emerson, an early American writer and philosopher, provides us with his definition of what it is to succeed. According to him, success is to be happy and laugh a lot; to go on when fake friends turn on us. Also, Emerson says one succeeds when he or she makes someone else’s life easier by helping somehow. The author suggest that success is to leave a personal impression on Earth through a good kid, a new plant or a better social condition. To Emerson, all of this is what makes a person successful.

I would say the author sees success as leading a simple life. With this, I do not mean to minimize Emerson’s perspective. Actually, I agree with him. Unfortunately, society and the media have planted vain and superficial concepts about what success is in our youth. Like Emerson, I feel the ultimate goal in one’s life is to be happy and try to make others happy as well. To recapitulate, leading a simple life, being happy, helping others and leaving something good for the world is a way of to reach success.

Coming back to school to learn English was one of the best decisions I made to reach my own success. I started English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at the very low level, which is level one. At first, I was a bit disappointed at being placed in this level, but now I feel it was not that bad after all because I could get the basics and build a base.

For now, I am repeating level seven which is the very top level of the ESL program. Although some might think it is wasteful to repeat, I feel otherwise; I am glad that the program permits us to repeat levels in order to strengthen its students’ English skills. Personally, I have learned something new every semester. Actually, I feel more competent in using the language now.

Being back in school lets me have new perspectives and opens new opportunities. For instance, I have gotten a promotion in my job. When I was asked if I was interested in it, my first thought was “No.” I was scared. I did not want to get it, so I guess it is sort of ironic that I was given it. Nevertheless, I decided to try and see how things went since I had nothing to lose. I have held this position for a year now and I am glad that I took that chance.
I believe coming back to school is helping me to build up my English skills by improving my writing, enhancing my vocabulary, and strengthening my grammar. I really want to achieve an acceptable English level. I am aware that doing this is going to take hard work. College classes may be the next step. Going to college is always a good option, and getting a degree is a great goal to set. A degree may represent a better life level. In addition, the right connections must be made because those are important to succeed as well, and it is possible to make these connections in college.

**From Our Adult Educators**

Adult Educators aren’t the only ones who face challenges; from *The Reader*: “Being an adjunct college professor can be awful”

I’d like to extend my special thanks to Olive Harvey South Chicago Adult Educator Rodolfo Castellanos for sharing this article with me. It’s a well-written piece that shows a sad reality of an educator’s life. Even though the author talks of her struggles as an adjunct professor, I guess most of our Adult Educators can relate to the same struggles mentioned in the article: How many classes will I teach the next semester? Will I have enough hours to earn my living? Will I make enough money to pay my bills? If not, what will I do then? –Grace Maldutyte, Adult Educator, Olive Harvey College South Chicago Campus

**From Carlos Aulet, Adult Educator at Truman:** “After I stepped out at break time, I saw this on the board.”
Professional Development Resources

*Professional Development as Transformative Learning, New Perspectives for Teachers of Adults, the Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series, by Patricia Cranton*

This book draws on recent scholarship in adult education to provide practical ideas for adult educators on how to stimulate and support their own development as educators and better understand the process of professional development as adult learning. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the diverse contexts within which educators work and the nature of professional development in those contexts. Chapter 2 elaborates on specific strategies that are traditionally used in professional development, considering each in terms of the type of knowledge it fosters and its congruence with educators' practice. Chapter 3 describes educators' development in terms of Candy's (1991) four facets of self-direction. Chapter 4 on critical reflection uses Brookfield's (1987) components of critical thinking as a basis to discuss how educators' development can be critical in nature. Chapter 5 applies Mezirow's (1991) theory of transformation to the development of adult education practice. Chapter 6 uses Jung's (1971) psychological type theory to discuss the influence of educators' characteristics on their work. Chapter 7 discusses working toward change in organizations and institutions within the community of educators. Chapter 8 presents a model depicting the influences on educators' development and educators' influences on their context and culture. Chapter 9 provides strategies that developers can use in working with educators. Appendixes include 223 references and an index. (YLB)

*The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development, by MS Knowles, EF Holton III, RA Swanson - 2014*

How do you tailor education to the learning needs of adults? Do they learn differently from children? How does their life experience inform their learning processes? These were the questions at the heart of Malcolm Knowles's pioneering theory of andragogy.

*Adult Education as Vocation: A Critical Role for the Adult Educator, by Michael Collins*

Fixation on technique, erosion of autonomous and community interests, and efforts to increase professionalization of adult education (which tends to emphasize the differences between adult educators and adult learners rather than their common interests) have created a crisis in adult education. Contemporary practice and research on self-directed learning have focused on teaching techniques. This has caused modern adult education to evade serious engagement with critical, ethical, and political issues. Adult educators must develop a sense of vocation or calling and must subordinate technique and technology to ethical and practical considerations through human-scale, less impersonal programming and development. This does not necessarily mean decreased emphasis on competent performance.

The issues of needs assessment, program design, and program evaluation, professionalization, and educator training and competence should be approached from the perspective adult learners' needs rather than from the standpoint of bureaucratic or corporate needs. Adult educators should be guided by the principles of transformative pedagogy, which emphasizes social theories of action.
rather than psychological learning theories. Transformative education, which is based on engendering democratic social relations between adult educators and learners, may be extended to formal educational institutions, the workplace, and the community.


- improving the effectiveness of AL policies and provision, on which the Commission has also published a report
- making better use of digital media for adult learning, on which the Commission has also published a report, and
- improving the literacy, numeracy and digital skills of low-skilled adults

Building on mutual learning and the exchange of good practices, and following their mandate, these groups have delivered key messages and highlights (more at the site). 

Teaching adult basic skills is a challenging job and requires specialized training. Member States need to provide adult basic skills educators with attractive career pathways and appropriate employment conditions, as well as high quality initial training and ongoing professional development that focus on adult-specific teaching strategies as well as subject matter. Adult learners who need to improve their basic skills often need extra support to complete their learning journey, such as specialized guidance services, clear progression routes, and opportunities for the accreditation and certification of their prior learning. Effective support increases the likelihood that adults will take the next step up. To encourage participation and persistence, programs need to be offered as close as possible to where people live. Practical support on matters such as course fees, travel costs; childcare and time off work should also be provided. Programs should offer the possibility to resume after a period away from learning.