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## IAACE June 2026 Newsletter- Community

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Thu, Jun 18, 2026 at 1:38 PM

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June 18, 2026

### In This Edition of the IAACE Newsletter:

President's Message  
Award Nominations Are Open  
Retiree Recognition at the IAACE 2026 Awards  
Community Chat, Friday June 19 at 10:30 am ET  
Membership Survey Deadline is June 30  
Thank you, Outgoing Board members  
Welcome to the Board, starting July 1  
Show Off Your Graduates  
When Tears Turn To Triumph By David Shepherd  
Conference 2026 Magic is Happening  
Professional Development by Human i-t on - Today at 3 pm ET  
Advocacy Update  
Your Monthly Heads-Up  
IAACE Members June Birthdays



IAACE Members:

As I write this, I realize this will be my last President's Message, and it is filled with both gratitude and appreciation.

First, I must say thank you! It has been a true honor and privilege to serve as President of the IAACE Board. I am grateful for the friendships I have made, the knowledge I have gained, the support I have received, and the opportunity to work alongside such dedicated members of this organization.

I am incredibly excited to see the outstanding work being done in adult education and am confident that our association will continue to thrive under the leadership of our new President. We are in great hands, and I know IAACE will continue to be a strong voice and advocate for adult education across our state.

Please take a moment to read below for some exciting updates.

Thank you again for "Hitting It Out of the Park" with me! Your dedication, passion, and commitment have made this journey truly memorable. Serving as your President has been one of the highlights of my professional career, and I will always cherish the relationships and experiences I have gained along the way.

Although my term as President is coming to an end, I hope you'll stay in touch, don't be a stranger!

With sincere appreciation,

Caroline Foster  
IAACE President 2025-2026

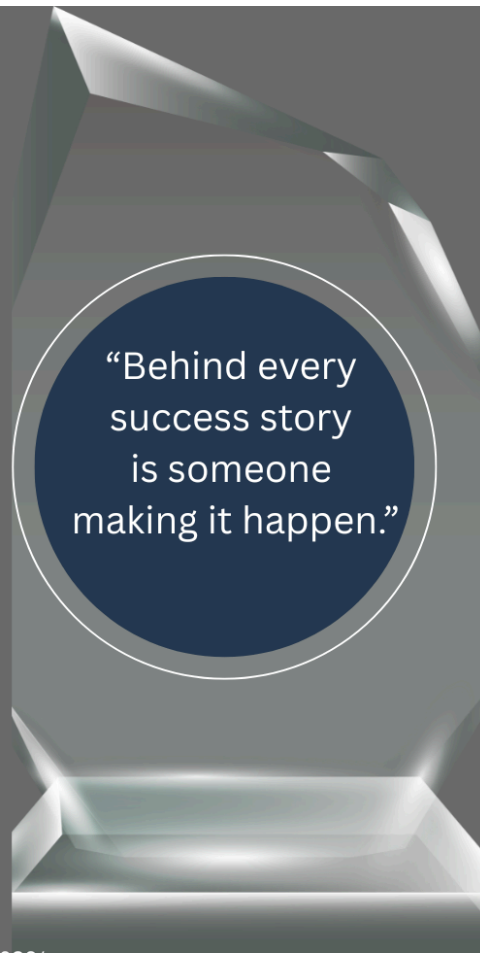


## Recognition Awards

Award Nominations  
period:  
June 17-August 14



[//iaace.com/awards/iaace-award-nominations-2026/](https://iaace.com/awards/iaace-award-nominations-2026/)



“Behind every  
success story  
is someone  
making it happen.”

Since 1973

### **Award Nominations Are Now Open**

Recognition season is here in the IAACE community.

And this is one of the best parts of who we are—taking time to celebrate the people doing meaningful, often quiet work every day across adult education in Indiana.

We know the impact doesn't always come with recognition. It shows up in the extra time spent supporting a learner, the creative problem-solving behind the scenes, the partnerships that open doors, and the steady leadership that keeps programs moving forward.

That's why this matters.

Recognition helps tell the story of the work happening across our state. It lifts up excellence, encourages others, and reminds us that what we do every day has real impact.

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### **Nominate Someone Who Deserves to Be Seen**

Take a few minutes to recognize a colleague, program, partner, or leader who is making a difference in adult education.

[Submit a Nomination](#)

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Not sure if someone “counts” as an award candidate? If they came to mind while reading this—you’re probably already on the right track.

Strong nominations don’t need to be long or complicated. Just share what they’ve done and the impact it’s had.

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When you think about your work this year, who stands out as someone who consistently makes things better for others?

That’s the person worth recognizing.

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We’ll also be talking about recognition, impact, and celebrating success in this week’s Community Chat—join us if you want to be part of the conversation.

IAACE is proud to include retiree recognition as a benefit and part of the award ceremony, details below.



\$20 per year OR \$55 Lifetime

Age 55+ Retired from Adult Education

## **Retiree Recognition at the IAACE Awards Banquet**

IAACE is proud to honor members who are retiring from the field of adult education and celebrate the lasting impact they’ve made on learners, programs, and the profession.

Retiree recognition will take place during the IAACE Awards Banquet on Wednesday, September 30 at 6:00 PM. This special moment is part of our evening of celebration as we recognize excellence across the field and thank those who are concluding their careers in adult education.

If you or a colleague will be retiring and would like to be included in this recognition, please be sure to complete the Retiree Recognition form by September 1, 2026.

We look forward to celebrating this meaningful milestone together and honoring the dedication of our retiring members.

# iaace Community Chat

3rd Friday of each month  
9:30 am CT/10:30 am ET



Facilitated by:  
**David Shepherd**  
Collaboration & Engagement  
Committee Chair  
and  
Jenn Wigginton  
IAACE Executive Director

[//iaace.com/membership/community-chat/](https://iaace.com/membership/community-chat/)



## WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!



### MEMBER PERCEPTIONS:

HOW DO YOU THINK IAACE IS PERFORMING OVERALL?

### BENEFIT UTILIZATION:

WHAT SPECIFIC MEMBER BENEFITS DO YOU VALUE MOST?

### STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

SHARE YOUR ASSESSMENT OF OUR PROGRESS ON THE KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.

**SHARE YOUR VOICE**

*Help shape the future of your membership*

Share your thoughts on benefits, communication, and our strategic plan outcomes

**Thanks For Your Service...**

As we welcome new board members, we also want to extend our sincere appreciation to those completing their service on the IAACE Board: Carol Bible, Tom Miller, David Shepherd, and Melinda Haines.

Melinda Haines is retiring from her role after completing a one-year term, and we extend our special gratitude for her leadership, time, and meaningful contributions to IAACE during her service.

Serving on the IAACE Board is about far more than attending meetings and conferences. Our board members help shape the culture of our association. They champion our mission, uphold our values, support our members, and help guide the vision that moves IAACE forward.

We are deeply grateful for the time, energy, expertise, and passion each of these individuals has contributed. While their board service is concluding, this is not goodbye. We know they will continue to be active members of our IAACE community, helping us build the strong, connected association our members value and deserve.

**Thank you, Carol, Tom, David, and Melinda, for your dedication and service to IAACE.**



Carol Bible (top left), Tom Miller (top right), David Shepherd (bottom), and Melinda Haines (bottom left) are pictured here, each recognized for their dedicated service during their term on the IAACE Board.

## Welcome to the Board starting July 1



Ryan LaPlante (Region 5), from Washington Township Adult Education, will serve as President-Elect. In this role, he will also co-chair the 2027 Conference, helping guide the vision and planning for this important event.



Katie Walton (Regions 9 & 10), from River Valley Resources, will continue her service on the board as she transitions into the role of Treasurer. Having previously served as President, she brings strong leadership experience and continuity to this new role.

Hannah Price (Region 11), Marilyn Pitzulo (Region 5), Adrienne Carroll (Region 1), and Katie Sattler (Region 12) also join the board, adding valuable perspective and energy from across the state.

The transition meeting in May provided a strong and thoughtful onboarding experience, setting the stage for a smooth handoff and shared understanding of our goals moving forward. We are grateful for the time, insight, and engagement from both outgoing and incoming leaders.

We look forward to the energy, perspective, and commitment this new group brings as they help strengthen and grow our community in the year ahead.



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## Show Off Your Graduates! Tag #IAACE on your Posts

IAACE wants to celebrate the amazing accomplishments happening across Indiana Adult Education programs this graduation season!

We invite you to share graduate photos, success stories, student quotes, and celebrations for inclusion in upcoming newsletters and social media.

No formal write-up needed — quick updates and photos are perfect!

Submit here: <https://forms.gle/db6oovy8rZhWetZh9>

Articles and Blogs are accepted anytime, email [director@iaace.com](mailto:director@iaace.com).

## Quick Graduation Spotlight Form



## When Tears Turn To Triumph

By David Shepherd

Wednesday, June 3 marked our program's 29th graduation since I began working in adult education. The names and stories change, but the feeling we all feel at graduation never grows old. Each year, I am reminded of why we do this: we change lives. Simple.

Our NEO Adult Education & Training program's graduates who participate in our graduation ceremony do so with our high school programs' graduates, each wearing the same blue Options school colors. No difference.

The message is clear: We don't acknowledge any difference between earning a high school diploma and earning an HSE. No separate graduation ceremonies. I'm not sure how common the practice is, as I'm not sure how common it is to have a public charter high school operating in the other half of the building simultaneously.

I am traditionally called upon to select our program's adult ed speaker; it was almost instantly clear who my choice should be: Tyrus Smith, a man who told us how he became a 45-year-old graduate.

One year ago, he could no longer contain his secret. After attending several high school open houses, he tearfully called his wife from work to tell her the truth, fearful that she would reject him once she knew he didn't have a high school diploma. On the contrary, she was understanding and supportive of his intention to attend NEO Adult Education & Training here in Region 1's Portage.

Tyrus's story took an unexpected turn, one that would once again test his determination and ability to persevere. He passed four sections, not five.

Math, that infamous thorn to so many, brought Tyrus to tears. He allowed himself to be temporarily disappointed, but he quickly pivoted to attacking his weakness. Two weeks later, he was ready to retest in math. The second time, he conquered it.

I could hear Tyrus's jubilant shout when he was a safe distance from the test room, but he wasn't done. With his high school equivalency in hand, he applied for his dream job as a steelworker. He got the job, and, to quote Tyrus in his graduation speech, "I've never been happier." On this day, the tears were finally tears of joy.

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### **IAACE 2026 Conference — Registration Opens July 1!**

Join us September 30–October 2 at Belterra Resort for the IAACE 2026 Conference—three days of innovative ideas, practical strategies, inspiring stories, and meaningful connections with educators from across Indiana.

#### **Registration & Hotel**

- Registration opens July 1: <https://iaace.com/2026-conference-registration/>
- Early Bird (July 1–Aug 28): Member \$400 | Non-Member \$500
- Late Registration (Aug 28–Sept 9): Member \$450 | Non-Member \$550
- Hotel reservations open July 1: <https://iaace.com/2026-hotel-information/>

#### **Keynote**

We're excited to welcome Lewis Chaney as our featured keynote speaker:  
<https://iaace.com/2026-conferencekeynote/>

#### **Certiport Certification Exams Available**

Earn industry-recognized credentials on site through Certiport:  
<https://certiport.pearsonvue.com/Certifications.aspx>

The schedule is coming together—stay tuned!

#### **Why attend?**

Learn. Connect. Lead.

Conference Keynote

IAACE Conference Promo

CERTIPORT®

A PEARSON VUE BUSINESS

Certiport Certification Exams will be offered at no additional cost.  
Click here to view the Certifications Offerings

## Professional Development Today at 3 pm ET/ 2pm CT

Join us as Charles and Lisa from human-i-t share about their AI course specially developed for adult learners in the blue collar fields. Click the graphic to register for the session.



human-i-t



iaace

## Preparing Adult Learners for an AI-Driven Workforce

**Charles Pellicane - Lila Zermeno**

**Thursday, June 18**

**2:00 pm CT/3:00 pm ET**

**REGISTER TO ATTEND:**

🌐 <https://bit.ly/IAACEJunePD>



Artificial Intelligence is rapidly changing the workplace – including many blue-collar and skilled labor industries. Join Charles Pellicane from Human-I-T for a professional development session designed to help educators better understand how AI is shaping the future of work and how adult education classrooms can adapt.

This session will provide insight into an AI-focused course developed to support working adults and blue-collar learners in building confidence with emerging technology, workplace tools, and digital problem-solving skills. Participants will explore practical ways teachers can introduce AI concepts into instruction to support lifelong learning, career readiness, and workforce advancement. Attendees will leave with ideas, resources, and strategies to help learners become more adaptable, informed, and prepared for the evolving demands of today's workforce.



# Advocacy Update

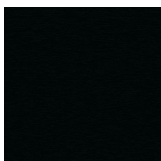
YOUR ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

[//iaace.com/advocacy/](http://iaace.com/advocacy/)

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.

Add your voice to raise cause of Adult Education by taking just a few minutes to sign our petition seeking recognition and increased funding. Small actions can result in big changes. Please add your name today to support our organization's efforts to make a difference.



## Your Monthly Heads-Up

Top 5 Things Coming Up

1. Professional Development Session is June 18
2. Community Chat is Friday at 10:30 ET
3. Submit Your Graduation Spotlights
4. Deadline for Membership Survey is June 30
5. Conference Early Bird Registration Opens July 1

# Fundraising & Community Event

Indianapolis Indians will provide \$3. per ticket sold with this code to Indiana Literacy Association. We hope you can attend and share with friends and family.



## Indiana Literacy Association Night at the Ballpark



Baseball



Literacy



Dollar Menu



Bark in the Park

Join us for an unforgettable evening of baseball, books, and community! A portion of every ticket sold supports literacy programs across Indiana.



SCAN TO GET TICKETS

Indiana Literacy Association | Indianapolis Indians  
[www.indianaliteracy.org](http://www.indianaliteracy.org) | Tickets: [www.gofevo.com/event/INDLITERACY26](http://www.gofevo.com/event/INDLITERACY26)

# SPARK AID FUND



UP TO  
\$200.

A quick spark of support for adult literacy.  
Need books or literacy-related supplies?  
The Spark Fund provides **\*\*immediate  
assistance\*\*** for supplies for your adult learners.

APPLY  
at

[//indianaliteracy.org/spark-aid-fund/](https://indianaliteracy.org/spark-aid-fund/)

Submit a request at: [indianaliteracy.org/spark-aid-fund/](https://indianaliteracy.org/spark-aid-fund/)



# COABE

The Voice Of Adult Education

## COABE Public Policy Pulse: Advocacy Tools You Can Use Now

The latest *COABE Public Policy Pulse* offers timely updates and ready-to-use resources to support adult education advocacy at the federal and state levels.

Organized around **Lead, Equip, and Empower**, this issue highlights practical ways to take action and elevate our field:

- **Lead:** Take direct action by contacting legislators, hosting local advocacy events, and using tools to engage policymakers on the importance of adult education funding and support.
- **Equip:** Access ready-made resources including state fact sheets, talking points, social media graphics, and outreach toolkits to strengthen your advocacy efforts.
- **Empower:** Share learner success stories and participate in national campaigns that highlight the real-world impact of adult education on workforce and economic mobility.

This Pulse serves as both a **call to action and a toolkit**, helping educators and advocates amplify their voice and strengthen support for adult education nationwide. Click the graphic for the latest issue.



[Submit your proposal here](#)

The deadline to submit your applications is **July 31, 2026**. Make sure to prepare and submit everything on time to avoid missing out!

**Be a Part of the ADULT EDUCATION MOVEMENT!**



Click the graphic above to Sign the Pledge!



**Happy Birthday to June Birthdays!**

If your birthday is missing, [sign in to your profile](#) and add your birthday month and date. Your membership may also have expired.

Kristi Williamson 1

Daniela Mancusi-Shreve 3

Jerry Czarnecki 6

Janene Plunkett 9

Joe Timbrook 9

Chris Harmon 15

Amanda Ruddick 16

JuliAnn Nisevich 16

Abbie Martin 20

Jill Jongeling 22

Gregory Stover 23

Mary Lynn Manning 24

## Share and Learn: Member Resources

### AE Acronyms Dictionary



#### Appreciation for the Pause.

We appreciated so much when French Lick took the time to make a moment that we would want to pause and take it in. A team visited French Lick in May to explore returning for our 2027 conference. They set up the Hoosier Ballroom to Welcome us. It was a nice touch, so we paused for a picture.

### Calendar Link

Finding what you need on the IAACE Website is easy, check out the <https://iaace.com/help/> page for searching tips and help on the [virtual.iaace.com](https://virtual.iaace.com) platform.

The platform, [virtual.iaace.com](https://virtual.iaace.com) is available for all IAACE members and is a viable option for your professional development needs. Find details on Professional Development Options at <https://iaace.com/professional-development/>



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