

IAACE July Newsletter-Transition Month

1 message

IAACE, Jenn Wigginton, Executive Director <director@iaace.com>
Reply-To: "IAACE, Jenn Wigginton, Executive Director" <director@iaace.com>
To: Jenn <director@iaace.com>

Thu, Jul 16, 2026 at 12:55 PM

[View this email in your browser](#)



In This Edition of the IAACE Newsletter:

President's Message- Denise Esslinger, 2026-2027 President

"There's Gold in the Groups"... Blog

2026 IAACE Conference Registration

Certiport Certification Exams available for Attendees

IAACE Swag Store Open- With the Conference Logo!

Award Nominations Open through August 14

Teachers Talk

New Committee Chairs, New Ideas, Endless Possibilities

Need a Helping Hand? Connect with Our IAACE Mentor, Rob Moore

The Power of the Pause: One Last Pause

Entrepreneurship & Personal Finance Updates for Indiana Adult Educators

IAACE Members July Birthdays

Read, Cheer. Give Back Night at the Ballpark

Spark Aid Fund

COABE Introduces NAFTAE



Denise Esslinger
IAACE President 2026-27



IAACE Members,

I am incredibly honored to step into the role of your IAACE President for the 2026-2027 year. Before looking ahead, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our past leadership for building such a strong foundation. Most importantly, I want to thank all of you. You are the dedicated educators, administrators, and advocates who show up every day to change lives across Indiana. Whether you are helping a student master English, guiding someone toward their HSE, or opening doors to workforce certifications, your dedication is the heartbeat of our state's success.

On behalf of the entire association, I want to express my gratitude to Jenn Wigginton for her eight years of leadership and dedication as our Executive Director. Her impact has shaped IAACE. While we will miss Jenn and all she brought to the association, we are currently in the process of hiring an interim Executive Director and will post the permanent position soon.

The conference theme this year is "Together We Make Magic Happen," and to me, that isn't just a theme for the conference. It is the true definition of adult education. Every time a student unlocks a new opportunity, walks across a graduation stage, or gains the confidence to pursue a dream, it feels like magic. But we know the truth. That magic doesn't happen by accident. It happens because we work together, share our strengths, and refuse to give up on our learners.

Adult education is constantly evolving, and IAACE is fully committed to ensuring you have the resources, community, and support to meet every

new challenge. Over the next twelve months, we are focusing our collective energy on three key areas:

- **Stronger Advocacy:** Championing the true value and critical funding of adult education at both the state and local levels.
- **Impactful Professional Development:** Delivering high-quality, inspiring training to equip you with the best tools for your classrooms and programs.
- **Listening to Your Voice:** Using feedback from our recent membership survey to shape our strategic plan, to ensure IAACE is growing in the direction you need most.

IAACE only thrives because of your passion and expertise. This year, I want to challenge each of you to bring your own unique brand of magic to our community. Join a committee, share a breakthrough moment from your classroom, or submit a proposal to present at our upcoming events.

Stay Tuned! Keep an eye on your inbox and the IAACE website for conference updates and new ways to connect.

I am excited about the year ahead and grateful to be on this journey with you. Please never hesitate to reach out to me at desslinger@warren.k12.in.us to share your ideas, your concerns, and your successes.

Let's come together, support each other, and make this an absolutely magical year.

Best regards,

Denise Esslinger

IAACE President 2026--2027

“There’s Gold In The Groups”: How Adult Education Professionals Can Unlock The Power Of

By Samantha Smith



When I joined [LinkedIn](#) years ago, I thought it was simply an online résumé, a place to update my job title, to occasionally congratulate someone on a promotion, and a place where people could “humble brag” about their accomplishments.

I was wrong.

Today, LinkedIn has become one of the most valuable professional development tools I use as an adult education leader. It has connected me with practitioners across the country and around the world, introduced me to innovative ideas, helped me discover funding opportunities, provided free professional learning, and expanded my understanding of what’s possible for adult learners. It has also helped me to rethink and reimagine my role in adult education.

As a homegrown Georgia peach now embracing Hoosier life in Indiana (year 3 y’all), I’m also using LinkedIn to rebuild my community and expand my professional network. It’s allowing me to learn my new landscape, connect with workforce and education leaders, and quickly become part of conversations that are shaping our field.

If you’re an adult education administrator, instructor, transition specialist, career pathways navigator, data specialist, support staff member or even an adult learner, you should be using LinkedIn as more than a social media platform. You should be using it as a professional growth strategy.

[Continue Reading](#)

[Read More & Comment Online](#)



You're Invited! Together, We Make Magic Happen

We are so excited to finally say it...registration for the **IAACE 2026 Conference** is officially open!

There is something special about seeing our adult education community come together each year. New ideas are shared. Friendships are made. Challenges become opportunities. We laugh, learn, celebrate, and leave inspired to make an even greater impact on the lives of our students.

This year, we'll gather **September 30–October 2 at Belterra Resort**, and we truly hope you'll be there.

Our theme, **Together, We Make Magic Happen**, couldn't be more fitting. The magic isn't in the decorations or even the incredible lineup of events—it's in the people. It's in the conversations between sessions, the encouragement from a colleague, the

new idea that changes the way you teach, and the partnerships that continue long after the conference ends.

We've planned an unforgettable experience, including keynote speaker **Lewis Chaney**, engaging breakout sessions, an interactive Exhibit Hall, our Awards Banquet, the Poolside Social, Featured Brunch, and a few IAACE traditions you won't want to miss. Registered attendees can also earn a complimentary Certiport industry certification during the conference.

Early Bird registration is available through **August 28**:

- IAACE Members: **\$400**
- Non-Members: **\$500**

We encourage you to register early and reserve your room at Belterra Resort so you can be part of every moment.

Whether you're a familiar face or attending for the very first time, there is a place for you at IAACE. Your experiences, your ideas, and your passion help make our community stronger.

We can't wait to welcome you this fall. Join us as we celebrate, learn, grow, and discover once again that **together, we make magic happen.**



Earn a Free Industry Certification at IAACE 2026

Take your professional development one step further at this year's conference! As an added benefit of registration, attendees have the opportunity to earn **one complimentary Certiport certification** in a variety of in-demand areas, including Microsoft Office, Artificial Intelligence, Adobe, QuickBooks, AutoCAD, Unity, and more. Practice materials are provided in advance, exams are proctored on-site, and there is no additional cost to participate. Space is limited, so be sure to indicate your interest when you register. Learn more about the available certifications and exam details on the IAACE website.

[Certiport Certification Exams Information](#)



IAACE
SWAG
.com/swag



SEARCH

Login

Cart (0)

[Categories](#) ▾ [What's New](#) [Gift Card](#) [Shop By Design](#)

[Need Information?](#)
[Contact Us](#)

ORDER BY AUGUST 21st to guarantee delivery before the conference!



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

Celebrate Excellence: Nominate an IAACE Award Recipient

Every day, adult educators across Indiana change lives. They open doors to new careers, build confidence, strengthen communities, and help learners achieve goals they once thought were out of reach. The IAACE Awards are our opportunity to pause, celebrate those accomplishments, and recognize the individuals and programs making an extraordinary impact.

Award nominations are now open through August 14, and we encourage every member to take a few moments to recognize a colleague, mentor, program, or partner whose dedication deserves to be celebrated. Sometimes the most meaningful recognition comes from the people who witness the hard work happening every day.

Whether it's an innovative instructor, an inspiring leader, a dedicated support professional, or someone who consistently goes above and beyond for adult

learners, your nomination helps shine a light on the incredible work taking place throughout Indiana.

Under the leadership of Awards Committee Chair Maeve Warrick, the Awards Committee made up of past award recipients, looks forward to reviewing this year's nominations and celebrating the outstanding individuals who exemplify the spirit of adult education. The board also follows a policy for the awards.

Let's take this opportunity to celebrate one another, honor excellence, and recognize the passion and commitment that make Indiana's adult education community so special.



Nomination Deadline: August 14

Don't let exceptional work go unnoticed. Submit a nomination and help us recognize the educators and leaders who make a lasting difference every day.

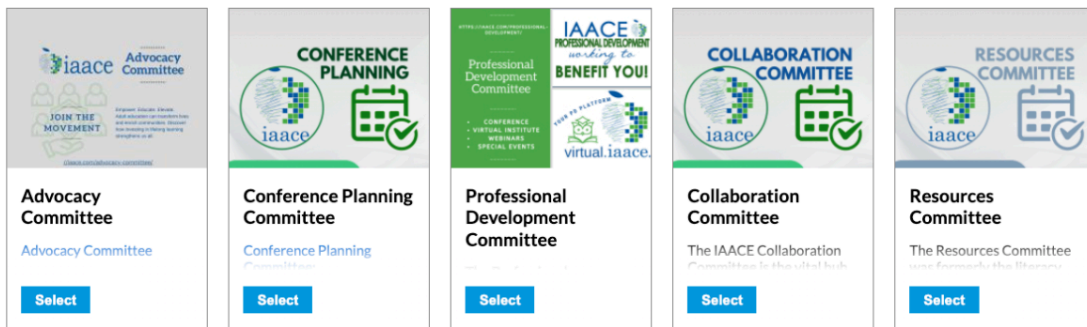
[Click here for more information.](#)

The banner features the iaace logo on the left, followed by the text "TEACHERS TALK" in large blue serif font, and "The After-Class Conversation" in a smaller blue serif font below it. A horizontal line separates the header from the main text. The main text reads "What adult ed teachers are actually talking about." To the right of this text is a graphic of two overlapping speech bubbles, one green and one brown. Below the main text, it says "Released monthly on the last Friday of the month" followed by the URL "www.iaace.com/teachers-talk/".

[Teachers Talk Page](#)

Committee Updates

New Committee Chairs, New Ideas, Endless Possibilities



Meet IAACE's New Advocacy Committee Chair, Adrienne Carrol

IAACE is thrilled to introduce **Adrienne Carrol** as our new **Advocacy Committee Chair**!

Representing **Region 1**, Adrienne brings more than **17 years of experience in adult education**, including 10 years as an Adult Basic Education instructor, 2 years as a professional development facilitator, and nearly 7 years as the Director of Adult Education at **NEO Adult Education and Training** in Portage. She holds master's degrees in **Adult and Community Education** and **Executive Development for Public Service**, reflecting her commitment to both educational excellence and effective leadership.

Adrienne also serves as Indiana's **National Association for the Transformation of Adult Education (NATAE) State Advocate for Adult Education Fellow**, helping connect Indiana's adult education community with national advocacy efforts and ensuring our state's voice is represented in conversations that shape the future of adult education.

For Adrienne, advocacy is personal. She has seen firsthand the transformative impact adult education has on individuals, families, and communities. She is passionate about supporting adult learners, empowering educators, and

ensuring that every Hoosier has access to high-quality adult education opportunities.

As IAACE's Advocacy Committee Chair, Adrienne will help lead our advocacy initiatives, engage members in legislative and public policy efforts, and strengthen partnerships that advance adult education throughout Indiana.

Please join us in welcoming Adrienne to her new leadership role! We are excited for the knowledge, enthusiasm, and dedication she brings to IAACE as we continue advocating for adult learners and the professionals who serve them.

[Advocacy Page](#)

Meet IAACE's New Collaboration & Engagement Committee Chair, Katie Sattler

IAACE is excited to introduce **Katie Sattler** as our new **Collaboration & Engagement Committee Chair!**

Katie, from region 12, brings a wealth of experience, a collaborative spirit, and a deep commitment to adult education. Her passion for education began while serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras, where she witnessed the transformative power of learning. Since then, her career has included roles as a World Cultures teacher, English Language Learner (ELL) teacher, and elementary classroom teacher before discovering her true calling in adult education.

Today, Katie serves as the Lead Teacher at Washington Township Adult Education in Indianapolis, where she has taught learners at every level, including ELL, Adult Basic Education,



 iaace

and Transition/Bridge courses. She is dedicated to continuous growth as an educator and leader and is currently pursuing her Administrator's License while participating in COABE's Leadership Opportunities for Adult Educators (LOCAL) Program.

Katie believes that collaboration is one of the greatest strengths of the adult education community. She is passionate about bringing educators together to share ideas, celebrate successes, solve challenges, and build meaningful partnerships that strengthen programs across Indiana. She also recognizes the importance of advocacy and believes that when educators work together, they create better opportunities and outcomes for adult learners.

As IAACE's **Collaboration & Engagement Committee Chair**, Katie will help foster connections among members, encourage statewide networking, strengthen partnerships, and create opportunities for educators to learn from one another while advancing IAACE's mission.

Please join us in welcoming Katie to her new leadership role! We are excited to see her enthusiasm, leadership, and collaborative vision help strengthen our IAACE community and continue making a positive impact for adult learners across Indiana.

Committees serve members, don't miss out on being a part.

Committee Meetings take place virtually!

<https://iaace.com/committee-sign-up/>



ROB MOORE

INDIANA MENTORING PROJECT

ROBMOORE@IAACE.COM

812-686-0466



ADULT EDUCATION DIRECTORS COURSE

MONTHLY MINDERS

CONSULTATIONS

[//iaace.com/mentoring](https://iaace.com/mentoring)

Need a Helping Hand? Connect with Our IAACE Mentor, Rob Moore

Whether you're new to adult education, stepping into a new role, or simply looking for fresh ideas from someone who's been there, IAACE's mentoring program is here for you. Our IAACE Mentor, Rob, is available to answer questions, share resources, offer guidance, and help you navigate challenges big or small. You don't have to figure it all out on your own—we're stronger when we learn from one another. Reach out to Rob and discover how a mentor can help you grow with confidence.

The Power of the Pause: One Last Pause

By Jenn Wigginton

As I write this final *Power of the Pause (POtP)* for the IAACE newsletter, I find myself reflecting on the many moments I've shared through this little space. My POtP originated with a trail walk with my pup Hippo and him making me pause to notice turtles sunning themselves along the bank. I continued the pause through a photograph—a sunrise, my pupHippo, a quiet trail, or an unexpected moment that reminded us to slow down. Other times, it came through a simple thought about leadership, relationships, or the work we do together.

The lesson has always been the same: we don't have to rush through life to make a difference. Often, the greatest clarity, the strongest relationships, and the best decisions come when we simply pause long enough to notice.

So today, my invitation is simple.

Pause to appreciate how far you've come.

Pause before assuming.

Pause before reacting.

Pause to celebrate a colleague.

Pause to notice the good that is happening around you.

Pause to notice the nudges that God provides.

Those moments matter more than we realize.

As I begin a new chapter, this will be my final *Power of the Pause* in the IAACE newsletter. This series has been a personal passion and a joy to share with you over the years. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your journey, and for taking a few moments each month to pause with me.

May you continue to find the power in the pause—even when these reflections are no longer appearing in these pages.



Entrepreneurship & Personal Finance Updates for Indiana Adult Educators

There is exciting news for Indiana adult educators interested in expanding entrepreneurship and financial literacy opportunities for learners!

U.S. Entrepreneurship Certification Examination Approved for Ivy Tech Credit

The **U.S. Entrepreneurship Certification Examination** has been approved for **one hour of Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)** at Ivy Tech Community College as a replacement for **ENTR 279: Entrepreneurship Capstone**. Congratulations and thank you to **Nickie Nolting** and **Farrah Burkhart** for their contributions to this achievement.

Personal Finance Certification Update

The **U.S. Personal Finance Certification Examination** has been submitted to Ivy Tech's Systems Office for review and approval. Updates will be shared as they become available.

Professional Development Opportunities

Adult educators and service providers can build the knowledge and instructional skills needed to teach entrepreneurship and personal finance through two national professional development opportunities. These institutes provide curriculum, classroom-ready resources, instructional strategies, and preparation to help students successfully earn industry-recognized certifications.

- [COABE Online Entrepreneurship Institute](#)
- [AAACE Online Personal Finance Institute](#)

Indiana educators are encouraged to participate and take advantage of these valuable learning opportunities.

If you have questions about either certification or the professional development opportunities, [please contact Dr. Cheryl Ayers](#).



Happy Birthday to July Birthdays!

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

Caleb	Stieglitz	1
John	Pribik	1
Lisa	Cruea	2
Lori	Hunt	2
Louisa	Hoffman	8
Renata	Uzzell	8
Tina	Kinirsky	10
Craig A.	Harmon	12
Todd	Deley	13
Kerri	Warner	14
Sheila	Akinleye	15
Christina	Ortega	20
Katie	Sattler	22
Deidre	Hansen	23
Elizabeth	Melton	23
Medhat	Estephanous	23
Robert	Moore	28
Caroline	Foster	30
Ryan	LaPlante	31



READ. CHEER. GIVE BACK.

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 | Tickets: 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/](http://indianaliteracy.org/spark-aid-fund/)

Submit a request at: indianaliteracy.org/spark-aid-fund/



COABE

The Voice Of Adult Education



A New Voice for Adult Education

Advocacy matters, and adult education has a strong new champion. The National Association for the Transformation of Adult Education (NAFTAE) is dedicated exclusively to advancing adult education through public policy, national awareness, and strategic advocacy. By bringing together educators, learners, workforce partners, and policymakers, NAFTAE is working to ensure adult education remains a national priority and that every learner has access to the opportunities they deserve. It's exciting to see another organization raising the visibility of our field and strengthening the collective voice of adult education across the country.

Share and Learn: Member Resources

AE Acronyms Dictionary

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 platform.

The platform, 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/>



Copyright © 2026 IAACE, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because you opted in via our website or your membership opted you in.

Our mailing address is:

IAACE

9801 Fall Creek Drive

#151

[Indianapolis, IN 46256](#)

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

