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*The Voice of
Adult Education
in Massachusetts*

Hundreds Attend Adult Literacy Awareness Day at State House

**Press Release
Release**

March 18, 2010

For Immediate

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State Representative Daniel Bosley (D-North Adams), State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz (D- Boston), Teha Woodrow, MassAAL and WAITT House Student Leader, Frandy Boyer, Haitian Multi-Service Center Student Leader, Vinny Silva, Crittenton Women's Union Student Leader, and Roberta Soolman, MCAE Public Policy Co-Chair.

Today more than 800 adult learners and educators from across the state gathered at the State House for Adult Literacy Awareness Day. This annual event, organized by the Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Literacy (MassAAL) and the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education (MCAE), draws participants in General Educational Development (GED), Adult Basic Education (ABE), and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes to tell their stories and urge their local representatives to continue support for these programs. Today adult learners and educators filled the

Gardner Auditorium and went to legislative offices to advocate for funding for ABE in the budget.

"Adult basic education creates a pathway to success leading people to better jobs, higher education and civic participation," said MCAE's director Kenneth Tamarkin. "Currently there is a far greater demand for programs than slots available." Hundreds of adult learners are expected at the State House to ask their legislators to support \$28 million for Adult Basic Education (ABE) in the Fiscal Year 2011 Budget.

"In this economic climate, when basic math and literacy skills are critical, we need at least level funding for adult education," notes MassAAL director Ernest Best. A former adult learner himself, Best chose a GED over life on the streets and went on to complete college and become a state leader.

"I am a very proud supporter of Adult Basic Education," said Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz (D-Jamaica Plain). "ABE improves literacy skills for thousands of adults and allows them to become self-sufficient workers, family members, and citizens. I will fight to preserve as much funding as possible for this fiscal year." Senator Chang-Díaz will kick-off the event and speak in support of ABE.

MCAE gave Representative Daniel Bosley (D-North Adams) the MCAE Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding dedication to adult basic education and his many years of service advocating for funding for ABE and the needs of adult learners statewide. "Representative Dan Bosley has been a champion for adult education for many years," said Kenneth Tamarkin from MCAE.

"Adult basic education is essential to recovering from the recession and getting people back to work. Without basic literacy, it is more difficult to prepare adults for the jobs currently available and to teach them new skills needed to become a more qualified worker," said Representative Daniel E. Bosley. "I am honored to be receiving this award and hope that other legislators will continue supporting the wonderful work that the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education does."

Adult Literacy Awareness Day is supported by the Hyams Foundation and endorsed by Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education (MCAE); English for New Bostonians (ENB); First Literacy, Inc.; Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA); and Massachusetts Workforce Alliance (MWA).

About MassAAL

The Massachusetts Alliance for Adult Literacy (MassAAL) is the voice for the adult learner in ABE, ESOL, and GED programs in Massachusetts. MassAAL assists the adult learner in developing lifelong leadership skills, creates public awareness about the need for adult literacy, and strengthens the adult learner's voice in shaping public policy for adult literacy services in Massachusetts. For more information on MassAAL, visit <http://www.sabes.org/student/massaal.htm>

About MCAE

MCAE is a statewide membership organization of educators, adult students, and others who support equal educational opportunities for adults. MCAE is dedicated to the advancement of adult education through high quality services and professionalism in the field from basic literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages through transitions to post-secondary education. MCAE also serves as a resource for practitioners, policy makers, researchers and the media. For more information on

MCAE visit www.mcae.net.

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