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The Voice of
Adult Education
in Massachusetts

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Statewide Adult Education Conference Highlights Immigrants as Assets to the Commonwealth and Awards Peter Pan Bus Lines for Contributions to Family and Adult Literacy

Boston, MA: As Massachusetts kicks off Family Literacy Month on November 1, hundreds of educators from across the state will convene for the annual Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education's (MCAE) NETWORK conference--New England's largest gathering of adult basic education (ABE) practitioners.

"Every year more than 20,000 adults--60 per cent of whom are female and most of whom are low-income or immigrants--participate in ABE programs in Massachusetts," said MCAE's executive director, Kenneth Tamarkin. "They earn their GEDs, learn to speak English and strengthen their capacity to support their families and communities by actively participating in the workforce."

The two-day NETWORK conference begins at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, November 3 at the Best Western Royal Plaza in Marlboro, with a keynote speech delivered by Dr. Paul Watanabe, Director of the Institute for Asian American Studies and Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts-Boston. A nationally-respected political commentator and immigration expert, Watanabe will discuss the current intense political debate surrounding immigration. He will also discuss the results of the November 2 election and the most recent findings from the *Massachusetts Immigrants by the Numbers Report*, a publication that highlights immigrant demographics and economic trends in the Commonwealth.

On Thursday, November 4th, MCAE will award and recognize outstanding students, businesses and practitioners in Massachusetts' ABE programs. This year MCAE is honoring the Peter Pan Bus Lines for its visionary development of the new Holyoke Intermodal Transportation Center that now houses Head Start and adult literacy classrooms. MCAE is also featuring the Intergenerational Literacy Program in Chelsea--one of the oldest family literacy programs in the United States--as its Featured Program at www.mcae.net in November. For more information regarding Family Literacy Month visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/familylit/month/announcement.html>.

Representative Frank Smizik (D- Brookline) will join MCAE on Thursday for the annual *View*

from the Hill workshop. In this session, Rep. Smizik will discuss his advocacy and budget experiences, competing budgetary priorities and how adult learners and practitioners can be effective advocates for ABE during the budget process.

MCAE is the statewide organization for practitioners, adult students, individuals and organizations supporting equal educational opportunities for all 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 (ESOL) through preparation for a high school credential such as the General Educational Development (GED) test to programs such as family literacy, workforce development, and workplace education to transitions to post-secondary education. For more information about adult basic education in Massachusetts visit www.mcae.net.

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Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education

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