



# National Coalition For Literacy

## **NCL Update** **August 2009**

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### **NCL Transitions**

*It takes courage to change, to release the familiar and seemingly the secure, to embrace the new. But there is no real security in things that can no longer be. There is more security in the adventurous and exciting, for in movement there is life, and in change there is Power.*

—Alan Cohen

The National Coalition for Literacy has gone through many changes this last year and it has taken courage from the Board of Directors and the membership to embrace new ways of doing business.

Early in the year, the Membership Committee conducted a needs survey of NCL members, and 25 responded. Using the survey results, the Board of Directors met in May and conducted strategic planning. During the strategic planning meeting, we identified two major areas that needed work in order to increase the efficiency and flexibility of the Coalition's public policy advocacy efforts. The first is to revise, update and streamline the Public Policy Protocols that were adopted in 2007. A task force was formed to discuss how the protocols could be changed to help move our policy work more effectively.

The second is to develop and articulate overarching, federal public policy principles that will be used to guide the advocacy efforts of NCL representatives. These guiding principles will be finalized and available through the Advocacy Toolkit before the end of October. Issue-specific guiding principles are also being developed. For example, an immigration task force has been meeting under the leadership of John Segota and has produced English Language Learning Policy Principles ([http://www.ncladvocacy.org/ELLPolicyPrinciples\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ncladvocacy.org/ELLPolicyPrinciples_FINAL.pdf)), which have been adopted. A NIFL task force has also been meeting under the leadership of

Jackie Taylor and has produced a set of policy principles for a new Center for Adult Education, Literacy and Workforce Skills ([http://www.ncladvocacy.org/NationalCenterPolicyPrinciples\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ncladvocacy.org/NationalCenterPolicyPrinciples_FINAL.pdf)), which have been adopted. The new Policy Principles and Protocols will be finalized and voted upon at the NCL annual meeting in September. We will also discuss the results of the survey at our membership meeting then.

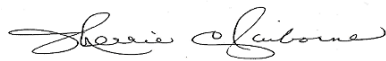
At the end of June, our Vice President, Patricia Bennett, was hired as the Associate Director of Programs (<http://www.nifl.gov/about/bios/bennett.html>) for the National Institute for Literacy and had to resign from her Director seat with the Coalition. We are proud for Patricia, but miss her knowledge of the field and her kind way of doing business. The Board voted for Art Ellison to fill her position, and he will serve as a replacement for Patricia through September, when the NCL Members will elect new Board Members.

The Coalition tried very hard to find funding to continue doing business in the same manner, but because of difficult economic times we could not. Courage again played a role in decisions that the Board faced. With only limited restricted funding, contractors for the Coalition will be hired for task related work. We were fortunate to receive funding from the Dollar General Foundation for 2009-2010. We would like to thank the Dollar General Foundation for funding our Awards event and to going into two more states for policy advocacy related work; to continue the toolkit and to use new technologies for advancing public policy advocacy.

CHANGE—YES COURAGE——YES POWER———YES

As a result of all the changes, the National Coalition for Literacy will go forward with adventurous and exciting new ideas, with a strong leadership team, and greater power than ever before to lead the field of adult education to a place of security.

I look forward to seeing each of you in September.



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## **NCL Elections: How It Works**

A nine-member Board of Directors governs the National Coalition for Literacy. Each year, the NCL Voting Members elect three new Board Members so that their three year terms are staggered, and elect officers for one year terms. In the spring, the Elections Committee makes recommendations to the Board for new Directors, and the Board accepts or rejects the recommendations. If accepted, the slate is brought to the Voting Membership at the September Annual Membership Meeting and the membership votes up or down on the slate. This September marks the NCL annual election of new Board Members and Officers. By September 7, NCL Members will be notified of the elections slate and Voting Members will be asked to cast their vote on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

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## **AIR-Sponsored Policy Symposium**

### **Changing the Odds: Informing Policy with Research on How Adult Learners Succeed**

Research has documented the barriers adult learners face in attaining basic education or English proficiency, getting started or advancing in employment, or transitioning to higher education. What would it take to address these barriers more comprehensively with policy

and focused investments? The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is hosting a discussion with panelists from the Department of Labor, Migration Policy Institute, Center for Law and Social Policy, and other research and policy organizations on how we *change the odds* for all learners and move forward to include *all* our adults in education, employment, and civic engagement. The symposium will launch a series of white papers on the topics by the speakers and AIR researchers.

**When:** September 16, 2009; 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Where:** American Institutes for Research, 1000 Thomas Jefferson St. NW  
Washington, DC Main phone: 202.403.5000

Please register today: <http://tinyurl.com/ChangingTheOdds>  
Space is limited.

**At the end of the day**, join the National Coalition for Literacy Leadership Awards ceremony and reception at the Library of Congress, honoring outstanding individuals for their contributions to adult education, family literacy, and policy making.

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### **NCL Literacy Leadership Awards**

Please join other NCL members and friends to celebrate and honor the 2009 Literacy Leadership Awards. The NCL Literacy Leadership Award recognizes individuals and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to improving literacy in the United States. This year, we are pleased to honor the following individuals and organizations:

- Gretchen Wilson, Country Singer Legend and GED Graduate
- Senator Patricia Murray (Washington)
- Representative Raul Grijalva (Arizona)
- Dorcas Place, President and CEO, Brenda Dann-Messier
- Home Safety Council, President Meri-K Appy
- Calvin Miles, Adult Learner and Advocate, Received by his Family

**When:** Wednesday, September 16, 2009, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Center for the Book, Library of Congress, James Madison Building  
Montpelier Room, 6th Floor  
Independence Ave., SE, between 1st and 2nd Streets

Light hors d'oeuvres will be offered at the reception. There is no fee to attend.

**To RSVP**, click [here](#).

(You can also copy and paste this link into your web browser:  
<http://tiny.cc/2009NCLLeadershipAwards>)

The Literacy Leadership Awards are cosponsored by the National Coalition for Literacy and the Center for the Book. This year's awards reception is generously supported by a grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.  
(<http://www.dollargeneral.com/ServingOthers/Pages/GrantPrograms.aspx>).

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## Joint NCL/COLLO Membership Meeting

**On September 17, 2009**, NCL will hold its Annual Meeting from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. with breakfast at 8:30 a.m. and lunch. We are pleased to have the opportunity to meet jointly with the Coalition of Lifelong Learning Organizations (COLLO) for part of the day. Both groups will meet separately from 9-11:30 a.m. Following lunch, NCL and COLLO will join forces to participate in a shared professional development experience and explore ways in which we might collaborate to advance common interests.

To **RSVP**, click [here](#).

(You can also copy and paste this link into your web browser:  
<http://tinyurl.com/NCL-COLLO-Joint-Meeting>)

**When:** September 17, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Other meetings may be scheduled after 3 p.m.

**Where:** Hall of States (**For directions:** <http://www.sso.org/>)  
444 N. Capital St., NW  
Washington, DC 20001

**Rooms:** **COLLO:** Room 231  
**NCL:** Room 235

**Fee:** \$30 fee per person to cover breakfast, lunch and the cost of meeting room and materials.

For more information, contact Jackie Taylor at [jackie@jataylor.net](mailto:jackie@jataylor.net) or 865-680-7668.

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## New International Literacy Day Resources



The International Reading Association and the National Coalition for Literacy are pleased to offer International Literacy Day Resources in the NCL Advocacy Clearinghouse and Toolkit:

<http://www.ncladvocacy.org/ild.html>



NCL has published two new fact sheets to help programs, schools, states, and advocacy organizations make the case for adult and family literacy: The *Adult Literacy Fact Sheet 2009* and the *Health Literacy Fact Sheet 2009*. Both can be found in the NCL Advocacy Clearinghouse and Toolkit at the above link.

Join us in celebrating International Literacy Day on September 8.

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### Mark Your Calendars

**Sept. 16:** NCL Literacy Leadership Awards  
**Sept. 17:** NCL/COLLO Membership Meeting, Washington, DC

## Upcoming Adult Literacy Events

**Sept. 16:** AIR-Sponsored Policy Symposium  
**Nov. 1-6:** AAACE, Annual Conference, Cleveland, OH

*If you would like to list your event or meeting here, please send information to [ncl@ncldc.net](mailto:ncl@ncldc.net) by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month.*

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## Public Policy Corner

By Lynn Selmsler, Policy Director, NCL

Appropriations bills take center stage in this month's update as they impact several areas of interest and concern to the adult education community.

The House of Representatives passed H.R. 3293, appropriating funds for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education on July 24, 2009. The Senate reported their version of this legislation on July 30, 2009. While there are similarities in the funding levels set forth in these bills, there are also differences.

Both House and Senate bills provide \$628,221,000, for adult education state grants. The House bill provides for \$45,907,000 for a one-time increase to those states that did not receive their full allocations because of an administrative error by the Department of Education. The Senate bill provides that up to \$46 million is available for this purpose. In addition, both bills provide \$75 million for the English literacy and civics education state grants.

Similarly, both bills eliminate funding for the National Institute for Literacy. However, the House directs the Department to consult with stakeholders in the field of adult literacy to determine which activities supported by NIFL, if any, are worthwhile and to incorporate them under National Leadership Activities. The Senate bill also supports the Department's review of NIFL activities in order to identify those activities that are to be continued. However, the Senate bill encourages the Department to take special note of the national discussion lists, Bridges to Practice/Learning to Achieve program, regional resources centers, and teacher, student and administrator databases among the items that should be supported, which is consistent with items identified in the Coalition's NIFL Services Survey Report ([http://www.national-coalition-literacy.org/NCL\\_NIFLReport061209.pdf](http://www.national-coalition-literacy.org/NCL_NIFLReport061209.pdf)).

The House bill recommends \$11,346,000 for National Leadership Activities, of which \$5 million is for an Adult Workforce Transition Initiative. The Senate recommends \$13,346,000 for National Leadership Activities, consistent with the budget request.

The Senate includes language in its committee report encouraging OVAE to work with the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to explore how best to support the research needs of the adult education field, including through possible dedicated funding for an adult education-focused research grant competition and the establishment of an adult education and literacy research and development center. In contrast, the House includes \$2 million for a new research and development center for adult learning and literacy within the Institute of Education Sciences (the difference in the amount provided for National Leadership Activities

between the House and Senate). Similar to other IES centers, the grant for the center is to be awarded on a competitive basis, with a five-year grant period. The Committee report states that the new center is to address the unique challenges of adult learning and literacy and identify and support the best practices in this field of research. While these are two different approaches, this is an item we worked on for several years with appropriators and it is good to see that the research needs of adult education are getting the attention they deserve.

The news is also mixed for Even Start. The House bill provides \$66 million in funding for Even Start, with strong language supportive of the program and questioning the use of old data to justify its elimination. The Senate bill eliminates funding for Even Start.

On a different topic, Congressman Jared Polis (D-CO) has introduced H. Res. 707, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Week resolution developed by the Coalition. The resolution calls for the celebration of this week during our Literacy Leadership Awards. At the present time, the Congressman is circulating a "[Dear Colleague](#)" seeking cosponsors. The Coalition encourages its member organizations to support the resolution with their individual House members. If we are unable to obtain 25 cosponsors, the resolution will not be considered by the Committee or the full House of Representatives. **For a copy of the action alert, the Dear Colleague letter, and the text of the resolution, see the [Act Now](#) section of the NCL Advocacy Clearinghouse and Toolkit (<http://national-coalition-literacy.org/advocacy/actnow.html>).**

The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions held a hearing on the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) on July 16, 2009. A video of the hearing, as well as individual testimony, can be found on the Committee's website at [http://help.senate.gov/Hearings/2009\\_07\\_16/2009\\_07\\_16.html](http://help.senate.gov/Hearings/2009_07_16/2009_07_16.html).

Finally, Congress continues to move forward on health care reform legislation. We have been working with the office of Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) on several amendments to the section of the Education and Labor Committee bill providing grants for Employee Wellness Programs to expand on the current language as it relates to health literacy. While the Congressman was not successful in amending the bill during committee debate, there is a chance some of our changes could make it in the version of the bill that ultimately makes it to the full House of Representatives for consideration.

Congress will be in recess through the month of August, so we have a little breathing room. But once they return, they will have many issues facing them of interest to adult education, including the completion of the Labor/HHS/Education appropriations bill for FY 2010, WIA reauthorization, and health care reform. There is even a chance Congress will begin debate on immigration reform. So stay tuned.

**Visit the National Coalition for Literacy's website for more information.**  
<http://www.national-coalition-literacy.org/>