

MAACCE MATTERS

Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education (MAACCE)

Volume 6 Issue 2

October 2007

MAACCE Honors Maryland's Outstanding Adult Students



Student Award Winners (*not all winners present*)

At this year's conference, student award winners were from many different backgrounds and experiences. Awards were presented to young single mothers, older learners who had overcome barriers. learners who had to learn English before they could enroll in classes to prepare for a Maryland High School Diploma, learners working full time jobs and attending classes,

students who were the first in their families to get a diploma, and learners who have returned to their classes to volunteer and mentor learners trying to reach their goals.

All of the student award winners demonstrated determination, perseverance and commitment to accomplishing their goals. This involved juggling schedules, late nights studying, making difficult life-changing decisions, personal sacrifice, time management, self examination and reflection.

It was inspiring and humbling for the adult education professionals present to hear the stories and voices of these outstanding students.

(See page 4 for more on awards)

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Presidential Musings

Behind the scenes of a conference

Up until four years ago, I attended conferences with much abandon, never wondering who or what was behind the scenes. For all I knew, the conference happened by magic. However, if I may be excused for using a cliché, I have discovered that it's not magic, nor is a conference put on by "very important people," but it's put on with a lot of blood, sweat and tears from a few very ordinary people. In MAACCE's case, this means your very own Board of Trustees.

Take the summer of 2006, for example. There we were at the annual retreat, planning the Board activities for the 2006-2007 year, and the subject of the conference came up. We had outgrown the Timonium site, so it was time to find another place to bring our constituents together. Most of us had a cell phone glued to our ear. We called every place we found after faithfully "Googling" for sites.

Our basic questions? 1. "Do you have a banquet room that can hold 500 people?" 2. "Do you have at least eight break-out rooms that can hold at least 50 people?" and 3. "Can you do this for under \$38,000?" That's right. The conference costs at least \$38,000. The costs rise higher when we add technology, gifts, programs, etc.

Surprisingly, many of the places we questioned couldn't accommodate our size. They lacked the number of breakout rooms needed, or they didn't have the banquet capacity. Others wanted a guarantee of 70 overnight rooms plus \$40,000 or more. The Marriott in Hunt Valley is an example. They don't begin to negotiate any conference that's under \$46,000! Turf Valley was the same way – guarantee 75 rooms. We looked at past years and found we never had more than 50 stay overnight. We could never guarantee 70-75 rooms. We were stunned. Then the Best Western at the Travel Plaza came to our rescue. They had the banquet room, breakout rooms, and a price we could work with.

We were elated. We quickly spread the good news and worked hard to put together a fantastic event for our constituents. The big day finally arrived and to our surprise and dismay, the front entrance was closed off. Of all things, they were having bricks painted onto the surface! They promised the entrance would be open in time for our grand opening – the next day at 8 a.m. Well, if it can go wrong, it will. The paint was still wet ,and they couldn't open it to the public. Thus, some of our attendees were forced to enter through the travel plaza. This certainly didn't lead to a great first impression. Next, we discovered the Best Western was having problems with their cooling system. Some rooms were too cold, some too hot; and maybe, just for "baby bear," some were just right. To make matters worse, there was the Toby's matinee on Thursday that caused some confusion and traffic problems. The problems with the microphone didn't help our annual meeting, either. Plus, the dumbwaiter stopped working, and the banquet staff had to carry our Thursday's luncheon up from the basement. No wonder some of them were sweating profusely. Unfortunately, by the time they got to the tables in the back, they were moving at a snail's pace. It might have helped if one of the staff had told us and we could have made the announcement. However, I know we are an understanding, empathetic bunch of people and we forgive easily!

Fast forward to 2007. Here we are again in the same place. What to do about the conference? Do we book with a "swankier" place, raise the conference price \$25 or more, and guarantee 70-75 rooms? The real question was: could programs afford such a thing? Remember, we would still have to have at least 425 people attend and fill those overnight rooms to make it work. Otherwise, MAACCE would have a very large bill it couldn't pay.

We are staying with Best Western. They have a new managerial staff, they have promised that Toby's won't be hosting a matinee then, and most of the mezzanine floor will be completely remodeled. They promise to do their best to make our attendees happy.

The next time you attend a conference, remember the "ordinary" people behind the "curtains." They work hard and hope you reap the benefits. I know I will never look at any conference that I attend the same way again. I sure appreciate all those "ordinary" people who put on the show.

Lastly, remember that your conference fees pay for the conference, but they also add to the scholarship "pot" and the public policy expenses pot. The conference money, coupled with the \$5 from each membership payment, helps us support our students, instructors, and, ultimately, our community. Don't forget that we're here to work for you, our constituents. Thank you for being a part of such a beautiful community.

Cíndy

That's right. The conference costs at least \$38,000. The costs rise higher when we add technology, gifts, programs, etc.

MAACCE Newsletter Distribution

Beginning in 2008 we will distribute the newsletter electronically via email. We're looking for feedback from you, our Members, about how you prefer to receive the quarterly newsletter.

Beginning in 2008, we will distribute the newsletter electronically via email. This expedited distribution will greatly speed up your reception of the newsletter and take advantage of the technology of the 21st century. More importantly, it will allow us to use the postage and printing costs for other purposes during the year.

When you receive this newsletter, please take a moment to let us know if you do NOT want to receive it via email. If we do not hear from you by <u>November 15</u>, we will assume this is an acceptable means of communicating with you. Please contact Rebecca Swick at <u>nwick@hcc.edu</u> for any changes.

You will continue to receive this newsletter in hard-copy form if we do not have an email address for you. Should you prefer to get it electronically (and <u>help us save money</u> at the same time!), please provide us with a current email address.

Thank you! Todd Elliott VP of Membership

New Kid on the Block

Greetings from North-Central Baltimore City! I am writing this from one of the newer grant-funded programs in the MSDE family, and as a new MAACCE Board member, I wanted to take some time to introduce us. The Greater Homewood Community Corporation has been around since the late 1960's, initially as a housing advocacy organization. In the late 1980's, we began to offer tutoring and classes and have since become a strong, vibrant member of the adult literacy efforts in Baltimore City.

Our program offers ABE and ESOL classes, as well as one-to-one tutoring on a limited basis. Each semester we operate about seven of each, and we're working on providing additional satellite locations. Even within Baltimore City we've found that potential learners can be reticent to go too far afield to find service, so we're trying to locate classes close to their homes and/or workplaces. This, of course, comes with a whole host of challenges, which could be another article.

The tutoring component is one of our unique features. On a regular basis there are about 60-75 active one-to-one volunteer tutors working with learners on English, reading, writing, and/or math skills. We offer a literacy/ABE tutor training bimonthly, and a few times a year we conduct an ESOL tutor training. These are comprehensive, two-day trainings that take volunteers through the basics of working with adult learners, understanding instructional strategies, working on goal setting and lesson planning, as well as an introduction to the Program's resources. Beyond the initial training, we encourage volunteers to attend additional workshops to increase their skills and better understand their learners.

The Greater Homewood Community Corporation has been around since the late 1960's, initially as a housing advocacy organization Like most other programs, our learners come to us with a variety of issues, and we use the tutoring option as a means of accommodating particular needs and/or schedules. We conduct a fair amount of case management as a result; balancing the needs of an individual is of primary importance to us, and we work hard to follow learners' progress, encouraging them, and (hopefully) ensuring retention.

We rely on our partners to help serve those areas we can't address. Genesis Jobs assists with job placement, ERICA has resources for immigrant populations, and our satellite hosts help recruit learners (Barclay School, Marian House, St. Mark's Lutheran Church). Additional projects in the works include classes at the Village Learning Place and another Greater Homewood partner school. All of these activities are in the northern part of Baltimore City, where we are the largest literacy provider.

So if you're ever in north Baltimore and you want to stop by, let me know!

Todd Elliott Director Adult Literacy and ESOL Program Greater Homewood Community Corporation 410-261-3524

MAACCE Welcomes two new members to the Board **Todd Elliott** VP Membership and **Bruce Knotts** Co-Chair Public Policy

2007 MAACCE Award Winners

Administrator Award Sister Pamela Jablon Center for Adult And Family Literacy in Baltimore County.

Practitioner/Facilitator Award Carol Donovan Calvert County Public Schools.

Both of these award winners are retiring after many years of service and commitment to adult education and life-long learning.

Teacher/Instructor Award was presented to a group of 8 instructors from Howard County who collectively have given 129 years of service in adult education. Technology Award

Lee Conrad

Community College of Baltimore County for his many contributions to that program.

Business/Agency Collaborator Award The Prince George's Memorial Library System for extraordinary assistance to the Literacy Council of Prince George's County and to adult learners throughout the County.

Several of the award categories had no nominations. While we are all busy, it is very important to take a few moments, think about those in our programs and in our communities who go above and beyond in service and take time to honor them. Nominations do not need to be lengthy. Please see our website at http://www.maaccemd.org for a complete list of awards.



Becky Lessey and six of her outstanding instructors

Letter to the Editor TEACH THE PARENT, REACH THE CHILD

Recently Baltimore City's Health Commissioner, Joshua Sharfstein, and the CEO of Baltimore City Schools, Andres Alonso, made a public plea for parents, especially those with low income to read to their preschool children. What a wonderful initiative for those parents who have adequate reading skills to help their children succeed in school!

Unfortunately 40% of adults 18 years and above in Maryland test at below basic or basic skill levels, according to the Maryland State Assessment of Adult Literacy 2003. These adults have trouble with the basic skills: filling out an application, adding amounts on a bank deposit, reading a chart of television listings, deciphering written medical instructions and reading instructions for a frozen dinner.

As much as parents want to help their children succeed, their lack of adequate skills makes it impossible for them to read to their children regularly. In order to help all our children be successful in school, many more educational opportunities must be provided in their neighborhoods for these parents. Such programs must include adult basic education classes, classes for immigrants to learn reading and writing of English, GED test preparation and seminars for parents that will assist them to become role models and teachers to their children.

All of our children deserve to have parents who can read to them. In fact statistics show that when parents go back to school, their children's reading levels and testing scores automatically improve.

In order for our youngsters to succeed, our community must insist that the much needed adult literacy programs and services be greatly increased. Only when we adequately help our parents to succeed academically, will our children embrace education and reading, as the most important values for their future. **TEACH THE PARENT, REACH THE CHILD!**

Helene H. Waranch Executive Director Literacy Works, Inc., 410-887-2001

Policy Matters

MAACCE Public Policy Updates

Our "thanks" to former Maryland Senator Patrick J. Hogan:

For the past several years, Senator Patrick J. Hogan (PJ) has been the prime sponsor of the Senate Bills for adult literacy—and has been one of our chief champions in our quest to increase both awareness and also funding for adult literacy. After several years as a State Senator, PJ resigned as Senator to accept the position of Legislative Strategist (Vice Chancellor of Government Relations for the University of Maryland system. MAACCE is grateful and thankful for all of his support and work on behalf of adult literacy and will miss working with him (and his staff) as we prepare for the 2008 legislative session. We wish "ex Senator Patrick J. Hogan" the very best in his new position.

Long time chair, Brad Keller, departs:

Brad Keller (MSDE Correctional Education) was honored at the MAACCE conference for his eight years of service as Chair of the Public Policy Committee. At the annual conference in May, MAACCE presented him with a plaque for his years of outstanding service and hard work on behalf of the field.



Three separate legislative citations from MD Senator Patrick Hogan, Delegate Sheila Hixson and the MD 46th District team were also presented to Brad. Both

Senator Hogan and Delegate Hixson have been the main sponsors of the adult education funding bills submitted during the past several years. Brad and the Public Policy Committee worked closely with each of these legislators and their staffs. Through his years of hard work, adult education & literacy has increased its state funding level by tenfold to almost \$7 million! Brad spent countless volunteer hours and miles of travel between Hagerstown, Baltimore & Annapolis to lead these efforts on behalf of MAACCE. There are not enough words to express our gratitude to Brad for his time and expertise in helping to guide the field to a new level of credibility and professional growth.

New co-chairs have big shoes to fill:

With the departure of Brad Keller, the Public Policy Committee replaced the leadership with two cochairs. Sonia Socha (South Baltimore Learning Center, Executive Director) and Bruce Knotts (Prince George's Literacy Council, Executive Director) have agreed to co-chair the Public Policy Committee for the next year as it continues its advocacy work for the 2007 & 2008. Sonia has served on the MAACCE Board since 1997 and the Public Policy Committee since 1999. Bruce is a new member of MAACCE and the Public Policy Committee. His career in the State Department will prepare him well for the tasks of coalition building and working with politicians. As the new co-chairs, it is their hope & plan to carry on the successful work of the MAACCE Public Policy Committee at the federal, state & local level.

Committee members are needed:

The Public Policy Committee is looking for members from the field throughout the State of Maryland. In order to maintain what has been achieved on the funding front for both the federal and state level, we need to continue to work hard from the local level on up. The committee needs you! If you are interested & willing, please contact Bruce or Sonia (see info at end of article). There is something for everyone to do—and you do not have to do everything—but we

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Policy Matters (continued)

would like an expanded committee that will not only represent the various areas in the state, but which will also represent the various types of adult literacy service providers throughout the state.

Why we need you to participate in our advocacy efforts:

Many adult literacy programs in the state are now able to serve more adult learners and hire more staff, since funding has been sustained and increased over the past 8 years. Maintaining this level of funding, as well as working to increase it, will require you to get the message out about the need for & value of adult literacy services (as well as what it costs) to your local, state and national government officials. Please send us your e-mail address so that we can include you on the public policy e-mail blasts when action is needed. Then when you receive one of these e-mails, please follow the instructions in it. If you have a question about it, please e-mail or call Bruce or Sonia, and we will answer your question.

MAACCE will post advocacy information on the website:

Watch for news about public policy initiatives and information you can share with your local and national government officials about adult literacy in Maryland.

Postcards to advocate for increased state funding will be available. MAACCE will be continuing its efforts to advocate for a funding formula during the 2008 legislative session in Annapolis. As a part of this effort, in October, postcards addressed to the Governor will be placed on the MAACCE website for your access and also distributed at the upcoming MSDE administrator's meeting. MAACCE will be asking the field to ask the Governor for his support to increase adult literacy funding in the State budget. Please be sure learners, teachers, volunteers and friends send in the postcards before January. There may be an e-mail version of the card as well, but we will let you know about this on the website at a future time.

Step up for Adult Literacy – join in our work!

Please send us an e-mail to join either the Public Policy Committee or the group e-mail advocacy group.

Sonia Socha & Bruce Knotts, Co-Chairs of the MAACCE Public Policy Committee

ssocha@southbaltimorelearns.org 410-625-4215

bknotts@literacycouncil.org 301- 699-9770

Save the Date

Next year's conference is on the horizon! Save May 8 & 9, 2008 and join us at the Best Western, Baltimore for our spectacular event.

This year's theme and logo:

Challenges, Changes, Choices



Please consider submitting a proposal to present at the conference. We are only as good as you. We have desperate pleas for more math, more GED, more writing, more administrator workshops, and of course, more ESL. Call for Proposals will be out by November, 2007 and can be submitted online as well as by "snail mail."

The Board wants to send a warm thank you to those who presented at the 2007 conference, especially who have presented time and time again.

EDUCATION MATTERS Tech Tips

Sandi L. Myrick-Nelson

Not many years ago in what now seems a galaxy away, adult literacy programs feasted in the land of plenty. Now, however, funders have tightened the purse strings causing programs to bring purchasing to a screeching halt. Also, programs have had to cut staff resulting in instructors trying to find innovative and inexpensive ways to manage multilevel classrooms without losing low-level learners or to keep higher-level learners from becoming bored with the level of instruction. As a solution to this problem, adult educators can look to the technology that was purchased during the time of plenty. Tech Tips will be used as a vehicle to share websites that can be used as a replacement for the costly computer programs that can no longer be afforded by some programs.

As mentioned above, adult educators are faced with managing multi-leveled classrooms. The use of technology can make this process a lot easier while keeping the learners engaged. To accomplish this end, students can be divided into groups based on instructional levels. The instructor will then assign one group to the computer to reinforce skills that were previously taught while he/she works face-toface with another group. Following the lesson with the face-to-face group, the groups will be switched. This process will give the instructor time to work with each group without learners having to wait for the instructor's attention, becoming frustrated at not being able to keep up, or feeling they are being held back because the level of instruction is too slow.

Topping my list of websites to use in managing a multi-level classroom is <u>www.gedpractice.com</u>. This website is maintained by Steck-Vaughn, developers of the Official GED Test. The website contains interactive lessons for all parts of the GED Test and is best used for higher level learners.

Next on the list is <u>www.tv411.org</u>. TV411.com also includes interactive lessons for all parts of the GED Test but at a lower level. In addition to this website, there are also tapes and work booklets

available for the entire tv411 program. Programs that are currently receiving funding through MSDE can borrow the tapes from the Maryland Adult Resource Center at University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Other programs can purchase the materials through the website.

For those who are looking for math only, I highly recommend <u>www.aaamath.com</u>. This site is not only interactive, but learners can select the skill they need to work on and they can also adjust the level of the skill based on their own instructional needs. Learners seem to enjoy this site because of the variety of levels, skill sets, and additional instruction included.

The websites mentioned above have been used and have brought some sanity to managing a multileveled classroom. Give them a try and see if they work for you. Stay tuned in to **Tech Tips** for more websites that I have found to be helpful in easing the pain of managing the multi-leveled classroom.

Sharing With MAACCE

MAACCE is looking for many great innovators who are willing to share. Did you know there are many ways you can share with your colleagues? Write for our newsletter. We're always looking for news from the field and ideas. It's easy to do. Just email Cindy Fischer at <u>cfischer@harford.edu</u>

We are currently looking for articles for the December/January newsletter.

You can also share by presenting your ideas to the field at our annual conference May 8 & 9, 2008. We know you have many great ideas to share, so please consider stepping up to the plate. Thank you.

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EDUCATION MATTERS

Happenings on the NEDP Front

The National External Diploma Program has been quite busy state wide for these past months. Newly minted NEDP diplomas number 450. That's correct...450 Maryland adults with the credential they need to move up in the workplace and to better take care of their family obligations.

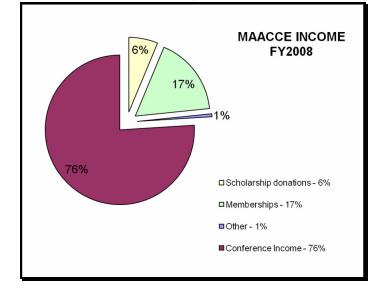
Not only are their diplomas new, but parts of the NEDP Program are new, too. CASAS is now the owner of the program and is working hard to revalidate the skills to reflect changing standards for high school completion. Six locations in Maryland: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Calvert County, Frederick County, and Howard County have participated in a pilot study using diagnostic instruments supplied by CASAS. These locations joined with sites in Connecticut and New York to give feedback via an online meeting center to keep CASAS and each other updated on the progress of the pilot. As of July 1, all other NEDP sites nationwide were given the go-ahead to transition to the new diagnostic materials. We are pleased to report that using these materials seems to have shortened the time clients take to complete diagnostics, and therefore earn their diplomas more quickly. This information was shared with all practitioners during the NEDP session at the MAACCE Conference this spring.

Across the state, NEDP is changing as well. By the time fall registrations for all adult education programs begin in earnest, many National External Diploma Programs will have new addresses. Allegany County will move to the new Mountain View High School building. Somerset County is on its way to the Tawes Building where the Board of Education is now located. The Prince George's Literacy Council Program is located at the Sports and Learning Complex in Largo. Prince George's County Community College NEDP has moved to new digs in central PG County. Carroll Community College has taken over the Consolidated Adult Education and Literacy Services grant. Not to be left out, Anne Arundel County's Annapolis site has moved within the building twice this summer for

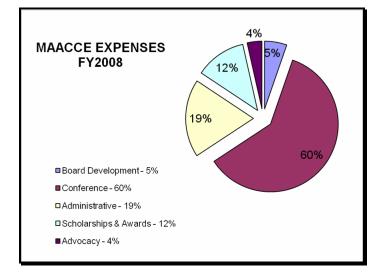
asbestos abatement. Look for updated phone, fax and snail mail contact information soon for all NEDP sites.

The National External Diploma Program looks forward to serving more Maryland adults in the upcoming year.

Roni Nudelman



2008 MAACCE Budget



EDUCATION MATTERS

"How Many Combinations Are Possible"

After a careful analysis of the new official practice tests (OPT) developed by the GED Testing Service and distributed by Steck-Vaughn Company, it was discovered that there are a few math operations being tested that have not been previously seen on these tests which determine a student's readiness for the GED Math Exam. The "OPT's" are now available in forms PA through PG, and versions PE, PF, and PG are more in line with representative questions from the newest edition of the GED Math exam. This type of math problem is easily solved, but has also not been mentioned in any existing texts for preparing students for the GED Math test, at least not any that this author has found. I present an example of this type of problem now so that this math operation can be included in the GED math curriculum.

Mr. Jay's Diner

Sandwiches		Side Orders		Drinks	
Chicken	\$3.75	French Fries	\$1.50	Coffee	\$1.25
Tuna	\$3.25	Soup	\$2.25	Juice	\$1.00
Ham	\$4.20	Salad	\$2.35	Milk	\$1.10
Club	\$4.75			Soda	\$1.25

If a customer orders one sandwich, one side order, and one drink, how many different combinations of these three items can be ordered at Jay's Diner?

(1) 11

(2) 16

(3) 28

- (4) 36
- (5) 48

Solution: (5) 48

The easiest method for solving this problem is to multiply the number of sandwich choices by the number of side order choices, by the number of drink choices: $4 \times 3 \times 4 = 48$

*A new math strategy will be provided with each issue of this newsletter.

J B Willetts Instructional Specialist Baltimore City Community College jwilletts@bccc.edu

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MAACCE Matters

MAACCE 2007 Conference a Success!

Scenes from the conference







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President Hrabowski to Speak at 2008 MAACCE Conference

As we plan for next year's conference we have already received confirmation from our keynote speaker, Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski, President of University of Mayland, Baltimore County.

Originally from Birmingham, Alabama, Dr. Hrabowski earned his Bachelors degree in Mathematics at the age of 19 from Hampton Institute. He then attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he received his Masters in Mathematics and his Ph.D., at the age of 24.

In 1977, Dr. Hrabowski became the Dean of Arts and Sciences at Coppin State College. He joined the University of Maryland at Baltimore County in 1987, serving first as Vice Provost then as Executive Vice President, and presently as President. Dr. Hrabowski is the recipient of numerous awards. Among them are the Educator Achievement Award from the National Science Foundation and the first United States President's Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring.



Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski

Standards in Action Pilot Project

Maryland Adult Education and Literacy Services has been selected as one of six states to participate in a national project on implementing content standards. Maryland recognizes that the state has trained instructors over the past four years on how to use the Maryland Content Standards for ESL/ESOL Adults, but does that training translate into instructors using the standards? This project called, *Standards-in-Action*, will help instructors understand the benefits of using standards when planning instruction and developing local curriculum.

The Maryland Standards in Action Team consists of Karen Gianninoto, MSDE ESL Specialist, Elizabeth Sinnes, Charles County Program Administrator, Mary Vargo, ESL Coordinator, Lucy Detig, Instructional Specialist, Gwen Handy, Dorchester County Program Administrator, and Kim Duncan, Instructional Specialist. The Maryland SIA Team completed national training in June in Washington D.C. The *Standards-in-Action* project is a 3-year standards implementation initiative that will provide Maryland with professional development activities and resources that will build on instructors' understanding of standards and translate standards into curriculum and instruction. The purpose of these activities and materials is to help states and local programs deliver effective professional development to help programs improve performance.

Charles County Adult Education Center and Dorchester County Adult Education Program have agreed to participate as pilot sites. This fall both programs will provide professional development to ESL instructors on *unpacking the standards*. During the workshop, instructors will analyze the concept, cognitive demand, and thinking level for 10 standards. In addition, activities will be developed for each standard. One possible outcome for the project will be a document that analyzes each standard and includes activities specific to the standard.

The unpacking process used by the Maryland Standards in Action Team reports significant benefits. Some of the benefits have included developing a better understanding of the standards, planning effective activities for learners, and planning instruction at the learner's level. Other activities will include analyzing state assessments and aligning the test questions to the Maryland Content Standards for ESL/ESOL Adults, revising the ESL content standards and ESL assessment trainings, and using the unpacking activity as a tool for mentoring instructors.

Maryland Adult Education and Literacy Services has been selected as one of six states to participate in a national project on implementing content standards.



MAACCE

Becca Swick Howard Community College 10650 Hickory Ridge Road Columbia, MD 21044

E-MAIL: someone@example.com

We're on the Web! See us at: http://www.maaccemd.org

About Our Organization...

The Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education is a non-profit organization providing leadership in Maryland for those interested in advancing education as a lifelong process. MAACCE provides a central forum for a wide variety of adult, community and continuing education groups and encourages organizations and agencies in Maryland to cooperate in a broad spectrum of educational programs and activities in support of the lifelong learning concept.

MAACCE

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