

The Faces of Adult Learners: 25 Years in the Making

Candida Baez

Candida first came to Mujeres Unidas en Accion (MUA) in September 2007 looking to better her English and to finish her GED.

Candida quickly passed through the three levels of ESOL that MUA offers. She took GED classes and also prepared for her citizenship exam.

Candida is very interested in politics, so she enrolled in the ¿OISTE? (Did You Hear?) leadership training that MUA offers yearly. She enthusiastically sought out extra projects and work at MUA, including tutoring her peers. Candida is a sharp, motivated woman who takes advantage of every opportunity.

Since enrolling in MUA, Candida improved her English, became a U.S. citizen, and obtained her GED. Upon seeing Candida's potential, MUA hired her as the part-time student project/volunteer coordinator. She has helped over 100 students complete projects in areas such as health education, breast cancer and fundraising. Candida now teaches Alfabetización (Basic Spanish Literacy) and Pre-GED I. Her students' math and reading skills have improved greatly under her instruction.

Grounded in MUA's mission is a desire to make leaders of our staff and students. Candida brings that passion to her work at MUA and motivates everyone with whom she comes in contact.



Age: 38

Immigrated from the Dominican Republic in 1998

Adult Education Program:
Mujeres Unidas en Acción

Adult Education Coalition:
Dorchester Adult Literacy Coalition

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Boston Adult Literacy Initiative. (ALI)

What is ALI?

We are Boston adult basic education providers that receive funding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or/and the City of Boston.

What do we do?

We provide services that help adult learners reach their educational and career goals as workers, parents, and community members:

- ◆ GED preparation
- ◆ English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- ◆ Adult Basic Education: literacy and numeracy
- ◆ Transition to college and job training programs
- ◆ Adult Diploma

These profiles highlight the accomplishments and challenges of just a few of Boston's 6,500+ enrolled adult learners; another 5,500 are waiting to enroll.

Education: Improving Lives and Creating Opportunities!



Age: 31

Immigrated from Haiti in 2000

Adult Education Programs:

Perkins Center / Adult Education
Ohrenberger Community Center
Blackstone Community Center

Adult Education Coalitions:

Dorchester Adult Literacy Coalition
Hyde Park/West Roxbury Adult Literacy Group
South End Adult Education Coalition

Regina Salomon

Eight years ago, Regina left her native Haiti for the U.S., looking for a better life.

Regina first enrolled at Roxbury Community College in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. Soon her language skills became good enough to transfer into the Adult Diploma Program (ADP) at WAITT House in Roxbury. Regina earned her high school diploma credentials from WAITT House in September of 2006. She also successfully completed WAITT House's College Connection Program at Roxbury Community College in 2007.

Regina has been attending Quincy Community College studying for an Associate's degree. After completing her degree from Quincy College, Regina wants to start a career in nursing. "Working as a nurse is something I have always wanted to do," she said.

Taking AEL courses has positively impacted Regina's life. In fact, Regina felt so confident in her abilities, after graduating from WAITT House, that she applied for the full-time Student Support position that had become available at the Perkins Center/Adult Education Program. Regina was hired and has been working there ever since. Regina is definitely a role model to many adult students at the Perkins who often look to her for advice.

Regina is also an excellent example of how adult learners benefit from the strong partnerships between adult education providers that the Boston Adult Literacy Initiative aims to nurture.

For more info: Brunir O. Shackleton, Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services, (617) 918-5244 or brunir.shackleton.jcs@cityofboston.gov