

# The Faces of Adult Learners: 25 Years in the Making

## Patricia Carrington

Patricia is a computer instructor at Crittenton Women's Union. At 40, Patricia found herself raising five children and receiving public assistance. She decided that she wanted to go to work but did not have the skills necessary to obtain employment. She did not even have a high school diploma.

Patricia decided to go back to school while working part-time. It took 9 months to obtain her diploma through the External Diploma Program at the JPCC Adult Learning Program. After graduating, she found a full time job.

Patricia says that the program "help[ed] me to not be afraid and to stand up and do what I need to do for a better life for myself and my children. [The program] helped me to teach my children the importance of getting an education no matter what age you are".

Getting a diploma helped Patricia increase her hourly pay from less than \$6 dollars an hour to \$15 an hour. She plans to go back to college to get a Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science.

Patricia is grateful for the chance to tell others that anything is possible if you work at it. Patricia marvels that "if 13 years ago someone had said that one day I would be a computer instructor helping to make a difference in other people's lives, I would have laughed at them. But, look at me now!"



**Age:** 51  
**Adult Education Program:**  
Crittenton Women's Union  
**Adult Education Coalition:**  
Allston-Brighton Adult Education Coalition

## This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> 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*

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

## Benita Legaspi



**Age:** 54  
**Immigrated from The Philippines in 1974**  
**Adult Education Program:**  
Creative Workplace Learning  
**Adult Education Coalition:**  
Allston-Brighton Adult Education Coalition

**2000:** As a single mother of four children, Benita enrolled in the Creative Workplace

Learning program's Adult Diploma Program (ADP) with the sponsorship of the Malden Housing Authority. The ADP is a portfolio-based program with 240 hours of classroom instruction in language arts (reading/writing), math, science, US history, computers, life employment (skill analysis and career development/planning).

**2001:** Benita graduated from Savio Preparatory High School with straight As and got a job at Spaulding Rehabilitation Center in Boston.

**2003:** She enrolled as a part time student in the surgical technician certificate training program at Bunker Hill Community College.

**2007:** Benita graduated from surgical certificate training program and got a job in the surgery department at Newton/Wellesley Hospital.

**Today:** Benita is studying to become a medical assistant. Graduating from the CWL Adult Diploma Program has enabled Benita Legaspi to achieve her dreams of graduating not only from high school but also from college. Benita's children have also enrolled in college. She hopes to one day enroll in a nursing program.