

## Issue No. 22, December 5, 2011

### *A Message from CAAL's President*

In this, our last issue for 2011, I want to thank you as a partner, friend, or subscriber for your continuing interest in our work. I also want to applaud the fine essential work you and colleagues across this nation do daily to meet the basic skills needs of millions of our fellow Americans.



Gail Spangenberg

I wish I didn't have to follow these two messages with one about financial need, but CAAL, like many other nonprofits, is struggling for funds to carry on into 2012 and beyond. I'm hoping you'll want to make a small donation to us as part of your holiday season giving.

You might wonder why you should choose CAAL for a year-end gift when there's such need all around us. We don't run programs. We don't award certificates. We don't interact every day with students or labor in the front-line community trenches where students are served. But what we *do* do creates a stronger foundation and funding for *your* work. You can see the results of our national policy and research program at the federal, state, and community levels, in all sorts of ways -- legislation and policy, more effective services, and bringing adult education and workforce skills groups together in new, more productive ways. Adult learners at all skills levels benefit from what we do.

Much of our effort these days grows out of CAAL's first-ever, two-year National Commission on Adult Literacy (enabled by the vision and funding of Dollar General Corporation). Its [\*Reach Higher, America\*](#) report is still downloaded from our website in huge numbers every month. It has generated much of the new thinking, action, and positive energy needed to move our field forward. We're especially proud that it has motivated so much future planning in the states. It remains a guidepost for business leaders, and for policymakers and educators. Sam Halperin, a commissioner and founder of the American Youth Policy Forum, describes CAAL's impact this way: "*That CAAL could cause the Commission to be formed in the first place, and then steer 25 plus leadership organizations into supporting a bold report is a testament to CAAL's effectiveness.... Even more impressive (and unlike most other commission reports), CAAL keeps the Commission's report alive by continuing to educate and advocate for its realistic recommendations.*"

We plan to build on our achievements in 2012. If you believe CAAL's nonpartisan voice is important and should continue, please consider a contribution at this time -- whether large or small, your help will make a big difference.

Everyone at CAAL -- Forrest Chisman, Jim Parker, Garrett Murphy, Gene Sofer, Bess Heitner, Paula Jarowski, and our prestigious roster of board members -- joins me in wishing all of you the happiest of holidays and a great New Year.



**DONATE NOW**

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

- Update on Workforce Investment Act
- CLASP Analysis of AEEGA HR2226
- NCFL's Libraries and Family Award Program
- State Credentialing Guidelines from NSC
- Aligning Community Colleges and Workforce Needs in MA
- Leadership Change at Barbara Bush Foundation



**The Workforce Investment Act (WIA)** is currently stalled in Congress over issues that have nothing to do with Adult Education or Job Training but that appear to relate to composition of the WIA boards (extent of business representation) and the issue of alignment (preferred by adult education leaders) vs. consolidation (which House and Senate Republicans tend to prefer). There is no House WIA bill at the present time, but House Democrats and Republicans are working on their bills and hope for a bipartisan bill to emerge from the process.



**CAAL and CLASP** worked together on suggestions to improve the **Adult Education and Economic Growth Act** ([www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov), HR2226) prior to its reintroduction by Rep. Hinojosa in June 2011. Most of our suggestions were incorporated. Even independently of action eventually taken on WIA, the AEEGA stands as an enlightened and comprehensive framework for effectively advancing the field of adult education and workforce skills development. As such, it is a highly important resource for the field. CLASP policy analyst Marcie Foster recently prepared [a fact sheet on the AEEGA](#) which gives a few additional ideas for strengthening this already excellent bill.



In its recently-announced [2012 Libraries and Families Award Program](#), the National Center for Family Literacy is inviting applications from innovative library literacy programs around the country

that serve families well. Online applications are due by February 6. Awards of \$10,000 each will be given to three winning programs, along with scholarships to the National Conference on Family Literacy in 2012 and 2013. Award selection criteria and application information are available from NCFL at the link given above.

▶ [Counting on Credentials: Approaches to State Credential Measurement Policy](#) is both a November 18 audio update and a related article by the National Skills Coalition. The discussion and article offer several elements that seem to be essential for a successful cross agency credential measurement policy at the state level. The audio segments are available at NSC's website, and the 4-page article can be accessed by clicking on the phrase "cross agency approach."

▶ [The Case for Community Colleges: Aligning Higher Education and Workforce Needs in Massachusetts](#), prepared for the Boston Foundation by Julian Alssid and Melissa Goldberg of Workforce Strategy Center and John Schneider of Mass INC, analyzes current community college efforts in that state in terms of employer and worker needs in today's knowledge economy. It makes recommendations for improving the gap that now exists between the colleges and employers. Fifteen community colleges were involved in the study, along with a wide range of industry groups. The 40-page report was issued in November.

▶ The [Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy](#) has passed the leadership baton to former Gov. Jeb Bush and his sister Doro Bush Koch. The Foundation has operated under the former First Lady Barbara Bush's founding leadership for more than 22 years, and it has awarded more than \$42 million in grants.

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