



Summer 2015

THE MAYOR'S  
COMMISSION ON



LITERACY<sup>SM</sup>

Because Adult Learning Works

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## GED® Graduates Celebrate



There was cause for celebration for thirty adults and their loved ones on Wednesday,

June 10, 2015, during Philadelphia's first citywide GED® graduation held at the Free Library of Philadelphia's Central Branch. The ceremony recognized those who have passed the GED® since July 1, 2014, and attained the Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma. The Mayor's Commission on Literacy and ten adult education organizations co-hosted the event, which was sponsored in part by PECO.

[>Read more](#)

## Mark Your Calendar: 2015 Tutor Institute

The graphic features the logo for 'THE MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON LITERACY' with the tagline 'Because Adult Learning Works'. The main text is a word cloud of literacy-related terms including: network, LEARN, assist, share, MENTOR, educate, transform, encourage, tutor, inspire, explore, facilitate, PREPARE, TEACH, give, build, develop, INNOVATE, strategize, collaborate, ENGAGE, VOLUNTEER, advocate, enhance, connect, INVEST, and discover. The event details are presented in colored boxes: 'SAVE THE DATE' in green, '2015 TUTOR INSTITUTE' in purple, '100 S. Broad Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Philadelphia, PA' in white on a purple background, and 'SATURDAY, OCT. 24, 2015 | 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM' in white on an orange background.

Join us on **Saturday, October 24th** as we explore, strategize, and network during this conference for adult literacy volunteers. The event will provide tutors, tech tutors, and mentors with the resources and methods they need to become more effective in assisting learners build workforce skills.

Through a variety of sessions, participants will learn strategies and best practices to meet the diverse needs of adult learners working towards passing the GED®, learning English (ESL), or developing skills to enter into post-secondary education and advance their careers.

***More information coming soon.***

## National Coalition for Literacy Recognizes Mayor Nutter

Congratulations to Mayor Michael A. Nutter for receiving a Literacy Leadership Award from the National Coalition for Literacy.

In 2011, Mayor Nutter charged the Commission to help the estimated 550,000 adults in the city functioning below basic adult education levels to qualify for family-sustaining

jobs and post-secondary training and education. In response, the Commission created [myPLACE<sup>sm</sup>](#).

Mayor Nutter is proud of the Commission's myPLACE<sup>sm</sup> system, saying "we can directly enroll adult learners in classes at more than 30 literacy organizations and reduce enrollment wait times. In addition, the Commission's online courses are helping thousands of individuals acquire the basic work ready skills required of our 21st century, technology-based economy."

Jeff Carter, President of the National Coalition for Literacy said, "The diversity of this year's awardees are a good representation of the different kinds of leadership you see involved in adult education across the U.S. It's going to take all of us-political leaders, journalists, educators, and others-to build a greater understanding of the adverse impact that low skills has on families across the country and on our economy overall." [>Read more](#)

Watch Mayor Nutter's acceptance speech [here](#).

## The Commission Receives \$10,000 Grant from Dollar General Literacy Foundation

The Mayor's Commission on Literacy was recently awarded a \$10,000 grant from the [Dollar General Literacy Foundation](#). The grant was awarded in support of the Commission's work to accelerate learning for low-literate adults.



"It is exciting to see the impact grants from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation make throughout the country, especially as we cross the \$100 million threshold in overall donations and the difference it has made to nearly six million people," said Rick Dreiling, Dollar General's Chairman and CEO. [>Read more](#)

## The 27th Annual Technology & Adult Education Conference

"One of our most successful Technology Conferences to date," is how Diane Inverso, Senior Director of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy, described ConnectED Learning: The 27th Annual Technology and Adult Education Conference held on Friday, May 8, 2015. The Conference was co-sponsored by Temple University's Center for Social Policy and Community Development (CSPCD).



Watch highlights from ConnectED Learning: The 27th Annual Technology and Adult Education Conference

Nearly 200 professionals and volunteers in adult education and workforce development convened on the summer-like day. The conference featured three concurrent workshop sessions, 14 adult education service and material vendors, a panel presentation featuring *myPLACE Online*<sup>SM</sup> learners, breakfast, lunch, a raffle giveaway, and keynote address from Louis Giorla, Commissioner of Prisons. [Read](#) additional event highlights or [download](#) conference session materials.



***Watch Commissioner Giorla's Keynote***



***Watch the Adult Learner Panel***

**Diane Inverso Celebrates 25 Years with the Commission**





***The Mayor's Commission on Literacy's  
Senior Director Diane Inverso***

Diane Inverso, Senior Director of The Mayor's Commission on Literacy recently celebrated her 25th Anniversary working at the Commission. Diane began her tenure in 1990 during Mayor Wilson Goode's administration.

The Commission is grateful for Diane's commitment to public service, literacy, and the City of Philadelphia. Reflecting on her work at the Commission, Diane said, "I feel fortunate for having served the citizens of Philadelphia. Over these 25 years, I have met and worked with many wonderful people. I look forward to continuing to build more strong relationships with the community."

[>Read more](#)

## The Commission Welcomes Robert F. Smith

The Mayor's Commission on Literacy is pleased to welcome new Commission member Robert (Bob) F. Smith. Bob, the Region Vice President of Community Investment at Comcast, is a 25-year veteran of the cable telecommunications industry. He joined Comcast in 1994 and has held leadership positions in government affairs, communications and community investment.

"I greatly admire the Commission's outstanding work on adult literacy, digital literacy, and preparing Philadelphians for the workforce. I'm honored to have this opportunity to join the Commission and look forward to supporting those efforts," Bob said.



***Commissioner Robert F. Smith***

Bob currently leads strategic community investment activities for the Comcast operating region serving the Greater Philadelphia Region. Bob is also involved with Comcast Internet Essentials, which aims to bridge the digital divide by providing low-cost Internet service, computer equipment, and digital literacy training to families with at least one child eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program. [>Read more](#)

## Panel Addresses the Digital Divide

A terrific group of speakers convened on Thursday, May 21st for Comcast's event "Philadelphia's Digital Divide: Overcoming Obstacles & Creating Opportunities" at Drexel University's Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships.

Dr. John Horrigan, a senior researcher with Pew Research provided the keynote presentation about the effects of Comcast's Internet Essentials on broadband adoption in Philadelphia. Dr. Horrigan's research found that internet access is not enough to close the digital divide, training is also essential to build skills and increase broadband adoption. In Philadelphia, residents can visit their neighborhood [KEYSPOT](#) to receive training on a variety of topics such as Microsoft Office Suite, online job searching, social media, and more.



***(Left to right) Dr. Kevin Johnson, OIC Philadelphia; Jennifer Kobrin, Mayor's Commission on Literacy; and Maria Walker, Drexel University participated in the panel discussion.***

Loraine Ballard Morrill of iHeartMEDIA Philadelphia moderated a lively panel discussion with Jennifer Kobrin, Associate Director of the Mayor's Commission on Literacy; Tan Vu, Director of the Center for Digital Inclusion and Technology at Peoples Emergency Center; Dr. Kevin Johnson, President and CEO of OIC Philadelphia; Maria Walker, Project Manager at Drexel University; and Bob Smith, Regional VP of Community Investment at Comcast.

To see photos of the event follow [KEYSPOT on Facebook](#) and [view the album](#).

**Join the Alliance**

[The Philadelphia Adult Literacy Alliance](#) brings together over 250 active members from the adult education community.

The mission of the Philadelphia Adult Literacy Alliance is to support the delivery of quality services to Philadelphia's adult learners by offering professional development, encouraging collaboration and connectedness, and sharing information.



**Why join the Alliance?**

- Represent your organization and learners
- Stay updated on adult literacy and workforce trends, standards, and public policies
- Grow in your profession and take advantage of leadership opportunities
- Tap into new resources to enhance the quality of adult education programs
- Connect, network and meet new, interesting people committed to improving adult literacy city-wide

[\*Become a member today, it's free and easy!\*](#)

Want to be even more involved with the Alliance? Apply to become an advisory board member. [Learn more.](#)

## In the News

-[Educating Philadelphia's Job Seekers for 21st-Century Jobs](#) (Philadelphia Social Innovations Journal)

-[Rebuilding the American Middle Class by Investing in Adult Education](#) (The Huffington Post)

-[Empowering Philadelphia's Families and Innovators Through the Internet](#)(Technical.ly Philly)

-[Job-Seekers Withering on Waiting Lists? Not on This Philly Woman's Watch](#) (Next City)

-[Philadelphia's Digital Divide](#) (Philly in Focus)

-[Ideas We Should Steal: The Cuban Literacy Campaign](#) (The Philadelphia Citizen)  
Citywide GED® Graduation on [NBC10](#), [WPHL17](#), and [6ABC](#)

## Help us help others

New [research](#) shows that adults who have taken 100 hours of Adult Basic Education classes earn an additional \$9,621 per year. (That's the equivalent of two *myPLACE Online*<sup>sm</sup> courses, in just 12 weeks, at half the cost of traditional classroom instruction!) Our programmatic year closes on June 30th and Commission staff are gearing up for an exciting year ahead. [myPLACE](#)<sup>sm</sup>, [myPLACE Online](#)<sup>sm</sup>, and our other offerings are expanding to meet the extensive needs of Philadelphia's job-seekers.

**We need your support.**

[Make a gift](#) to the Mayor's Commission on Literacy. Together, we can help

Philadelphia's adults improve their literacy skills so they can participate in the workforce, support their families, and contribute to the regional economy.

**Invest in Adult Education**

## Recent Supporters



## Our Major Partners

