

Paul Jurmo, Ed.D.

Basic Skills for Development

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OBJECTIVE

Educator seeking projects related to adult foundational (basic) education for workforce and social development

STRENGTHS

- Experienced, innovative, accomplished leader in basic education for development in U.S and internationally (especially Africa and Pacific).
- Uses a collaborative approach to developing effective learning systems to help adults, youth, and children succeed in academic and real-life (work, family, and civic) roles.
- Expertise in needs assessment and planning, research and evaluation, policy development, curriculum design, professional development, partnership building, program management, and fundraising.
- Special interests in:
 - advocacy for adult foundational education systems reform;
 - working with diverse learners and communities;
 - tying basic education to economic security and career advancement for multiple industries, health and environmental education, prisoner re-entry, and democratization;
 - use of participatory learning strategies;
 - appropriate uses of digital technologies;
 - leadership development.
- Strong writing skills (e.g., evaluations, policy and planning documents, funding proposals, curricula, and research papers).
- Doctorate in international education with special focus on literacy education and evaluation. Master's degree in social education (integrating education with social issues).
- Expertise in video, web design, photograph, and desktop publishing.
- Recent writing on reforming federal AFE policy; transitioning U.S. AFE to a community-oriented model; re-defining "the U.S adult illiteracy problem;" re-orienting AFE to democracy and social justice; collaborations with other stakeholders (e.g., workforce centers; public health, environmental sustainability, and prisoner re-entry partners; universities; organized labor, forward-thinking employers); creating a national AFE Digital Library; community-oriented basic education in U.S. urban areas and developing countries.

Please visit www.pauljurmo.info for sample publications.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Consultant on Basic Education for Development: November 2017- Present

Recent projects: 2023-2062

- Writing a series of documents for AFE advocates with ideas and resources they might use when responding to current threats to the field while planning for a better future.
- Co-creating and -leading the Urban Alliance for Adult Literacy, a national network of urban AFE coalitions. Helped to organize, host, and present webinars; contributed resources to website; developed steering committee; and supported overall planning.
- Developing digitized collections of hard-to-find resource materials being posted to a new Archive of Special Collections on the COABE (Coalition on Adult Basic Education) website. (This draws on the Adult Foundational Education Digital Library Group's proposal for an expanded national on-line resource sharing system for U.S. adult foundational education. This work has included digitizing and organizing publications of now-closed Business Council for Effective Literacy, Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy, National Commission on Adult Literacy, National Institute for Literacy, Literacy South, and other organizations. (Received 2026 National Institute for Literacy Award from COABE for work on this project.)
- Wrote case study of two Gambian adult literacy projects published in January 2024 issue of UNESCO's *Prospects Journal*.
- Wrote *In Community, Strength: Changing Our Minds about U.S. Adult Foundational Education (AFE)*, a five-volume series of resource books discussing why and how to shift AFE to a community-oriented model.
- Interviewed on the January 28, 2023 episode of *The Critical Teaching and Learning Forum* podcast hosted by Erik Jacobson.
- Wrote "Learners as Leaders for Stronger Communities," white paper on the roots, benefits, challenges, and possible future of U.S. participatory adult foundational education and adult learner leadership efforts.
- Prepared articles on Cuban adult literacy campaign of the early 1960s.

Other projects: 2018-2022

- Wrote "First Things First: Re-Map 'the U.S. Adult Literacy Problem,'" an April 2022 ProLiteracy white paper arguing for a more comprehensive, accurate, and actionable way of defining the problems that basic- skills-challenged adults and adult educators have to contend with.
- Co-facilitated two webinars at April 2022 national COABE conference on "Innovation and Systems Reform in U.S. Adult Education" and "Learning from Basic Education in Developing Countries."

- Provided technical assistance to national adult learner leadership organization VALUEUSA.
- Wrote *Basic Skills for Community-Oriented Development* (published by ProLiteracy), summarizing the “why and how” of creating basic skills education supports for adults, youth, and children in developing countries that are integrated with other development initiatives.
- Submitted adult education policy recommendations to U.S. Senate’s Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.
- Participated in “Re-Imagining Adult Education” Work Group and Evidence-Based Adult Education System Task Force of Open Door Collective.
- Wrote *A Different Way: Reorienting Adult Education Toward Democracy and Social Justice*, a white paper published in April 2021 by ProLiteracy.
- Wrote article for the March 2021 *Labor Studies Journal* about a union-based work-related basic education program for transit workers in New York City.
- Co-led series of webinars for the Open Door Collective on how adult basic education can work with health, social justice, and environmental organizations.
- Co-wrote a September 2020 research brief and co-presented a webinar for ProLiteracy on contextualized approaches to adult literacy education.
- Worked with a multi-stakeholder team to submit funding proposals for development projects in Ethiopia.
- Contributed artifacts and writings and provided technical assistance to newly-launched Museum of the Peace Corps Experience in Washington, DC.
- Organized unpublished and published documents from U.S. and international adult literacy efforts for donation to two university-based educational archives.
- Wrote “Forum” article for Fall 2020 *Adult Literacy Education International Journal*, outlining a strategy for creating adult basic skills development systems that are more inclusive, relevant, efficient, and sustained.
- Created a video of a “get out the vote” walk in southeast Washington, D.C.
- In summer 2020 co-wrote report for an Ethiopia-based organization summarizing results of its recent study about the readiness of Ethiopians to respond to COVID-19. Included recommendations for an integrated initiative of health, education, workforce development, and social cohesion-related services
- Co-wrote concept paper for a distance learning demonstration project to enable U.S. adult literacy program students to continue learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Completed nine documents on adult basic education for economic security for the Open Door Collective (ODC).
- In addition to chairing ODC’s Labor and Workforce Development Issues Group, participated in ODC groups related to public health,

- older Americans, and research. Also provided input to research committee of Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy.
- Prepared funding proposals for two literacy programs.
 - Edited documents and website content for development organization in East Africa.
 - Helped Jobs for the Future analyze employee education needs and identify on-line curriculum resources, laying foundation for a national workplace education initiative for the logistics industry.
 - Wrote a case study for March 2018 UNESCO's *Prospects Journal* on the national literacy reform program in Tonga.
 - Wrote article for *Worldview Magazine* on strategies used by successful Peace Corps Volunteers in Tongan literacy project.
 - Provided resources on Gambian farmer literacy project to Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Archive at American University and John F. Kennedy Library in Boston.
 - Organized and participated in on-line discussions hosted by the U.S. Department of Education's LINCS resource system related to (a) how U.S. basic skills programs can respond to the opioid crisis and (b) how prisoner re-entry services can work with adult basic skills programs.
 - Participated in advocacy efforts at U.S. Congress organized by the National Peace Corps Association.
 - Spent much of 2018-2019 living in five African countries, conducting research on education for integrated development and writing many of the above-described publications.

Peace Corps/Tonga (October 2012 to October 2017): As Director of Programming and Training and part-time Country Representative, led post's English Literacy Project to help Tonga modernize its literacy education system. Prepared a series of technical notes and videos describing innovative practices developed in the project. (Visit <https://pauljurmo.info/writings%3A-international> .)

Consulting/Advising (Summer 2010 to Summer 2012)

- World Education (Zimbabwe, Fall 2011 and Spring 2012): Helped Children First program develop a non-formal education program for out-of-school children.
- American Institutes for Research (Winter 2011 – Summer 2012): Helped large employer prepare workforce development strategy; provided input into funding proposal related to workforce education.
- MPR Associates (Summer 2011 - Present): Advised on "Support for States' Employability Standards in Career Technical and Adult Education" project.
- California Family Life Center (March 2012): Prepared funding proposal.
- Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal (Spring-Summer 2011): Wrote two articles on workforce education for the November 2011 issue.
- ProLiteracy USA (Fall 2011): Helped plan capacity building strategy for adult literacy specialists worldwide.
- Academic Advisor (Spring 2012): Advised master's degree student on thesis related to educational technologies for lower-skilled adults.

- John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University: Researched skills of public transit employees for National Transit Institute.
- LINCS Workforce Competitiveness Collection: Advised national on-line resource collection operated by U.S. Department of Education.

Union County College, New Jersey (2005-2010): As Dean of Economic Development and Continuing Education, led college division providing non-credit services to over 20,000 individuals annually. Initiated career pathway systems for eldercare, transportation/ logistics/distribution, retail, and green jobs; integrating simple computer technologies into work-related basic skills curricula; innovative training for adult educators; a county-wide prisoner re-entry initiative; an encore careers program for older career changers; a career readiness program for older adolescents; and a county-wide workforce learning system.

New York University, Rutgers University, New School University, City University of New York (1992 to 2006): As Adjunct Professor, taught twelve undergraduate and graduate courses related to adult basic skills education.

Transport Workers Union, New York City (2002-2005): As lead consultant, helped establish a \$10 million education initiative for 35,000 New York City subway and bus workers, focusing on occupational test preparation and math for electronics repair.

New York Immigration Coalition (2004-2005): Prepared policy paper on education needs of adult immigrants and non-immigrants in City.

John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University (2003-2004): Prepared handbook on how workforce staff can serve adults having limited English literacy. Evaluated "literacy labs" in One Stop Career Centers.

National Research Council (Summer 2004): Gave input into standards for the National Adult Literacy Survey.

U.S. Department of Education (Fall 2003): Prepared policy paper on work-related adult basic skills presented at international conference.

Consortium for Worker Education in New York City (Summer 2000 to March 2003): Deputy Education Director responsible for program planning, overseeing a 10-person staff, curriculum design, and staff development for teachers in this city-wide network of union- and community-based adult education programs serving 50,000 adults annually. Supported special program for 500 unemployed garment workers who lost jobs after the September 11th attack.

Learning Partnerships (1991-1999): Director of small non-profit that carried out multiple innovative projects (for ABC CANADA, U.S. Department of Education, VALUEUSA, and other clients) related to workforce basic education, program evaluation, and leadership development.

Business Council for Effective Literacy (New York, 1984-90): Senior Program Associate at this national foundation promoting corporate and government support for adult literacy education.

Co-Operatives Department, The Gambia (1982-83): As Literacy/Numeracy Advisor (with USAID funding), helped run national farmer numeracy program.

Community Development Department, The Gambia (1976-79): As a Peace Corps Volunteer, served as Functional Literacy Advisor to help launch and run a 21-village national adult literacy pilot program under UNDP funding.

Early work experience as worker in Detroit auto manufacturing and food packing plants (3 summers) and nursing assistant in convalescent (1 year) and acute-care psychiatric (2 years) hospitals.

EDUCATION and TRAINING

- University of Massachusetts at Amherst: Ed.D. in International Education, with focus on adult literacy and evaluation (1987).
- Boston University: M.Ed. in Social Education (1977).
- University of Michigan at Ann Arbor: B.A. in English (1973).
- University of Detroit High School: Graduate of Classical Honors Program (1969).
- National Institute for Literacy: Year-long National Literacy Leader Fellowship (1996) and additional training on Equipped for the Future model of adult literacy education (1998-2000).
- Rutgers University: Year-long fellowship in John J. Heldrich Leadership Institute on Workforce Development (1995).
- Peace Corps: Trained in programming, training, administration, and security policies and procedures (2012-2017).
- Training and mentored experience in website design, desktop publishing, and uses of digital video and audio recording and photography.

PUBLICATIONS

Articles, research and evaluation reports, guidebooks, curricula, and other documents on various aspects of basic education for development (samples available at www.pauljurmo.info)