

# Urban Literacy Update

Newsletter of the Urban Alliance for Adult Literacy

A National Project of ProLiteracy

[www.urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy.org](http://www.urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy.org)



## SUMMER IN OUR CITIES

The urban communities that adult foundational education (AFE) serves are facing a number of issues this summer. These issues might be seen as opportunities and/or as challenges. They include refugee and immigrant integration, environmental sustainability, strengthening of infrastructure (e.g., for transportation, electrification, water, digital access), public safety and criminal justice reform, public health, democratic participation, and ensuring the academic success of children.

How might AFE – with other partners – help adult learners and their communities effectively deal with these and other issues? That question is central to the mission of the Urban Alliance for Adult Literacy (aka Urban Alliance). This newsletter describes what the Urban Alliance is doing – and hopes to do – to support collaborative efforts of AFE providers and other partners to strengthen U.S. communities.

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- Updates on Urban Alliance activities (new membership policy, meetings, presentations, on-line discussions, new magazine)
- Special Announcement about Digital Equity Act Funding Opportunities

We invite you to become familiar with the Urban Alliance for Adult Literacy — and join us in this new national network.

To see the first issue of this newsletter (which provides more information about our origins, terminology we use, and supports we're providing to the field), visit the "Newsletters/ Reports" page on our website: <https://www.urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy.org/>.

**To subscribe to this newsletter**, email [urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy@gmail.com](mailto:urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy@gmail.com) and type "Subscribe to Newsletter" in the message header.



## **Our Steering Committee: Who We Are, What We Do, Why and How You Might Participate**

### **Who We Are**

#### *Current (including New) Members*

- Laureen Atkins-Holliday: Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, The Literacy Cooperative, Cleveland, Ohio
- Steve Hannum: Director of Literacy Initiatives, the Literacy Council of Central Alabama and the Literacy Providers Network, Birmingham, Alabama
- Paul Jurmo: Consultant, Adult Foundational Education for Development, Washington D.C.
- Melissa Moore: Executive Director, Read Muskegon, and the Read Muskegon Literacy Collaborative, Muskegon, Michigan
- David J. Rosen: President, Newsome Associates, Boston, Massachusetts
- Ahoo Salem: Executive Director, Blue Ridge Literacy, Roanoke, Virginia

#### *Past Members*

- Dena Giacometti: Formerly with Skills for Chicagoland's Future, currently Associate Director for ScaleLIT in Chicago
- Federico Salas-Isnardi: Director, Houston Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy

### **What We Do**

Steering Committee members typically meet once a month to (1) plan and monitor our monthly Greenhouse Meetings (webinar discussions), newsletter, discussion group, and website; and (2) recruit urban AFE supporters to join Urban Alliance.

### **Benefits of Being a Steering Committee Member**

- knowing that you are contributing to something important;
- developing valuable expertise and contacts in the field; and
- increasing the visibility of yourself and of your program and community.

### **How You Might Join or Otherwise Support the Steering Committee**

- Identify potential members for us. (Contact: [urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy@gmail.com](mailto:urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy@gmail.com) )
- Indicate your own interest in being a Steering Committee member.
- Identify discussion topics and presenters, activities, and other information that the Steering Committee might use.
- Participate in our on-line Greenhouse Meetings and discussion groups; contribute ideas and information to our newsletter and website.

## Updates on Urban Alliance Activities (*Part 1*)

### New Membership Policy

Our Steering Committee is developing a new Urban Alliance membership structure (for individuals and organizations). Watch your email in August for more information about what being a member entails and how you can apply for a free membership.

### Greenhouse Meetings & Other Presentations

To view recordings and/or slides of past and recent Greenhouse Meetings (webinars), visit <https://www.urbanallianceforadultliteracy.org/webinarspresentations>

### Recent Greenhouse Meetings & Presentation

- **A Community-Oriented Approach to Urban Adult Foundational Education:** Presented on May 29, 2023 by Paul Jurmo (Washington, DC) and Jessica Tomkins (Literacy New Jersey).
- **Family Literacy for Stronger Urban Communities:** Presented on June 17, 2024 by Anna Kaiper-Marquez (National Center for Families Learning) and Melissa Moore (Read Muskegon).
- **National Association of State Directors of Adult Education:** David Rosen described Urban Alliance during a monthly on-line NASDAE Adult Education Policy and Issues Forum on June 20, 2024. (Paul Jurmo had circulated an earlier version of this information to the group in Spring 2023.)

### Upcoming Greenhouse Meetings & Presentation

- **Upcoming Greenhouse Meetings:** The Urban Alliance Steering Committee plans to host a new series of monthly Greenhouse Meetings (90-minute presentations-with-discussions) starting in September. Planning of these meetings is being guided by 35 responses to a survey recently sent to 75 individuals on our mailing list (a 47% response rate). Highly-requested topics include how to build partnerships with community agencies, two-generation AFE, strategies for generating financial and in-kind supports, serving immigrants and refugees, updates from other urban AFE coalitions, and developing learner leadership.
- **ProLiteracy Conference** (October 2024 in Baltimore): Urban Alliance representatives will make presentations to and otherwise interact with attendees at this national event.

Send suggestions for other topics and presenters to [urbanallianceforadultliteracy@gmail.com](mailto:urbanallianceforadultliteracy@gmail.com)

*Updates continued on next page.*

## Updates on Urban Alliance Activities (Part 2)

### Online Discussion Group

**Urban Adult Literacy CAFE** is a new asynchronous online discussion group for supporters of adult foundational education in urban communities. Topics to date include community-oriented AFE, advocacy, funding opportunities, the Digital Equity Act, partners for urban AFE, media campaigns, learning circles, housing insecurity, poverty and income inequality, teaching adult beginner readers, working with One Stop Centers, and family (aka intergenerational, 2-Gen) literacy. Email [urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy@gmail.com](mailto:urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy@gmail.com) to learn more about these discussions and how you can participate. (In the message header, type "Join the Discussion Group.")

### New Urban Alliance Magazine

Steering Committee members are exploring the launch of **a new Urban Alliance magazine** featuring stories about collaborative AFE efforts in U.S. cities, discussion of relevant issues, and information about resources (e.g., publications, organizations, funding) for urban AFE. Watch your email, our website, and the next issue of our newsletter for updates about this new publication.

## Special Announcement about Digital Equity Act Funding Opportunities

**The National Telecommunications Information Agency (NTIA)** has just published its new and eagerly awaited Competitive Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for digital inclusion services. The NOFO is essentially a request for proposals for new and direct federal funding. You can learn about this NOFO on the NTIA website ( <https://www.ntia.gov/federal-register-notice/2024/notice-funding-opportunity-digital-equity-competitive-grant-program> ) or view the PDF here ( <https://www.ntia.gov/sites/default/files/2024-07/de-competitive-nofo-fy24.pdf> ). The application is due September 23, 2024. The National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA, <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/> ) will host a webinar with information soon. This could be an excellent opportunity for some urban AFE coalitions to submit multi-million dollar proposals to offer digital inclusion services to urban residents, including but not limited to adult learners, or to participate in a City, County, public school's, or other organization's proposal for some of these funds as a partner or sub-grantee organization.

Watch your email during the weeks of July 29 and August 5, 2024 for information about an Urban Alliance Greenhouse Meeting (webinar) in later August which will discuss how to apply for these funds.



*This newsletter issue was written and edited by Paul Jurmo and David Rosen with design by Paul Jurmo. Previous issues and other resource materials can be found at [www.urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy.org](http://www.urbanallianceforadulthoodliteracy.org) .*