



219 North Main Street, Suite 402  
Barre, VT 05641 (p) 802-479-1030 | (f) 802-479-1835

## **Vermont Celebrates Adult Education and Literacy Week**

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**Contact: Haley Jones at (802) 479-1111 or [haley.jones@vermont.gov](mailto:haley.jones@vermont.gov)**

**Barre, VT.** – The Vermont Agency of Education is pleased to announce that Governor Phil Scott has proclaimed September 24-30, 2017 as Adult Education and Literacy Week. Approximately 2,700 adult Vermonters receive adult education and literacy services each year. Adult learners build skills that make them successful in college, in obtaining and retaining jobs, as parents and family members, and as citizens.

“Adult education services have been changing lives in Vermont for over 50 years. Thousands of Vermonters have received their high school diplomas or their GED thanks to adult education. Services are also available to those who finished high school, but could use help with their basic reading, writing, or math skills,” said Secretary of Education Rebecca Holcombe.

Robin Castle, State Director of Adult Education and Literacy at the Agency of Education added, “Some students in adult education learn new skills in order to get a better job; some students are building skills they will need in college; some students are immigrants or refugees learning English and preparing to work or go to college. All students receive instruction in how to think critically and be a responsible citizen. The ages of students currently range from 16-82 – adult education students are diverse and determined.”

Annually, approximately \$4 million of state and federal adult education funds are distributed statewide by the Agency of Education through a competitive grant process. The four organizations receiving these funds are Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, The Tutorial Center, and Vermont Adult Learning. The Governor’s Proclamation states, “These organizations provide services in every town and county in Vermont in order to empower Vermonters to build better lives through education, training, and employment, and to strengthen Vermont’s workforce and economy.”

Adults Education learners in all these programs are developing new capabilities that build their confidence and enable them to achieve greater economic prosperity. For example, Doug, a Vermonter in his mid-40s, attends Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, Inc. (CVABE), and is obtaining his high school diploma. He first went to CVABE to keep his partner company while she studied for her GED, but decided to start taking classes himself. Doug said:

“I dropped out of high school in 11<sup>th</sup> grade – it just wasn’t for me. I saw what my partner was doing at CVABE, and realized that it was nothing like school. I decided to better myself, for my kids, my partner, my life, my career and my future. I wanted to open doors.

I started doing basic math. I learned how to set up budgets, pay bills, and even how to write a check properly. I learned volume and area, which I use all the time in building, and also how to properly read measurements. After that, I moved on to a special reading program called Orton-Gillingham. I could barely read, and I had to learn how to do things by following steps through pictures. I can now read and understand, and I enjoy reading books.”

Doug noted that he had never considered finishing high school, but the Adult Education program:

“.....offered me the opportunity, and a pathway to a diploma that could also get me a better job or career. I’m now looking into opening my own businesses with all the skills I’ve learned at CVABE. Instead of being a nobody, I can be a somebody, do better and make it.....It doesn’t matter how old you are, you can always go back to school and open doors.”

For more information about Adult Education in Vermont, contact [Robin Castle](#) or [visit the adult education webpage](#).

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