



# ALC News

TRANSFORMING  
LIVES THROUGH  
EDUCATION  
SINCE 1979

FALL 2019

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## ALC Celebrates 40th Anniversary

For 40 years, the Adult Learning Center has been transforming lives through education.



The Adult Learning Center (ALC) is celebrating 40 years of transformative education here in Milwaukee with students and tutors from across the metro area. In the teacher-led and volunteer-supported classroom model, “transforming lives through education” is more than just a phrase, but the process that happens with our students, volunteers, and partners each day.

In Milwaukee, one out of every eight students does not graduate from high school. The ALC strives to help these students reimagine the life they have for themselves and their families through GED instruction. For many, the ALC helps them overcome the

challenges that prevented them from finishing high school in the first place and prepare for life beyond our doors. Many of our graduates have gone on to pursue higher education degrees and more career opportunities.

We look forward to working with our students, volunteers, and partners to continue transforming our community through education.



## Summer Session Success

While most schools close their doors in the summer, the ALC hosted an active summer session for students. This “bonus” session ran from late May through the end of June and carried a heavy emphasis on math. Students worked three days a week with math

instructor Jon Gilgenbach and dedicated math tutors. The session was a major success with 4 people taking and passing their GED math tests. One student, Cristina, even passed with our highest reported math score to date.

In addition to improving

their math skills, the students did a lot of work through online platforms in our computer lab, where they were able to increase their confidence with technology and computer literacy skills. Learning never stops at the ALC!



Our tutors are the backbone of student support. Thank you for all you do!

## ALC Names New Director

After a semester long search, the ALC’s Executive Director position was filled by none other than long time ALC instructor, Jon Gilgenbach. A veteran teacher with over 16 years experience, Jon has been a fixture at the Adult Learning Center since his placement here as a Public Ally. Officially hired as a math instructor by Sr. Ann Marie Palmisano, for years Jon has been helping adult learners gain the skills and confidence they need to be successful on their GED tests.

Additionally, Gilgenbach has been our number one technology resource, helping students gain technical literacy and computer confidence. Board Chair Felita Daniels Ashley says: “Jon is a visionary leader who



**New Executive Director Jon Gilgenbach began his role in July 2019.**

brings to the Adult Learning Center rich experience in adult education, civic, and community engagement,” Jon began his official role on July 1, 2019. “I’m excited to continue with the ALC in my new position. I think we have a really good thing going here with our students and volunteers and in the relationships we’ve built. I look forward to continuing the work we do at the ALC and with the community.” We welcome Jon in his new role and look forward to all he brings to the ALC with his leadership.

# New Graduates

Jonathan Penney completed his GED in July of 2019. Shortly after, he relocated to Texas with his family.



Cristina Hernandez completed her final GED test in October 2019. She is now looking to enroll at MATC in the spring.

Mark Caldwell completed his final GED test in November 2019. He is now enrolling at MATC for auto mechanic studies.



Help us celebrate the graduates at

**2019 Winter Graduation**

Friday, Dec. 20, 2019

10:00am

St. Martin de Porres

Church

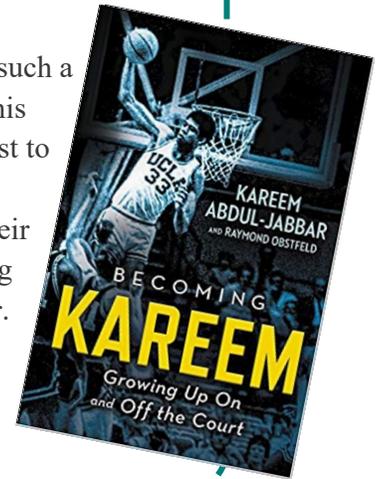
(128 W Burleigh St.)

## SCRIBO Returns along with All School Read

The SCRIBO writing contest provides a creative outlet for students while expanding their opportunities to write. This year, we will be starting the SCRIBO contest again and pairing it with an all-school read, so students can choose to write about their relation

to the book. Selected by Mary Stearns, Level I instructor, we will be reading about the life of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, a talented athlete and writer. Mary says: "I'm always looking for books my students will enjoy that they can read themselves. As an

author, Kareem does such a good job and I think his story will be of interest to our students." ALC students will begin their all school read starting in the spring semester. The writing contest will also take place in the spring.



## Ways to Give

Looking for ways to support the transformations happening at the ALC? Look at what your dollars can do for students:

- \$50 School Supply supporter (Textbook, calculator)
- \$100 GED Flash subscription: our study tool for student success
- \$250 Full Ride Sponsorship (Textbook, calculator, tuition, and GED test fees)



Check out the ALC Wish List or set up a recurring donation online at [www.alcmke.org](http://www.alcmke.org)!

*The Adult Learning Center is pleased to welcome Francis X. Vogel to our staff as the new Development Director.*

*Most recently with EconomicsWisconsin, Francis also served with Polish Heritage Alliance, Wisconsin Clean Cities and the Milwaukee Fatherhood Collaborative.*

*“I’m very excited to connect with friends and partners of the ALC as we strive together to help take this vital organization to the next level,” said Francis, who began his role in November. “The ALC’s students, fellow staff, volunteers and donors are simply amazing. It’s exhilarating to be here.”*

*Francis, his wife Carol Lynn Wandler, and five of their daughters live in Shorewood.*

## New Partner Feature: Maximus

ALC students are a hard-working bunch, but sometimes life interferes with their studies. Fortunately, that’s where Maximus comes in. Maximus is a government contractor that helps our students in their academic and employment pursuits. Case Manager Shannon King works with our students to

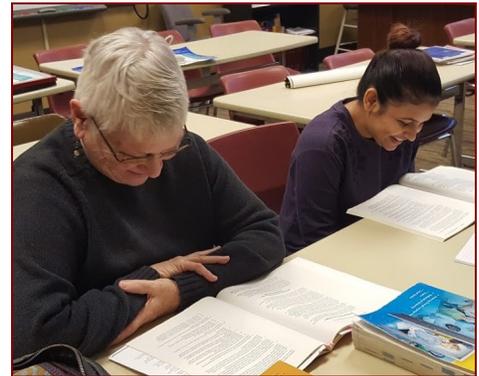


*Case Manager Shannon King presents to our students.*

access resources for childcare, transportation, and employment training so they are able to be successful both in and out of the classroom. Thank you Shannon and Maximus!

## Volunteer Spotlight: Helen Adelt

Helen Adelt loves learning and is very good at sharing that knowledge. From Osher Lifelong Learning classes at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she is both a member and instructor, to level three students at the ALC, Helen is constantly expanding her horizons and diving deep into the topics she is passionate about. Fortunately for the ALC, one of those passions is literacy.



Helen has been tutoring level three language arts since her start at the ALC, and has been absolutely “blown away” by the students she has tutored. “The students are absolutely inspiring. The staff is great, but the students are what keep you here.” One particular student’s story is her favorite to tell: “When she first started, it took 20 minutes before we could even open a book because she was so nervous. You wouldn’t even recognize her based on who she is today.” She tells stories like these to her classmates at Osher too, saying, “I want to tell them about our success and that we’re here.” Our students’ impressive success would not be possible without Helen and the other tutors who work tirelessly and give their time so generously.

## ALC Awarded Community Grants

The ALC received grants from: The Forest County Potawatomi Foundation, the Weiss Family Foundation, and the We Energies Foundation.

- The mission of the Forest County Potawatomi Foundation is to fight poverty, promote economic opportunity, strengthen communities and provide an example of responsible citizenship by assisting charitable organizations and support the pursuit of education by offering scholarships.
- The Weiss Family Foundation supports nonprofit organizations that help Milwaukee children and families impacted by poverty overcome obstacles and meet their greatest potential.
- The We Energies Foundation's mission is to create brighter futures for the communities in which they do business, enhancing the growth and success of their company.



The ALC looks forward to continued partnership transforming the lives of our students and community.

### Our Condolences

*Our thoughts are with those mourning the recent passing of these ALC friends.*

- Richard Burgmeier, husband of level one tutor Rosemary Burgmeier, passed away September 8, 2019. Services were held at St. Joseph Church.
- Minnie Linyear, former ALC board member and wife of Reggie Linyear, passed away October 2, 2019. Services were held at St. Martin de Porres Church.

### Staff News

-Sr. Callista Robinson was awarded the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Vatican II Award for outstanding service to the church. She received her award in a ceremony in October 2019.

-Mr. Jon Gilgenbach was named the 2019 Public Ally Changemaker of the Year and received an award in July 2019.

-Ms. Frances Pitt took part in the Public Speakers Conference in London, England and presented her seminar entitled *The Greatness I Am Seeking is Also Seeking Me* in June 2019.

## Want to get involved?

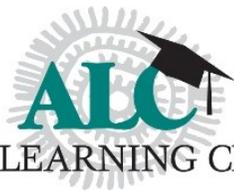
As a teacher-led, volunteer-supported organization, we rely on our volunteers to help us work toward our mission here at the ALC. Are you interested in transforming lives through education? Ask us how to get involved!



***It takes a team to help our students succeed here at the ALC!***

**I can...**

- **Volunteer as a Tutor!**
- **Volunteer in Administration!**
- **Join the Board!**



ADULT LEARNING CENTER

**Adult Learning Center**

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*Thank you for helping us transform lives  
through education!*

# Upcoming Events

- December Assembly and Gifts.....Wednesday, December 18
- December Graduation.....Friday, December 20
- Christmas Break (ALC Closed).....December 23-January 5
- Spring TABE Begins.....Monday, January 6
- First Day of Spring Semester.....Tuesday, January 21

