



University of Illinois
College of Education



THE ADULT LEARNER AND THE APPLIED BACCALAUREATE

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OCCRL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

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Overview

The Adult Learner and the Applied Baccalaureate project documents the applied baccalaureate phenomenon in the United States, including the extent to which applied baccalaureate programs target adult learners. Recognizing the vital link between a healthy economy and a well-educated adult workforce, this project documents educational opportunities as well as public policy and policy-oriented initiatives associated with applied baccalaureate degrees awarded by associate degree-granting and traditional baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. The project also identifies factors that influence the development and sustenance of these degree options for adult learners.

Goals

The first phase of this project studied all 50 states to determine the extent to which the degrees are offered, contributing factors that led to the creation of the degrees and the decisions not to create the degrees, when applicable.

The second phase studied six states (Arizona, Florida, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington) with notable policies and practices, paying particular attention at how well they address the diverse needs of adult learners.

Products

- 50-State Inventory (September 2008)
- Phase One Policy Brief (January 2009)
- Lumina convening paper (April 2011)
- Case Study Report (May 2011)

Funder

Lumina Foundation for Education (<http://www.luminafoundation.org>).

For more information

Visit <http://occril.illinois.edu/projects/lumina/> for more information, and links to the released products.

This project is dedicated to Dr. Barbara K. Townsend, who inspired and led our research team as Principal Investigator from September 1, 2007 until her death on June 11, 2009. Dr. Townsend was Professor of Higher Education and Director of the Center for Community College Research in the College of Education at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Her research on baccalaureate attainment, particularly for women and minorities; community college missions; and transfer and articulation led her to the study of applied baccalaureate degrees, including community college baccalaureates. This Lumina-funded project was a culmination of a noteworthy career as a researcher, teacher, and mentor who is sorely missed by her many colleagues and friends. It was a privilege to work with Barbara, an outstanding role model who challenged our thinking. Her spirit lives on in the work of countless scholars who have been and who will be influenced by her pioneering studies. Our research team strives to achieve the high quality that Barbara sought in this work as in all aspects of her professional career.

