

# COABE

COALITION ON ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

*To inspire educators so adults succeed and communities thrive*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**COABE Outstanding Administrator of the Year Award Runner-Up: Mark Pettis**

**Learning Is For Tomorrow (LIFT)**

**Baltimore, MD**

The Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) is 15,000 members strong and growing, and provides a variety of services including annually providing competitive national-level awards, incentive grants, and scholarship opportunities through special funding provided by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.

Our mission is to inspire educators so adults succeed and communities thrive. COABE exists to provide leadership, communication, professional development, and advocacy for adult education and literacy practitioners in order to advance quality services for all adult learners. Fifteen thousand members strong, one way that we engage in these activities is by spotlighting excellence in the field. Mark Pettis was nominated for COABE's Outstanding Administrator of the Year Award and was selected as a runner-up.

Mark Pettis is currently the Executive Director of the Learning Is For Tomorrow (LIFT) adult literacy organization in Baltimore City, Maryland. Mark has worked as a classroom instructor, reading specialist, instructional specialist, learning specialist, program director, and executive director. Mark truly understands the challenges and barriers many adult learners face because of limited literacy skills. Mark began working as a speech technician at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 1986. Following time at the NIH, he spent eight years at Johns Hopkins Hospital/University working on acquired dyslexia and memory studies. He then spent 17 years at Towson University as an adjunct faculty member in the education and reading departments, teaching classes on academic literacy and reading disabilities. He received graduate degrees in reading and nonprofit management, became a certified manager in program improvement through ProLiteracy, and, was one of 16 executive directors chosen to participate in the executive leadership training program administered by the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and the University of Baltimore. In 2010, he was awarded the title of Weinberg Fellow. Mark has been at the helm of LIFT since 2001 when it was a program of the South-East Community Organization (SECO). He served as executive director of SECO from 2004-2007. In 2007, Mark separated LIFT from the parent organization and was responsible for it becoming an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Under his guidance, LIFT has become a leader in providing adult literacy services in Baltimore, specifically for those with learning challenges. Mark is a true role model for what it means to be a lifelong learner.

To learn more about COABE's prestigious award program, go to [www.coabe.org](http://www.coabe.org) or contact [awards@coabe.org](mailto:awards@coabe.org)