



ALLEGANY COLLEGE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 20, 2018

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ALLEGANY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS RECOGNIZE ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY WEEK:

Nationally 1 in 3 Young Adults Drops Out Of High School

CUMBERLAND, Md. (Sept. 20, 2018) –The Board of County Commissioners has proclaimed Sept. 23-29 National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week in Allegany County. Activities in Allegany County include:

- Mon., Sept. 24, Read to Your Child or Pet Challenge @alleganycollegeofmaryland
- Tues., Sept. 25, Kick Off Voter Registration Event, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Haines Student Lounge of the College Center at Allegany College of Maryland
- Wed., Sept. 26, Community Literacy Partners Social Media Go “Green With Gratitude” Day
- Thurs., Sept. 27, Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) on Capitol Hill Day
- Fri., Sept. 28, Wear Green for Adult Education Day and tune into The Talk, a popular CBS daytime TV show, at 2:00 p.m. EST as adult education will take center stage.

Adults with low literacy levels frequently face poorer health, lower wages and higher rates of unemployment. Approximately 11% of the county’s population struggle to read, write, do math and use technology above a third-grade level. In Allegany County, nearly 26% of adults who lack high school credentials (a diploma or GED) live at or below the poverty line, according to the US Census Bureau’s 2012-16 American Community Survey. Nationally, children of parents with low literacy levels have a 72% chance of being lowest-level readers.

“While you can live without a high school diploma, it doesn’t necessarily mean that you’re living well,” noted Allegany College of Maryland’s Adult Basic Education Program Director Melanie Chapman. “Earning your diploma—whether it’s through in-person GED testing or the online National Adult External Diploma Program—can be a game-changer.”

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The Adult Basic Education program, within ACM's Center for Continuing Education and Workforce Development, serves adult learners 18 years and older who wish to earn a Maryland high school diploma, improve their reading or learn work-ready skills. On average, the program serves 275 individuals annually at classes held throughout the county. There are no fees for the classes, and support services are available.

Allegany County's National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week activities, organized by ACM Human Service Student Samantha Vega, are open to the public. For Vega, the week is her way to inspire others to learn more about adult education opportunities and matters related to its funding.

"Thanks to County's partnership, I went from 'opting out' to choosing my own path. For years, I lied about being a high school dropout because I was ashamed," explained Vega. "It hit me in my mid-20s that I wasn't making the world a better place. With Melanie and her staff's help, I earned my high school diploma in December 2015 and enrolled in my first college class at ACM that spring."

National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week raises public awareness about the need for and value of adult education and family literacy. Its goal is to leverage resources that support access to basic education programs for the 36 million U.S. adults with low literacy skills.

For more information about the Adult Basic Education program at ACM, call 301-784-5445 or visit allegany/abe.

ABOUT ALLEGANY COLLEGE OF MARYLAND

Ranked among the top 20 community and technical colleges in the country by the Brookings Institution, Allegany College of Maryland (ACM) offers world-class education in a caring environment that transforms lives, strengthens communities and celebrates life-long learning. Serving more than 3,000 credit and 5,870 continuing education and workforce students annually, ACM offers over 80 associate degree, certificate, and letters of recognition programs at affordable rates. To learn more, visit allegany.edu or call 301-784-5000.