

	2026 Adult Education Institute					
	Thursday, September 17, 2026					
	Please note: The 2026 AZ Adult Education Institute schedule may be subject to change.					
12:45 - 2:00	General Session and Keynote Presenter - Dr. Latoya Newson Welcome by Beverly Wilson - Deputy Associate Superintendent, AZ Arizona Department of Education - Adult Education Services					
Time	Session	Presenter(s)	Concurrent Session Title	Concurrent Session Description	Strand	Room
2:00 - 2:15	Transition/Break					
2:15 - 3:30	Session 1	Dr. Latoya Newson, Sudie Whalen, and Beverly Wilson	Building Collaborative Partnerships to Strengthen Participant Skills (Double Session)	Strong workforce partnerships are essential to creating seamless, student-centered pathways for WIOA participants. In this interactive session, participants will explore strategies for facilitating meaningful conversations with workforce partners, strengthening service integration, and identifying opportunities to better align adult education, training, and employment supports. Participants will also engage in a discussion around the new federal Workforce Pell Grant program and consider how adult education leaders can serve as thought partners in expanding access to short-term workforce training and career pathways.	ADMIN	Deer Valley
		Tamara Thompson	Coaching Conversations that Build Instructor Capacity (Double Session) [By Invitation Only]	Great coaching is about more than providing answers—it is about helping instructors think deeply, reflect intentionally, and discover solutions that fit their unique context. This interactive half-day workshop introduces the Mockingbird Coaching Conversation Framework, a practical approach for facilitating growth-focused conversations that build instructor capacity, confidence, and self-directed problem-solving. Participants will learn how to facilitate coaching conversations that promote reflection, support continuous improvement, and strengthen instructional decision-making. Through demonstrations, guided practice, and real-world application, they will explore how to coach instructors around challenges such as learner engagement, classroom management, attendance, motivation, lesson design, and instructional effectiveness.	ABE & ESOL	North Mountain
		Jennifer Lane and TSTM Trainers	Making Contextualization Easy: Teaching the Skills that Matter (Double Session)	Teaching the Skills That Matter (TSTM) trains teachers to integrate the skills that matter to adult students using approaches that work across critical topics. Central to this work is contextualization, which involves embedding skill development within meaningful, real-world contexts that are relevant to learners' goals and experiences. Using the project's tools and training, adult education teachers can facilitate instruction that connects transferable skills to authentic applications in these critical contexts. In this interactive session, participants will become familiar with the TSTM framework and toolkit, explore strategies for contextualizing instruction, and discover engaging, ready-made lessons.	ABE & ESOL	Camelback B

2:15 - 3:30	Session 1	Sara Gutting	Building Reading Foundations for HSE and ELL to Support Workplace Success (Double Session)	This workshop supports educators in helping students build strong reading skills through evidence-based practices that promote academic and workplace success. Participants will explore the four essential components of reading—alphabetics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension—and learn how to apply them to real-world tasks. The session emphasizes active learning, student engagement, and practical strategies that strengthen literacy across content areas. Educators will examine ways to connect reading instruction to workforce readiness and integrated adult education programs while supporting diverse learning needs. Participants will leave with ready-to-use classroom materials, interactive activities, and instructional strategies designed to improve reading achievement and learner confidence.	ABE & ESOL	VOS E
		Dr. Daisy Shah	Keep Calm and Test On: Easing Anxiety for ESL Adult Learners	Assessments do not have to be stressful or intimidating for adult learners. This interactive session provides educators with practical, research-based strategies to help reduce test anxiety, increase learner confidence, and create a more supportive classroom environment. Participants will explore calming techniques, motivational practices, and purposeful preparation strategies that encourage positive mindset shifts and improve learner readiness for assessments. The session will also highlight effective approaches for supporting English language learners transitioning into high school equivalency preparation, including GED® content areas. Attendees will leave with ready-to-use tools and strategies designed to promote student persistence, confidence, and achievement in assessment settings.	ESOL	VOS D
3:30 - 3:45	Transition and Snack Break					
3:45 - 5:00	Session 2	Dr. Latoya Newson, Sudie Whalen, and Beverly Wilson	Building Collaborative Partnerships to Strengthen Participant Skills (Double Session)	Strong workforce partnerships are essential to creating seamless, student-centered pathways for WIOA participants. In this interactive session, participants will explore strategies for facilitating meaningful conversations with workforce partners, strengthening service integration, and identifying opportunities to better align adult education, training, and employment supports. Participants will also engage in a discussion around the new federal Workforce Pell Grant program and consider how adult education leaders can serve as thought partners in expanding access to short-term workforce training and career pathways.	ADMIN	Deer Valley
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		Dr. Daisy Shah	Empowering Adult ELLs: Fun and Effective Strategies for Teaching Writing	Transform your approach to teaching writing to adult English language learners through engaging activities, practical tools, and easy-to-implement instructional strategies. This interactive session will explore effective methods for guiding learners from writing simple sentences to developing organized, detailed paragraphs and more advanced compositions. Participants will discover classroom-ready resources that promote confidence, creativity, and student engagement while supporting language development at multiple proficiency levels. Educators will leave with practical techniques to strengthen writing instruction, scaffold learning effectively, and help adult English language learners become more successful writers. The session is ideal for instructors seeking fresh, supportive, and meaningful approaches to teaching writing skills.	ESOL	VOS D
5:30 - 7:00	Network Social					