

2026 Sunshine Success Stories: Showcasing Florida's Adult Education Students

Purpose: Adult education and career, technical and workforce education serve over 170,000 students in Florida through a dual delivery system of K-12 public school districts and community/state colleges. Correctional institutions, libraries, community, and faith-based organizations also serve adult students. The Sunshine Success Stories identifies learners who have reached their life goals because of their participation in the adult education system and are now active in their communities.

How to participate in the Sunshine Success Stories: Nominations may be submitted by any Florida adult education teacher, administrator, or agency. Complete the nomination application form and email it with a photograph of the nominee to Dave Barnes at: dave@aceofflorida.org.

The deadline is Friday, August 28, 2026, to be considered for the ACE Conference.

Selecting Adult Student Winners

All nominations will be reviewed by the Conference Awards Committee for completeness and for how closely they address the criteria stated on the nomination form. Incomplete nominations and nominations that don't address the criteria will not be considered. Students with accepted nominations will be contacted for verification of the information. A signed release must be obtained from the students before any stories are used and no personal contact information will be distributed through the project.

Publicizing the Sunshine Success Stories:

ACE Website

Student success stories will be posted on the ACE of Florida website at: www.aceofflorida.org and the Florida Department of Education, Career and Adult Education website at: www.fldoe.org.

Print flyers, newsletters, press releases, advocacy brochures and conference displays

Student success stories will be available to use in a variety of local, regional, and statewide print publicity of adult education including flyers, newsletters, and press releases.

Recognition of the Sunshine Success Stories Students

- Each nominee will receive a personalized certificate congratulating them on their success and achievements.
- Sunshine Success Stories student winners will be placed on the ACE website, www.aceofflorida.org.
- Exemplary Sunshine Success Stories student pictures may be displayed in the Florida Department of Education, Division of Career Technical and Adult Education Office.

**Sunshine Success Stories:
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Nomination Form

Criteria to be considered in selecting an adult education student nominee.

The nominee:

1. is an adult with significant life responsibilities, such as those related to employment or family.
2. has made positive contributions to the community as an adult education student and/or as a community member.
3. has established and met life/career goals as a result of completing an adult education program.
4. has improved the life situation of self/others as a result of learning experiences.
5. has overcome difficult circumstances in order to pursue adult learning experiences.
6. doesn't have to be a current student.

Nominee Contact Information (Please print)

First Name: Last Name:

Address:

City: State, Zip:

Phone: Email:

School District, State College
Or Community-Based Organization:

Program/Level
Class Enrolled In Years of attendance:

Nomination Content

About the Nominee: Tell Their Story (Please try to keep the narrative to 300 – 500 words). Be Specific. Refer to the criteria. **Please address each of the bullets in your narrative.**

- Provide background information about the student.
- Describe what challenges they overcame.
- What brought the student to adult education.
- What is the person doing now?
- How did adult education contribute to the current success of the nominee?
- What are the nominee's plans for the future.
- Please describe the personal, educational and/or professional goals met by the student.
- Why this student deserves recognition.

Other Important Information to Include:

- Please give a general description of the program and school where the nominee attended.
- Advice or quote from the student.
- Quote from teacher, principal, employee.
- Any additional interesting information.

Sunshine Success Stories Student Nominee Permission Form

The intent of the Sunshine Success Stories is to identify adult learners who have reached their life goals and are examples of students who are now successful as a result of their participation in Florida's adult education programs. The stories of these students will be used to spread the word about the importance of adult education, what adult education is, and to help justify the need for continued funding for adult education programs.

The Sunshine Success Stories will be published in a special edition ACE Report, posted on the ACE website, and distributed to Florida's legislators and policy makers.

Adult Student Nominees must sign the permission form below in order to be eligible for the Sunshine Success Stories Award.

I _____, give my permission to ACE of Florida, Inc. to use my picture and my story for the Sunshine Success Stories Awards. I understand that my picture and story will be printed in a special edition magazine, posted on the ACE website, and may also be distributed through press releases and advocacy brochures to legislators, local policy makers, educational organizations, and business supporters.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

Email Address

Received by ACE of Florida

Name: _____

Date: _____

Nominator Contact Information

Name of Nominator:		Job Title:	
School District/State College or Community Based Organization:			
Address:			
City:		State:	
		Zip:	
Phone Number:		FAX:	
Email:			
County:		DOE Region:	

Signature of Nominator

Date

How to submit the Sunshine Success Stories Nomination Application

1. Fill out the Sunshine Success Stories Nomination Application.
2. Scan and email or fax the application to the ACE of Florida office.
3. You must include a photo of the adult student nominee. **EMAIL a hi-res, colored jpeg photograph of the nominee (you can submit more than one of which one must be a headshot). Photographs may not be faxed or mailed.**

The photo should be emailed to: Dave@aceofflorida.org. Be sure to include the student's name, school, city, and your name and contact information.

4. For questions call or email Dave at the ACE office at 850-222-2233, cell at 727-743-8202, or Dave@aceofflorida.org.

Deadline for nominations is Friday, August 28, 2026.