

3rd Annual Adult Education & Family Literacy Week

September 12-18, 2011



SARBANES KICKS OFF NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY WEEK AT MAACCE/SBLC PRESS CONFERENCE

"By investing in adult education services we help promote our greatest asset – the entrepreneurial American worker," said **3rd District Congressman John P. Sarbanes**, at a Sept. 12 press conference presented by the **South Baltimore Learning Center (SBLC)** and the **Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education (MAACCE)**.

Held at SBLC, the press conference drew over 100 people and was filmed by two TV stations. The event marked the start of the third annual National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week, proclaimed by the U.S. Senate and supported by the National Coalition for Literacy, National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week to raise awareness of the critical role adult education and family literacy plays in our country, in our economy, and for the nation's well-being.

For the third year in a row, a House resolution ([H. Res. 385](#)) was proposed designating the week of Sept. 12 as National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week 2011. For the very first time, the Senate passed a similar bipartisan resolution (S. Res. 258) recognizing the same week as National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week.

"Congressman Sarbanes cares so much about adult literacy and is a true champion for the citizens of Maryland who need these services. We are so pleased that, for the third year in a row, he requested to hold a press conference at SBLC to recognize this national awareness event," said **Sonia Socha**, SBLC executive director and MAACCE public policy chairperson and board member. "The purpose is to raise public awareness of adult education and literacy, and to garner support for increased funding an access to adult literacy services."

A founding members of the House Literacy Caucus, Sarbanes is an original sponsor of the House resolution. Others in the Maryland delegation to sign the resolutions were **Sen. Barbara Mikulski**, **Sen. Benjamin Cardin**, **Rep. Elijah Cummings** and **Rep. C.A. "Dutch" Ruppertsberger**, who prepared the following statement:

"As we work to create high-quality jobs that will propel Maryland's economy forward, the issue of adult literacy is more critical than ever. "Working to improve basic skills with an emphasis on literacy and math will help more Americans get, retain or advance in a job and, more importantly, achieve a family-sustaining income. I am proud to support the goals of the National Coalition for Literacy and Family Literacy Week 2011."

In addition to Rep. Sarbanes and Socha, press conference speakers included **Michelle R. Brown** (assistant to Sen. Mikulski), **Lynn Selmser**, (government relations director, National Council of State Directors of Adult Education), **Ralph Galvin** (Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation adult secondary education specialist, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning); **Randy Shipe** (MAACCE president), **Anne Schroth** (SBLC Board President), SBLC graduates, **Greg Lewis**, **Peggy Butler-Watson**, **Daryl Witherspoon** (SBLC learner) and **Fatima Boudouch** (BCCC English as a Second Language Learner).

For additional links, check out:

Congressman John Sarbanes website:

http://sarbanes.house.gov/release_details.asp?id=300

WBAL video on one of SBLC's learners, Daryl Witherspoon:

<http://www.wbal.com/video/29158505/detail.html>

National Coalition for Literacy:

<http://www.national-coalition-literacy.org/>

Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education (MAACCE):

<http://www.maaccemd.org/>



Congressman John Sarbanes, 3rd District



Congressman Sarbanes and Michelle Brown, Assistant to Senator Barbara Mikulski spent time after the Press Conference talking with learners



Above are speakers from the AEFL Press conference. The Front row includes, Congressman John Sarbanes; Ralph Gavin, Adult Secondary Education Specialist at DLLR Division of Workforce and Adult Learning; Sonia Socha, Executive Director of South Baltimore Learning Center (SBLC); Anne Schroth, SBLC Board President; Michelle Brown, Assistant to U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski, and Jeff Carter, Board Representative of National Coalition for Literacy. In the back row are Lynn Selmsler, Government Relations Director of National Council of State Adult Education Directors and Randy Shipe, President of Maryland Association of Adult Community and Continuing Education (MAACCE)



Sonia Socha, Executive Director of SBLC



MAACCE President, Randy Shipe, speaks about the importance of adult literacy and correctional education in Maryland.



Michelle Brown, Assistant to Senator Barbara Mikulski



Peggie Butler- Watson, 2009 SBLC Graduate of the External Development Program.



Daryl Witherspoon, GED Learner; Sonia Socha, SBLC Executive Director; Randy Shipe, MAACCE President and Congressman John Sarbanes.



Executive Director, Sonia Socha – take out this picture and replace with another (we will discuss)



Gregory Lewis, SBLC 2010 Graduate of the General Education Development (GED) Program



Speaking is Fatima Boudouch, from Baltimore City Community College, English as a Second Language Learner



**Lynn Selmsler, Government Relations Director,
National Council of State Adult Education Directors**



Jeff Carter, Board Representative of National Coalition for Literacy



**Ralph Gavin, Adult Secondary Education Specialist,
DLLR Division of Workforce & Adult Learning**



Speaking is Anne Schroth, SBLC Board President

More than 70 people attended the press conference





Congressman Sarbanes met with many of the Learners & Graduates after the Press Conference







SBLC and MAACCE thank Congressman John Sarbanes for caring so much about adult education and family literacy and being a champion for the citizens of Maryland who need these services.