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Adult Literacy Plus Launches English@Work Program at Shaw Industries

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On Monday, April 16th, the combined efforts of Adult Literacy Plus of Southwest Arizona (“ALPS”) and Shaw Industries finally come to fruition with the introduction of English Language Acquisition for Adults (ELAA) and High School Equivalency (HSE) programs to employees at the Shaw Industries facility located in Yuma, AZ. The initial rollout, with all of its moving parts, has taken a few months to finalize but the excitement to get underway is being felt on both sides. ALPS will be conducting classes on the Shaw Industries site and will be initially working with Managers and Supervisory staff, with plans to expand the program for other employees very soon. The corporate and business English@Work outreach program of ALPS was developed in collaboration with other Adult Education programs across the country and implemented by Bill Regenhardt, Executive Director of Adult Literacy Plus. “We could not have instituted this program without some great ideas from our colleagues within the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE), the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), and our organization’s highly qualified instructors”, said Regenhardt. “The focus on integrated education and training (IET) and the collaboration with business and industry, seen in this project, is vital to our community and local economy.”



From left to right, Bill Regenhardt, ALPS Executive Director; Oswaldo Barrera, Shaw HR Facilitator; Luis Flores Specialty 3rd Shift Lead; Omar Reyes, Specialty 3rd Shift Supervisor; Norberto Morales, Filament 3rd Shift Supervisor; and Maria Duarte, ELAA Instructor.

Oswaldo Barrera, Shaw Industries HR Facilitator states, "This is an amazing opportunity for our associates to improve on their English communication skills, thus positively changing their lives by increased morale and confidence. We are certain this will not only impact the workplace, but it will transcend their personal lives and the Yuma county community as a whole." The program will initially start with English Language classes for the front line supervisors and team leads, then move to HSE level classes. ALPS and Shaw are confident that this will lead other team members to get engaged in the learning process once they see that the leaders are growing the skills that will assist them in achieving their goals for advancement within the company.

The program participants will be from all three shifts, and are at different learning levels. However, Maria Duarte, the ALPS Instructor states, "The students show great teamwork, are eager to learn, committed and are a joy in class. It's awesome!" English@Work is a proven model that takes workers to levels where they can build on their skill sets and increase their opportunities for advancement. The advantages for business and industry in building into their employees through a program such as English@Work are wide-ranged and include increased safety awareness, better overall communication, increased customer service, overall employment satisfaction and employee retention.

About Adult Literacy Plus

Adult Literacy Plus of Southwest Arizona is a 501(c)(3) organization that has been serving the Yuma community since 1981. ALPS serves individuals who are basic skills deficient and those in need of increasing English language skills. The organization works collaboratively with the Arizona Department of Education, Federal government, the local Workforce Board, and other community partners to achieve its mission to benefit Adult Learners.

Our mission is to provide rigorous educational instruction for adults ages 16+, which elevates their skills in Reading and Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Civics, and English Language Acquisition, in order to obtain a High School Equivalency diploma and successfully transition to postsecondary education and careers that offer gainful employment.

For more information, please contact Bill Regenhardt at Adult Literacy Plus of Southwest Arizona, (928) 343-9363.