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Brian Kravitz
Waterbury, Vermont

Good Morning,

I am Brian Kravitz, a resident of Waterbury and Director of Outreach and Workforce Development for Central Vermont Adult Basic Education. I am very honored to be here with our Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) students to share about the work we are doing across the state.

According to the 2024 American Community Survey, there are roughly 31,000 Vermonters age 18 plus without a high school credential. There are direct correlations between educational attainment and both employment rates and earning potential. In 2024 the nationwide unemployment rate was 3.3%, and 6.2% for those without a high school diploma. The average weekly salary was \$1,221, and those without a high school diploma earned only 60% of that on average, a barely livable \$738. If a parent is without a high school diploma, there is an 80% higher chance their children will also drop out of school.

In the last 2 years alone 79 CVAE students have received either a GED or high school diploma, with 325 statewide. Our work directly affects the generational cycles that lead to unemployment, low wages, as well as undereducation.

Across the state, Vermont's AEL providers are actively engaged in workforce development programs. CVAE instructors have supported students in preparing for professional certifications in a wide variety of in-demand sectors, from cyber security to mental health technician to Medical Coding and Billing. Just 2 weeks ago CVAE assisted VAL as they ran an Energy Works weatherization training in Washington county, a new collaboration. Participants received OSHA-10 and first-aid/CPR certifications, in-depth understanding of the fundamentals of weatherization, and practice on industry-specific tools. Our goal is to have these graduates placed in weatherization and general construction positions within the next few weeks.

Vermont's AEL plays an integral role in our statewide workforce development landscape, from all-important high school credentials to technical training and certifications. We prepare our newest Vermonters for work by bridging the language barrier. We provide opportunities. I'm honored to have our students share their experiences.

Thank you.
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