



STUDENTS AS LEADERS *Summit*

FULL SPEED AHEAD: LIFTING OUR VOICES, DRIVING OPPORTUNITY
Monday, April 13 | Indianapolis, IN

GET READY TO TAKE THE DRIVER'S SEAT in your education, career, and community! This full-day experience is designed exclusively for adult learners ready to reflect on their journeys, share their stories, and build skills that open doors in work and life.

We'll start by looking back—celebrating your growth, resilience, and the moments of risk that shaped your story. From there, you'll practice turning those experiences into compelling stories that inspire action. Next, we'll translate your everyday skills into professional language that shows the world what you can do. Finally, we'll accelerate into the future with sessions focused on career-ready skills and financial confidence, giving you the tools to drive your opportunities forward.

By the end of the day, you'll leave energized, confident, and ready to "lead your lane"—equipped with the reflection, storytelling, and practical skills to move at full speed toward your goals.



7:00–8:00 AM | Fuel Up: Breakfast & Networking Pit Stop

Start the day by connecting with fellow adult learners from across the nation. Grab breakfast, meet your table team, and share one milestone you've achieved on your journey. COABE staff and volunteers will be on hand to welcome you.

Participants will:

- Build community connections.
- Set personal goals for the day.



8:00–9:10 AM | Green Flag: Leadership Ignition Lab – Voices in Action

The Summit officially kicks off with a celebration of leadership and learner voice. COABE leadership welcomes participants and recognizes current Student Ambassadors. A dynamic panel of adult learners will share how leadership shows up in everyday life—from the classroom to the community.

Participants will:

- Recognize leadership qualities within yourself and others.
- Understand how adult learners lead change in their programs and communities.

9:30–10:50 AM | General Session

Kyle Quilausing's journey is a powerful story of resilience, redemption, and the life-changing power of choices. Once a rising youth golf champion, Kyle faced addiction, incarceration, and years of lost potential, but today he is over 15 years sober and inspires thousands by sharing his story. In this session, he will offer hope and encouragement, showing that no matter the challenges one has faced, it's always possible to redefine your path and move toward a brighter future.

Participants will:

- Hear a compelling story of resilience and transformation.
- Recognize that past challenges do not define future potential.
- Understand how personal experiences can fuel leadership, advocacy, and community impact.



10:50–11:50 AM | Pit Stop: Exhibit Hall Grand Opening & Snack Break

Take a break, grab a snack, and explore the Exhibit Hall! Connect with adult education programs, community partners, and resources that can support your learning, leadership, and career goals.

11:50 AM–1:00 PM | Navigating Risk on the Track: Speaking Up and Stepping Out

Taking risks—whether in the classroom, at work, or in advocacy—requires courage and strategy. In this interactive session, participants will explore what “calculated risk” looks like in leadership. Through discussion and reflection, learners will identify moments in their own lives where they took a risk that led to growth, and consider how to use that same mindset to lead and advocate for others.

Participants will:

- Examine how taking healthy risks builds confidence and leadership.
- Connect courage in personal choices to advocacy and opportunity.
- Identify personal experiences of risk and resilience that shape your story.

1:00–2:00 PM | Lunch & Lead–Fueling Connections

Take a moment to relax, refuel, and connect with fellow learners. Begin by hearing one powerful story from a Student Ambassador who has navigated challenges and celebrated breakthroughs. Then, engage with peers in guided discussions that translate the inspiration from the story into actionable ideas.

Participants will:

- Leave with ideas for sharing their story in meaningful, real-world contexts.
- Build peer connections and learn from others’ experiences.
- Reinforce the power of storytelling as a leadership and advocacy tool.



2:00–3:10 PM | Future-Ready Fast Track: Accelerate Your Career Skills

The world of work is moving fast—and adult learners are ready to lead. In this session, you'll explore the competencies that help adults succeed and advance in any job, including communication, problem-solving, adaptability, and lifelong learning. Through interactive exercises and real-world scenarios, you'll practice applying your skills, confidently introducing yourself, and translating your experiences into professional opportunities. You'll also discover free and low-cost resources through COABE's partnerships with Google, IBM SkillsBuild, and eCornell to keep your skills sharp and your career moving forward.

Participants will:

- Apply transferable skills in realistic workplace scenarios.
- Communicate professional strengths clearly and confidently.
- Identify free and accessible resources to support continued skill development.

3:10 pm–3:50 PM | People Make Choices and Choices Make People

Join us for a special session with keynote speaker Kyle Quilausing, who will share his inspiring journey from professional surfer to former inmate, and now mentor and youth advocate, motivating adult learners to overcome challenges and embrace their potential.



3:50–5:00 PM | Future-Ready Pit Stop: Fuel Your Financial Confidence

Strong leaders make decisions that support both their career and personal goals. In this session, you'll explore practical ways to budget for goals, understand credit and paychecks as tools, and make strategic choices about training and career investments. Using interactive scenarios, you'll practice applying financial strategies in real-life situations and discover free or low-cost resources that help adults move forward confidently in their finances.

Participants will:

- Build confidence in making financial decisions that support career and life goals.
- Apply practical tools and strategies for budgeting, credit, and training investments.
- Identify free and accessible financial resources to plan for long-term success.

5:00 – 5:30 PM | Victory Lap: Group Photo & Summit Reflection

Celebrate your accomplishments and those of your fellow learners with a group photo to mark this shared milestone. End the day reflecting on one way you'll continue to “lead your lane” after the Summit.

Participants will:

- Reflect on personal growth throughout the day.
- Commit to next steps for ongoing leadership and advocacy.

7:00 – 9:00 PM | President's Welcome Reception

Join fellow conference attendees for an evening celebration! This is your chance to network, celebrate your hard work, and kick off the national conference at full speed.

