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## Honoring outstanding professionals who passionately believe in the power of adult and continuing education and learning



### Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that lifelong learning, including adult learning and education (ALE), is fundamental to achieving the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015) and to implementing and enforcing the principles and rights contained in the European Pillar of Social Rights (European Commission, 2021). The Marrakech Framework for Action (MFA) once again acknowledged that education, including ALE, is a human right that is critical to the exercise of other rights and the achievement of the SDGs more widely (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2022. p. 3.).

The MFA also reaffirmed that “adult learning and education (ALE) is a key component of lifelong learning, noting that ALE policies and practices apply to a wide range of ages, education levels, learning spaces and modalities, and recognizing that lifelong learning is the major engine of a learning society at different levels, involving individuals, families, organizations, workplaces, neighbourhoods, cities, and regions” (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2022. p. 3.). Regardless of the policy documents, our everyday practice and experience demonstrate that ALE is present in all spheres of life, societal contexts, and economic sectors. It might be claimed that (adult) learning is essential to life. And without ALE, transformation is impossible.

The implications of the global megatrends we face on a daily basis, including but not limited to industry 4.0, digitalization, an ageing society, the climate crisis, migration, COVID, wars, and the limitation of human rights, are fundamentally changing our lives, work, and relationships. And in light of these circumstances, ALE should be essential, more potent, and widespread than ever in the pursuit of justice, well-being, and change, ensuring that all adults have equal opportunity for inclusive and equitable quality learning. By mobilising people's transformational capacities, ALE can help them become agents of change rather than passive beneficiaries.

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of numerous excellent professionals and organizations, after a long time, we have finally reached the point where ALE is no longer a side branch of formal education and not a subordinate to the monopoly of formal education, but a critical and indispensable component of global education policies and skills development agendas. We have a moral obligation to recognize outstanding individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to ALE, which is one of the fundamental pillars of society and is responsible for the continuous renewal and enhancement of the knowledge and competencies necessary for socio-economic progress. This is the mission of the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame (IACEHOF), which honors distinguished individuals and organizations that believe passionately in the power of learning and have devoted their professional lives to adult and continuing education.

### History and purpose of the IACE Hall of Fame

The IACE Hall of Fame was founded following discussions that began in the mid-1980s. Dr Thurman J. White (US) is universally acclaimed as the founding father of the Hall. It was because of White's vision

and his realization of the need that a system was established to recognize and honor, in perpetuity, living and deceased educators of adult and continuing learning who had distinguished themselves as scholars, practitioners or policy-makers. The IACE Hall of Fame was formally established as a nonprofit corporation in 1993. Dr White served as the first chair of its Board, and the University of Oklahoma College of Continuing Education in the United States agreed to serve as the permanent home for the Hall. Dr James Pappas (US) has been the Hall's executive director since its start and he is credited with bringing the Hall to fruition.

The first induction ceremony into the IACE Hall of Fame was held in 1996, marking a significant milestone in the history of twentieth-century ALE. Since the first induction in 1996, 404 members from all over the world have been inducted into the Hall of Fame. As of 2022, the number of living members is 293.

The mission of the IACE Hall of Fame is to honor and recognize scholars, researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers who have excelled in the field of adult and continuing education, to serve as a record and inspiration for the next generation of continuing education leaders, and to raise awareness of the values and achievements of ALE.

The IACE Hall of Fame is a nonprofit organization. There are no fees or duties. The organization relies on gifts and tax-deductible contributions to sustain its activities and ensure its perpetuity.

The organization is managed by a four-member Executive Committee and a thirteen-member Board of Directors, with seven members from the United States, three from Europe, and one each from Asia, Australia, and Canada. In addition, the Development Committee, the Communication Committee, and the Nomination Committee support the work of the Hall.

One of IACE Hall of Fame's functions is to coordinate nominations and inductions of new members. Furthermore, the most common activities include communicating and disseminating information, collaborating with relevant stakeholders in the field of adult and continuing education, hosting webinars and seminars, publishing studies, and awarding the James Pappas scholarship to a graduate student majoring in a field related to adult and continuing education. Through a quarterly newsletter, IACE Hall of Fame keeps its members and stakeholders up to date on the latest news of the Hall. The latest issue was dedicated to the 2022 induction ceremony held in Cork, Ireland.

### **The IACE Hall of Fame European Chapter**

Following several international meetings, a subgroup was founded in Europe in 2016, known as the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame, European Chapter (HOFE). HOFE has 71 members, and the number of living members is 57. Permit me to point out, as a Hungarian, that seven of the 71 European members are from Hungary (János Sz. Tóth, Dénes Koltai, Mihály Sári, Andor Maróti, Balázs Németh, Éva Farkas, András Benedek).

Since its founding, the European Chapter had been co-chaired by André Schläfli (Switzerland) and Sturla Bjerkaker (Norway), who were succeeded in September 2022 by Arne Carlsen (Denmark) and Éva Farkas (Hungary). HOFE holds three virtual meetings and one in-person meeting every year. Through its Think Tank function, HOFE hopes to operate as a hub for networking and information exchange, as well as actively contribute to the development of European adult learning policy and the implementation of initiatives. HOFE is open to collaborating with organizations in the field of adult education through joint research projects, organizing conferences, seminars, and webinars, mentoring young researchers, and interacting with other European ALE organizations. HOFE is also committed to discussing and disseminating information about new developments in ALE, such as the European agenda for adult learning 2021-2030 and CONFINTEA VII Marrakech Framework for Action.

The European colleagues actively participate in the organizational activities of the IACE Hall of Fame. There are three European members in the 13-member Board of Directors: Simona Sava (Romania), Éva Farkas (Hungary) and George A. Koulaouzides (Greece). The Nomination Committee currently had two European members, Alan Tuckett (United Kingdom) and Sturla Bjerkaker (Norway), who succeeded André Schläfli (Switzerland) and Ekkehard Nuissl (Germany) in 2022. It is also a pleasure and an honor

that Éva Farkas (Hungary) was elected as the new Chair of the Board of Directors of IACE Hall of Fame in September 2022 who succeeded James Anderson (US).

### **Nominations**

The IACE Hall of Fame rewarded only individuals until 2020. A person must be eminently distinguished in their profession, have achieved honor or distinction, and have contributed to the heritage of adult and continuing education be eligible for induction into the Hall of Fame. Each year, three categories (scholar, practitioner, and policy-maker) are open to nominate professionals who have made outstanding contributions to the field of adult and continuing education and have had a decisive impact on, including but not limited to, developing and implementing adult and continuing learning policies and initiatives, improving quality of the practice, enhancing andragogy as an integrated part of education sciences, raising the visibility and recognition of adult learning and professionalization of adult educators, and educating the next generation of adult learning professionals.

Anyone can nominate individuals and organizations for the award. Each nomination requires two nominators, and at least one of them must be an IACEHOF member. All submitted nomination packets are forwarded to the Nomination Committee, which is appointed by the Board of Directors. The Nomination Committee is responsible for screening and scoring nominees based on pre-defined and publicly available strict professional criteria as well as recommending to the Board of Directors a slate of suitable inductees. The Board of Directors then reviews, discusses, and, as appropriate, approves the Committee's recommendations for induction.

The Hall of Fame's commitment to lifelong learning is exemplified by the organizational award established in 2020. The award is intended for organizations whose mission reflects opportunities for adult and continuing education by promoting the growth and development of adult learners and whose vision is dedicated to the idea that adult and continuing education contributes to human fulfilment and positive social change.

The next nomination period will be in spring 2023. The call for nominations will be published on the IACEHOF and HOFE websites and will be distributed to partner organizations.

### **Inductions**

Annual induction ceremonies have taken place at various locations around the world. These annual inductions are always held in conjunction with conferences of international associations representing adult and continuing education. A significant milestone in the internationalization process was the induction ceremony held for the first time in Europe in 2006 in Bamberg, Germany. This event was followed by ceremonies in several European cities over the years, including Budapest (Hungary) in 2008, Iasi (Romania) in 2014, and Belgrade (Serbia) in 2019. The most recent 26th induction ceremony was held in Cork, Ireland, on 28th September 2022. The induction ceremony is always special. This year's event, where we welcomed 18 exceptional adult learning professionals from 11 countries, was once again an exquisite, magnificent, and uplifting occasion. Due to COVID-19, the induction ceremony in 2021 had to be postponed. Since the award can only be received in person, carry-overs from the 2021 class were also included in the 2022 class, making this one of the largest classes ever. This class is also particularly noteworthy because of its international diversity.

For the first time in the history of the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame, an organization, the Irish National Association of Adult Education (AONTAS) was inducted into the Hall.

The next induction ceremony is scheduled to coincide with the annual conference of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) in Lexington (US) in October 2023.

### The International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame Class of 2022



From left to right: Niamh O'Reilly (Ireland), Mejai Avoseh (USA), Dearbháil Lawless AONTAS Ireland (organization award), Sabine Schmidt-Lauff (Germany), Larissa Jogi (Estonia), Licinio Lima (Portugal), Andras Benedek (Hungary), Laura Bierema (USA), Rolf Arnold (Germany), Michael Osborne (UK), Darlene Clover (Canada), Nancy Taber (Canada), Daphne Ntiri (USA), Robert Mizzi (Canada), Wing On Lee (Singapore), Séamus O'Tuama (Ireland), Linda Morris (USA), Per Paludan Hansen (Denmark), Raul Valdes Cotera (Mexico).

The induction ceremony is a wonderful event, and the symposium, at which all new inductees talk about themselves, their careers, their beliefs, and their relationship with adult and continuing education, is the most exciting and meaningful part of the day. The symposium provides an excellent opportunity to witness cultural diversity and varied approaches to adult and continuing education, as well as to meet distinguished colleagues who have dedicated their professional life to adult education and who, because of their professionalism, commitment, and humaneness, will serve as role models for the next generation of adult education professionals and researchers. The outstanding legacy of these people is preserved in a permanent display of plaques in the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame on the University of Oklahoma campus.



## References

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