Graduates celebrate success

Record number of students don cap and gown

Adult Options In Education’s GED graduation ceremony was Wednesday, June 2 at Hopkins Center for the Arts. More than 50 adults celebrated the success of earning their degree by participating in the ceremony. At right, Derartu Ahmed, jokes with a friend as she walks the recessional. Above Graduate Amalia Solis-Alcantar delivers her speech. Below, the graduates wait to accept their diplomas. Please see the rest of this issue for additional graduation news and photos. (Photos by Bruce Silcox)
This year is the first year that we have not had the amazing energetic assistance of Bernice Brooks helping with preparations for our spring graduation.

Bernice Brooks, beloved Adult Options staff member, passed away in January of this year.

Bernice was a para professional who worked with ESL and GED students at the Eisenhower Community Center. She first came to Adult Options as a volunteer nearly a quarter century ago.

She donated her time to the program for 14 years before officially joining the staff.

Bernice would start her day tutoring beginning-level ESL students, sometimes teaching students to hold a pencil or drilling students in the letters of the alphabet.

Later in the day, she would work in the GED preparation classes and even return in the evening to help GED students learn math and prepare for the GED exams.

Bernice helped wherever she was needed, she saw things that needed to be done and she did them… sometimes bringing in tools from her workshop in order to “fix” a shelf, a classroom door, or hang a picture.

Jeanne Amundson, GED teacher said “Bernice could put GED students at ease and would encourage students to learn and succeed.”

In memory of Bernice and her work with our students, Bernice’s family had designated memorial gifts to create a GED scholarship fund.

During the AOIE graduation featured in this newsletter, we were very pleased to present the very first Bernice Brooks Memorial Scholarship to Adan Ali.

Adult Options hopes to continue the scholarship in Bernice’s memory. Families of our graduates and friends of our program, are encouraged to make a financial contribution to the scholarship fund. Gifts can be sent directly to Adult Options In Education. We want to grow our scholarship program and include more graduates next year.

Tax-deductible, monetary gifts can be sent to:

Adult Options In Education
Hopkins Public Schools
Eisenhower Community Center
1001 Highway 7
Hopkins, MN, 55305

Proud scholar

Adan Ali had a big smile as he walked to the stage to accept the Bernice Brooks Memorial Scholarship at GED Graduation, Wednesday, June 2 at Hopkins Center for the Arts. Ali, a native of Somalia, first came to Adult Options In Education as an English language student. After he learned English he began working to earn the GED. Ali will begin college in the fall. He dreams of becoming a pharmacist. (Photo by Bruce Silcox)
To the GED Graduates:

Today, you have a credential to show,  
a boost of confidence ready to stow.  
Notched on your belt, higher self esteem,  
The elements to pursue a dream.

Honor the amount of resolve it required  
To study for hours- often dog-tired,  
But you set yourself an important goal,  
Stayed on course, stayed on a roll.

Finally mastered that perplexing math,  
Now large numbers just make you laugh.  
By setting an example for your kids,  
You swept out “don’ts” and showed them “dids”

Job, college or training, you’re counted in,  
This achievement will lead to win.  
Admit it: learning was at times even fun,  
So was passing each test, one by one.

Here recognize those who encouraged you,  
Pushed you out to class each cold night,  
Created a steady support team,  
Helped you prepare yourself for flight.

Congratulations!

6/10 Diane Pecoraro  
AOIE Volunteer; SLP Community Poet

GED Graduates, above, prepare to enter the auditorium at Hopkins Center for the Arts Wednesday, June 2. Linda Saveraid, above, was keynote speaker of the event. Saveraid, who recently retired as community education director in St. Louis Park, has been a friend and advocate of Adult Options in Education for many years. Symone Clay, at left, was all smiles when she accepted her diploma from Minnetonka Superintendent Dennis Peterson. (Photos by Bruce Silcox)
Adult Options In Education heavily relies on the work of volunteers who give their time to benefit our students.

A total of 184 volunteers gave 9157.5 hours to benefit 1810 students at classrooms in Hopkins, Minnetonka and St. Louis Park.

A complete list of volunteers serving all of our sites is below.


Lauren Carroll, Peter Choukalas, Shirley Coyer, Carita Dahlberg, Carolina DePaulis, Lobsang Dorjee, Diane Doty, Mary Theresa Downing, Susan Doyle, Dan Drewitz, Deb Drone, Laura Dummer.

Scott Eckes, Clifford Eckman, Lollie Eidsness, Sue Fink, Monica Flavin, Judi Forsmark, Barbara Freeman, Barbara Friedman.

Edward Galbraith, Darla Gilbertson, Julie Gomer, Geraldine Graves, George Greenfield, Darla Greystone.

Vicki Hackett, Michael Halvorson, Carole Harris, Max Harris, Becky Hart, Dale Hartman, Sabrina Harvey, Teri Haugland, Nancy Heilman, Jim Heintzman, Peter Herbert, Mary Lou Hof, Cindy Hoffmann, Mone Houngnakhone, Kathleen Howard.

Phyllis Jacobson, Carol Jenison, Joanna Johnson, Robert Johnson, Rita Johnston, Ginny Jones.

Anne Kamiri, Jane Katz, Terri Kendall, Anne Klein, Greg Klein, Lula Klein, Marjorie Knutson, Patsy Kuentz, Sharon Kuhn.


Amy Maass, Sarah MacRae, Don Maronde, James Matthews, Robert Mattison, Catherine McIntire, Elaine Mead, Beverly Meakins, Metok Metok, Alex Moen, Loretta Moen.

Ngozi Nwogwugwu, Mary Ollhoff, Beverly Paterson, Diane Pecoraro, Elisa Peltola, Jean Peppel, Ann Perkins, Gary Peterson, Jeanine Peterson, June Petrie, Kathleen Pfandtner, Alicia Popken, Kathy Pratt.

Louise Ribnick, Beth Richards, Julie Richmond, Dan Rivera, Kevin Roberson, Ann Roberts, John Roberts, Nancy Rogneby, Rob Ronglien, Nancy Rydland.

Bob Sather, Kitty Sather, Vicki Schmit, Mark Schwartz, Audrey Single, Anne Skold, Kathryn Spoelstra, Naomi Stock, Carlin Struckman, Mert Suckerman, Silvian Sundrum.

Iren Tadevosyan, Carrie Tietz, Tolly Tin, Todd Tinglestad, Kristin Titcombe, Emily Tohal, Judy Tonolli, Mary Trippler, Andrea Tshihamba.

Ken Vogel, Carol Wade, Judith Waeschle, Jane Weiner, Sue Weinstein, Nancy Werner.

Sandra Whelan, Jane Whipple, Bryan Wilson, Laura Wright, Rebecca Yale, Sara Yale, Jackie Zimmerman, Shirley L Zimmerman.

Barty Amundson, Glen Amundson, Kathy Beard, Mike Benjamin, Bob Bonde, Mary Chilvers, Marge Christensen, Kelly Clausen, Jo Cunningham, Kristall Davis, Brian Djerf.
