



2023 COABE Scholarship Lara Speights

Lara Speights, Vice President of Family Support and Adult Literacy at Neuhaus Education Center (NEC), has received the COABE Scholarship.

Lara has been the Vice President of Family Support and Adult Literacy at NEC for over two years, helping adult learners with basic reading skills to find success. With a decade of experience in education as a teacher, literacy specialist, and licensed dyslexia therapist, Lara has worked with students of various ages and learning needs, including students with learning disabilities and limited English proficiency.

While accommodating and supporting students with dyslexia and other learning differences at the primary and secondary level is common and well-researched, she found that, as she puts it, “The Adult Literacy world is woefully under-aware of dyslexia and how to both identify and support learners with dyslexia.” This, along with her work, has inspired Lara to pursue her PhD at Texas A&M University to further the research for adult learners with dyslexia.

Lara began her career as an educator teaching English Language Arts at the middle-school level. She then progressed to Dean of Instruction, coaching other teachers and working with academically at-risk students. She went on to become the school’s Literacy Specialist, using her skills as a licensed dyslexia therapist to lead the literacy program for struggling readers in grades 6–12. She began her current position at NEC in February of 2021.

Lara’s dedication to the field of education and adult literacy is apparent in her pursuit of a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Reading and Literacy. She hopes that her research will uncover more resources to increase adult literacy in the underserved dyslexia population and empower the adult students she serves daily.