



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE
College of Education and
Human Development

Adult Education Program Alumni Career Stories

Susan Hall-Taylor

“There is no typical day in the life of an adult education director – rather, they are all so different.” As the Adult Education Director in Waldoboro, Maine, Susan Hall-Taylor loves her work because she is involved with all aspects of running the program including recruitment of teachers and students; planning programs; budgeting and finance accountability; reporting at the local, state and federal levels; grant writing and data collection; regional collaborations and contracts with area agencies, businesses and adult education professional organizations. Susan says, “I have to be adept at multi-tasking!”

Susan was affiliated with the adult education program at the University of Southern Maine for many years. Before matriculating in the master’s program, she began by taking graduate level courses on a yearly basis in order to satisfy the requirements for the state administrative certification as an adult education director. With young children at home and an over two hour commute to the Gorham campus, she opted for summer week-long institutes whenever she could. Once she matriculated in the program, Susan came to appreciate online courses and did extensive research with online databases.

Being a program director throughout the duration of her graduate work allowed Susan to choose courses and course projects that benefited her local program by focusing on learning



that enriched her, the adult learners she works with and the adult education program that she administrates. As an adult education master’s degree student, Susan shared, “I have learned and grown a great deal as a person and as a professional as a result of the adult education master’s program. I have developed greater confidence and more advanced leadership skills, both from the program and from my continued practice in the field.”

Susan articulated the advantages of the adult education master’s program as a pathway to state certification as a director. “What stands out is the richness of the learning experiences in the program! The USM master’s program gave me a solid grounding in adult education theories and practices. My perspectives were broadened by exposure to the readings, other students – from so many different backgrounds and areas of practice within adult education - and the faculty.”

“If ever I had to define my favorite required reading in the program, it would have to be *The Meaning of Adult Education* by Lindemann. Being a practitioner in the field, I found so much that I could relate to in this little book; it totally validated my beliefs and practice in adult education.” About her second favorite reading *The Courage to Teach* by Parker Palmer, Susan has this to say: “This book validated my belief that teaching is a calling – a vocation as opposed to just a job. I pursued education as a career because I truly wanted to make a difference, and I still feel that way about it today even though I now am an educational administrator and not a teacher.”

Many would benefit from the master’s program in adult education at the University of Southern Maine, including Susan adds, “Certainly those who are looking to be an adult education director or assistant director, as well as those who work in human resources departments and trainers.”

For more information about the USM Adult Education program please contact Graduate Admission at (207) 780-4836 or visit www.usm.maine.edu/cehd/adult-education/