Hall of fame for adult educators

Los Angeles has Grauman’s Chinese theatre where Hollywood stars are celebrated on the footpath. Philadelphia celebrates baseball on its Wall of Fame. In Oklahoma, it’s leading adult educators who are inducted each year into their own exclusive club.

The International and Continuing Education Hall of Fame at the University of Oklahoma (OU) inducted its first group in 1996. Since then over 280 adult educators from around the world – including five Australians and two New Zealanders – have been honoured as leaders in the field.

‘All are outstanding lifelong learners and have left lasting impressions on the students, institutions, and organizations they have served,’ Dr James Pappas, Vice President for University Outreach and Dean, College of Liberal Studies says.

People who make it to the Hall of Fame are innovative leaders who believe passionately in the transformative power of education.

The Hall of Fame is located in the Centre for Continuing Education’s (CCE) Thurman White Forum building, a purpose-built and busy facility that hosts meetings, conferences, workshops and seminars year round. The day that Quest magazine visited in August, the Summer Youth Program was in full swing and the Oilwell Blowout School was in session. Dr Pappas who oversees the Centre says, ‘it’s an exciting place to work.’

Dr Pappas says the Hall of Fame plays a crucial role both in the valuing and celebration of adult educators. He says it not only honours leaders in the field of continuing education and adult learning but also serves as an inspiration for the next generation of continuing education leaders.

‘The Hall of Fame is important because people get the recognition they deserve. It’s also a way for students to identify with and understand the contributions others have made. Adult education is a broad field and we don’t do a good job of recognising contributors. Just look at the range of different fields that use the concepts and learning principles of adult education. You find them in community courses and colleges, in career focused courses and HR development, in management theories related to learning organisations.’

Dr Pappas is an honorary and lifetime member of the Hall of Fame and is actively involved in teaching. He finds teaching adults terrifically engaging.

‘Adult education is exciting, and there’s much more opportunity for personal learning than in teaching traditional, large classes.’

Australian members of the Hall of Fame

Dr Lloyd Robert Maxwell
Dr Jose Roberto (Robbie) Guevara
Joan Allsop
Dr Roger Morris
Michael Newman