



Connecting People

Communication
Across Barriers



Gold Star Speaker, Lynda Coates

Lynda Coates is a Gold Star Speaker with Communication Across Barriers (CAB), a national consulting firm that provides training to empower professionals to assist people with moving out and staying out of poverty. Lynda has a Master's Degree in Communication from Portland State University (PSU) and has been speaking and training for more than seven years across the country. She is an authentic voice, born into generational poverty and grew up homeless with her parents and five siblings. At 15 years old, Lynda came to Portland to live with her cousin Donna Beegle (current owner of CAB) who was a single mom at the time, struggling in poverty. Donna was connected to mentors who encouraged her to obtain a GED and eventually a Doctorate degree. Not only did Lynda witness Donna's journey, but she also was mentored by Donna and connected to other mentors and resources that allowed her to follow a similar path of education. Since graduating with a master's degree, Lynda has collaborated with Donna on numerous research projects and developed training materials for professionals in education, healthcare, social work and the legal system.

Even though Lynda was the first person in her family to graduate from high school, she spent four years at a community college taking remedial courses before starting on a bachelor's degree. As an undergraduate, she had the luxury of attending a small private university and was able to live in the dorms, emerge herself into college campus life and focus on education before starting a family. Having this experience, Lynda is passionate about working with first generation high school and college students, and teachers and faculty. For the last five years, she has been consulting with GEAR UP schools (a federal program) throughout Oregon and Washington to help keep students in school and prepare them for college.

What clients are saying:

Your session is one of the highest rated in our post-conference survey. People really loved it. Hope we can get you back again next year!

~ Alison Eldridge Anderson, Information Specialist, Washington State GEAR UP, West Coast Conference

Your presentation was fabulous! It really affected me. I've never seen or heard any research on poverty like I heard from you today - from the different kinds of poverty to the difference in how we process information and communicate.

~ April Scot, State of Oregon Health and Nutrition Counselor

We all truly learned a lot from your presentation. It was a different perspective for us and an eye opener. Your explanation on better techniques for educating those in poverty will definitely help us in our jobs. I for one, have a much better understanding of what people in poverty go through on a day to day basis. Anyone could be born into that situation you described.

~ Madelyn Koontz, Northwest Renal Dietitian

Lynda is available for keynotes and professional development trainings.

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